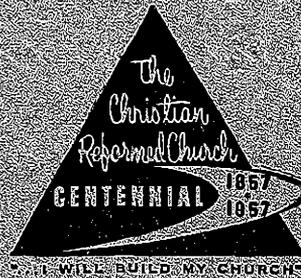


AGENDA

Synod Christian Reformed Church

To convene June 13, 1956
at Grand Rapids, Mich.

REPORTS AND OVERTURES



CHRISTIAN REFORMED PUBLISHING HOUSE
2850 Kalamazoo Ave., S. E.
Grand Rapids 8, Mich., U.S.A.

P R E F A C E

On *Tuesday evening, June 12, at 7:45 o'clock, D.V.*, a special Prayer Service for Synod will be held in the Calvin Christian Reformed Church, Grand Rapids, Michigan. This church is located at 700 Ethel Ave., S.E., in the south-east section of the city of Grand Rapids, a few blocks from the Calvin Campus. The Pastor of the Convening church, Rev. Clarence Boomsma will preach the sermon and lead in special prayer for Synod.

On *Wednesday morning, June 13, at 9:00 a.m.*, the delegates to Synod will meet in the auditorium of the main building of Calvin College. Rev. C. Boomsma will formally open the first session of Synod with an appropriate address, lead in devotions and serve as chairman until the Synod of 1956 is constituted.

On the preceding *Sunday, June 10*, our pastors and congregations are kindly requested to remember the forthcoming sessions of Synod in their prayers for the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

The Agenda for the Synod of 1956 contains various reports of both standing and study committees, and Overtures submitted by Classes, Consistories, and individuals. Supplementary reports of various Boards will be mailed directly to the home addresses of the delegates to Synod. The report of the committee preparing a revision of our Psalter-Hymnal will be mailed by this committee to our Consistories.

R. J. Danhof, Th. D.

Stated Clerk

944 Neland Ave., S.E., Grand Rapids 7, Michigan,
U.S.A.

P.S. Delegates are kindly requested to bring their copy of the printed Agenda and the mimeographed Supplementary reports received to Synod.

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Reports

REPORT NO. 1

THE PATERSON HEBREW MISSION

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

THE BOARD of the Paterson Hebrew Mission herewith submits its report on the work of the Board and its Missionaries for the year 1955.

The Board usually meets on the second Tuesday of each month at the Mission house at 253 Hamilton Avenue, Paterson. The Missionaries meet with us for at least a part of the time to present their reports. The Board is constituted as follows: Rev. D. H. Spalink, president; Dr. J. E. Meeter, Vice President; Rev. B. Bruxvoort, Secretary; Mr. E. Heerema, Treasurer; H. Vander Plaats and Mr. P. Damsma.

The staff of workers continues as before: Rev. David B. Muir, Superintendent, Miss Martha Rozendal, nurse and full-time worker, Miss Wilhelmina Tuit, full-time worker, and Dr. Peter G. Berkhout, physician.

Relative to the administration of the work of the Mission, the Board has, for Classis Hackensack and Synod, been attempting to execute our adaptation of the "Church Community Jewish Evangelism" plan. This plan was approved by Synod and was an answer to Synod's own mandate (Acts of Synod, 1955, Art. 48, P.16). By "adaptation" we mean to emphasize that the approach to the Jewish people shall not only be carried on by the members of our churches, but that "our mission staff prayerfully seek, and earnestly embrace every opportunity to bring to individual Jews the gospel of salvation in Christ" also in our local church communities.

The Board is of the opinion that this new approach which we have adopted, alongside of our institutional work, is only begun, and is a project which will take considerable more time to put into effect. Our churches must be won to see the need and the advantage of this method of working. At the same time the churches must begin to see that they also have a responsibility to witness to the Jews in their communities. If the work of our Jewish Missionaries in the various neighborhoods could have the effect of also arousing among our people a desire to witness to their Jewish neighbors, a double purpose will have been realized.

As to the actual work itself, we quote our Superintendent as follows: "The work of witnessing to the Israel continued through the year. Our Program was designed to meet the Jew both inside and outside the Mission. The Program for those visiting the Mission may be presented in the following statistics. There were 49 Saturday Evening Gospel meetings, with a total of 428 in attendance. There were 32 sessions of the Women's Bible Class with 82 attending. The medical clinic was held 46 times, with a total of 249 persons present. A Bible study hour is held preceding the clinic. There were 74 classes in English and Bible with 206 attending.

"In addition to meeting the Jew in the Mission area, considerable emphasis was placed upon finding and meeting the Jew in the neighborhoods of particular Christian Reformed Churches. The Program was carried on throughout the year, and we have effectively covered great areas in the immediate and more distant "parishes" of Summer Street, Passaic; III Paterson; and Madison Avenue. These churches have cooperated with us in every way. A Christmas mailing was sent out by these Churches to 120 Jewish families in their respective areas. We hope that continued friendly interest will encourage the Jewish neighbor to seek God's House. Altogether some 1,539 calls were made by the Mission staff. Especially in calling in new areas, one often finds Gentiles where one expects to find a Jew. Thus we have met many Gentiles in our Parish program. In keeping with our custom, and to avoid any misunderstanding, we state that all our statistics have reference to Jewish people only, and do not reflect any work done with Gentiles. We do witness to these also, however, and hope we may be the vital link between the neighborhood Church we are representing and the unchurched Gentile. Thus while the Church assists us in reaching the Jew, we assist the Church in its task of finding people — Jew and Gentile — in the area of its responsibility."

And now, just as we stand at the very beginning of this new approach to Jewish missions, it has been decided to transfer the administration of this work to the General Committee for Home Missions. We hope they may continue this method which we have adopted.

To this report of the Board on its work is attached a report by its Treasurer, Mr. E. Heerema. Our Treasurer has not included a proposed budget or a request for a quota from the Churches because of the projected "transfer" mentioned above.

The Board of the Paterson Hebrew Mission is grateful to Classis and Synod and our Churches for their interest in this work and their support. We are also grateful to our staff of workers for their consecrated labors.

Respectfully submitted,
The Paterson Hebrew Mission Board
B. BRUXVOORT, *Secretary*

FINANCIAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR OF 1955

GENERAL ACCOUNT

Balance January 1, 1955\$10,973.52

RECEIPTS

Classis Cadillac	\$ 53.84
Classis Alberta	154.42
Classis California	675.46
Classis Chatham	383.60
Classis Chicago North	854.55
Classis Chicago South	891.00
Classis East Ontario	300.55
Classis Grand Rapids East	1,139.82
Classis Grand Rapids South	1,498.56
Classis Grand Rapids West	817.52
Classis Hackensack	323.39
Classis Hamilton	167.81
Classis Holland	1,067.86
Classis Hudson	644.15
Classis Kalamazoo	411.77
Classis Minnesota North	393.62
Classis Minnesota South	254.82
Classis Muskegon	925.02
Classis Orange City	298.83
Classis Oostfriesland	427.98
Classis Pacific	388.17
Classis Pella	811.53
Classis Sioux Center	597.87
Classis Wisconsin	304.07
Classis Zeeland	826.14
Donations	285.90
Clinic	80.10
Offerings	10.00
Christian Reformed Board of Missions	195.00
Total	\$15,182.85
Total Balance and Receipts	\$26,156.37

DISBURSEMENTS

Salaries	\$10,535.31
Pension Fund (Ministers')	145.24
Auto Allowance	200.00
Fuel	345.68
Insurance	331.43
Christian Reformed Publishing House	41.75
Auto Expense	274.30
Building Maintenance	463.44
Clinic Supplies	49.05
Withholding Tax and Social Security	961.04
Telephone	183.59
Electric, Gas and Water	72.41

Travel Expense	36.00
Miscellaneous	445.07
Total	\$14,084.31
Balance December 31, 1955	\$12,072.06

**PATERSON HEBREW MISSION
FINANCIAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR OF 1955**

SAVINGS ACCOUNT

Balance December 31, 1954	\$ 5,525.03
Interest to December, 1955	87.81
Balance December 31, 1955	\$ 5,612.84

BOND ACCOUNT

Government Bonds held in Safe Deposit Box at Prospect Park National Bank	\$ 7,000.00
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Respectfully submitted,
ELMER HEEREMA, Treasurer

Audited and believed to be correct, January 6, 1956

Edward Fylstra
Andrew O. Bosma

**TOTAL ASSETS OF THE PATERSON HEBREW MISSION
December 31, 1955**

Cash in Bank	\$12,072.06
U. S. Government Bonds	7,000.00
Savings Account	5,612.84
Furniture and Equipment	2,000.00
Building at 253 Hamilton Ave.	7,000.00
Parsonage at 367 Sunset Blvd., Wyckoff	19,000.00
Total Assets	\$52,684.90

Paterson Hebrew Mission Board
REV. B. BRUXVOORT

REPORT NO. 2

CHICAGO JEWISH MISSION

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

THE CHICAGO Jewish Mission Board has again been enabled by God's grace to carry on the work of directing a witness to the 20th century Jew, persuading him that Jesus of Nazareth is truly the promised Messiah of God.

The Board is constituted as follows: Rev. E. L. Haan, President, Rev. G. Zylstra, Vice President, Rev. B. Byma, Sec'y, Rev. A. De Kruyter, Treasurer, Mr. Geo. DeBoer, and Mr. R. Dekker. This Board has met monthly in regular session and a number of times in special session to deal with the complex problems occasioned by shifting of population in our city.

The staff which has carried on the work this year is headed by Sup't Rev. J. R. Rozendal and includes Miss Edith Vander Meulen, full time Bible woman, Miss Nellie Van Mersbergen, full time Bible woman, Dr. E. Van Reken serves the clinic part time, and Mr. Lanenga as full time maintenance man. Miss Elizabeth Wesseling has served faithfully as full time nurse this past year but will now serve as part time nurse, the work having diminished considerably.

Mr. Huisjen has been under the jurisdiction of our Board in the past but his work of promoting community evangelism for the Jews throughout the denomination and the publication of the *Shepherd's Voice*, was of such wide scope that Synod in answer to an overture from Classis Chicago North properly placed this work under the General Committee for Home Missions. This transfer was effected January 1, 1956. We are thankful to God that Mr. Huisjen has been restored to health after a rather extended illness and is once again able to take up his work.

The following is gleaned from the Sup'ts report regarding the work. "At present we work at two locations, 1241-43 So. Pulaski Rd. which is the main station. Since this area is rapidly being taken over by Negro people a branch Mission was opened at 2252 W. Foster Ave. on the North Side of the city."

"Our work consists of Teaching Bible classes, Home visiting, Gospel meetings, Medical ministry in the clinic. During the past year a total of 13 classes and meetings were held each week at Pulaski Road. At Foster Ave. a total of 4 meetings and classes were held each week. Gospel meetings were conducted before each clinic three times per week. At the Pulaski Rd. building the grammar school girls class has an average attendance of 7 per meeting, kindergarten an average at-

tendance of 3, teen age girls an average attendance of 6, ladies Bible class an average of 4, ladies Bible class an average of 8, senior boys Bible class an average attendance of 4, high school boys an average attendance of 8, Sunday school an average of 6. The Sunday morning Gospel meetings averaged an attendance of slightly more than one Jew per Sunday. At the North Side location a teen age girls class averaged 4 in attendance, ladies class averaged 3 in attendance, another ladies class 2 and children's class averaged 4 per meeting."

The migrating of Jewish people in the Pulaski Rd. area is going much faster than had been anticipated. For this reason the Board is beginning to search for new locations; this relocation is difficult because of the scattering of the Jews to a wide area and the presence of some missions where the Jews are now concentrated. With this is also the problem of disposing of the present facilities; no decision has yet been made concerning this disposal. Although we have to relocate some provision will have to be made for the Jews remaining in the Pulaski area attending our classes.

We regret the lack of clarity in the decision of the Synod of 1955 re-Jewish work. The question arose whether the decision concerned only parish evangelism or all Jewish work. The Board finally agreed with the inferred decision of Synod that all Jewish work including ours would be realigned under the General Committee for Home Missions. At the time of this writing this realignment is in process.

A financial report for 1955 and a proposed budget for 1957 follow the report of the secretary. We request that synod give us a minimum quota of \$.55 per family for this budget.

This will be the last report of this Board directly to Synod; in the future the General Committee for Home Missions will no doubt report to Synod regarding our Jewish work.

Respectfully submitted,
 The Board of Chicago Jewish
 Mission and Nathanael Institute
 BERNARD BYMA, *Secr.*

BUDGET FOR YEAR 1957

Pastor's Salary	\$3,800.00
Pastor's Car Allowance	700.00
Pastor's Child Allowance	350.00
Dr. E. Van Reken	835.00
Edith Vander Meulen	2,750.00
Rent Allowance	700.00
Herman Lanenga	2,400.00
Nellie Van Mersbergen	2,650.00
Rent Allowance	500.00
Gas, Electric and Fuel	1,550.00
Insurance	350.00

Clinic Licenses	35.00
Bldg. Repair and Decor.	1,000.00
Medical Supplies	400.00
Janitor and Class Supplies	450.00
Printing and Stationery	300.00
Telephones	400.00
Postage	50.00
Miscellaneous Expenses	750.00
Miscellaneous Office Expenses	150.00
Rent, North Side	3,600.00
Taxes, Miscellaneous	25.00
Taxes, Social Security	250.00
Nurse, part-time	500.00
Total	\$24,495.00

A. DE KRUYTER, *Treasurer*

TREASURER'S REPORT

for January 1, 1955 through December 31, 1955

RECEIPTS

January 1, 1955 Cash on Hand	\$13,203.73
In Tri-City Savings and Loan	10,500.00
In Government Bonds	16,742.02

Receipts during 1955:

Classis Alberta	\$ 495.97
Classis Cadillac	73.19
Classis California	1,076.13
Classis Chatham	151.20
Classis Chicago North	1,246.98
Classis Chicago South	1,506.95
Classis Eastern Ontario	152.63
Classis Grand Rapids East	1,813.91
Classis Grand Rapids South	2,435.27
Classis Grand Rapids West	1,193.54
Classis Hackensack	422.81
Classis Hamilton	250.97
Classis Holland	1,668.83
Classis Hudson	912.16
Classis Kalamazoo	821.78
Classis Minnesota North	856.94
Classis Minnesota South	809.43
Classis Muskegon	1,543.29
Classis Orange City	739.71
Classis Oostfriesland	185.95
Classis Pacific	1,558.10
Classis Pella	1,206.49
Classis Sioux Center	851.22
Classis Wisconsin	720.03
Classis Zeeland	1,336.64

Clinic	\$1,038.50
Societies and Churches	788.95

\$24,030.12

Individuals	148.50
Interest	712.35
Telephone Refunds	56.50
Children's Fund	200.00
Miscellaneous Receipts	38.14
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	\$ 2,982.94
Total Receipts	\$67,458.81
Less Disbursements	\$36,126.35
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Balance	\$31,332.46

TREASURER'S REPORT, 1955

DISBURSEMENTS

Salaries	\$18,072.14
Auto Allowance	700.00
Rent Allowance	1,900.00
Child Allowance	350.00
Assistants' Pay	438.76
Shepherd's Voice	880.00
Clerical Supplies	241.06
Postage	208.50
Internal Revenue Department	1,827.21
Telephones	467.74
Heat	1,211.17
Gas and Light	197.53
Water	29.25
Rent — Foster Avenue	1,200.00
Licenses	60.92
Insurances	378.10
Government Bond	4,907.30
Class Supplies	224.23
Medical Supplies	1,154.28
Cleaning and Laundry	54.28
Janitor Supplies	53.60
Travel Expenses	277.67
Building Maintenance	367.66
World Alliance Congress	200.00
Insurance Payments withheld from Checks	65.26
Miscellaneous	659.69
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Total Disbursements	\$36,126.35
December 31, 1955:	
In Tri-City Savings and Loan	\$10,500.00
In Government Bonds	16,742.02
Cash on Hand, December 31, 1955	4,090.44
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Balance	\$31,332.46

ARTHUR H. DE KRUYTER, *Treasurer*

REPORT NO. 3

THE AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

IT WAS A privilege to attend the Advisory Council of the American Bible Society in its sessions on November 29, 30, 1955, as the representative of our church. It is very difficult in a short report to present the varied and ever growing work of this organization that tries, together with 23 other societies in other parts of the world, to translate, print and distribute God's Word in all languages and tongues of the world. The lion's share of this is done by the British and Foreign and our own American Bible Society.

Let me, this year, begin by calling your attention to the extensive work carried on for the blind. The complete Bible in Braille is a set of twenty volumes more than five feet high. The entire Bible is also recorded on 170 Talking Book records, that those who cannot read the Braille can nevertheless hear the Word of God.

Let me quote from the annual report: "As we mark the one hundred and twentieth anniversary of the Society's work for the sightless, it is with deep gratitude that we announce that the year 1954 was the largest yet in the worldwide distribution of the Book to those in physical darkness.

"New publications during the year included a new edition of the Small Volume of Scripture Passages in English Braille which the Blind call their "pocket" Bible; this same Small Volume on 5 Talking Book records in Portuguese for the blind of Brazil; a first edition of the Gospel of Matthew in Portuguese Braille; new editions of the Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke and the Psalms in German Braille for distribution in the Eastern Zone of Germany; the Gospels of Mark, Luke and John in Armenian Braille; a new edition of the New Testament (10 volumes) in Korean Braille; and a first edition of the New Testament in Colloquial Japanese Braille (8 volumes), which was ready for distribution in the fall of the year.

"Large shipments of Braille paper were again sent to Korea and Japan to meet urgent calls for the embossed Scriptures in these countries.

"To meet the need of the blind in Liberia, where the Society opened a new Agency in 1954, sets of the entire Bible on 170 Talking Book records and two spring-driven Talking Book machines were shipped to Monrovia in addition to Braille Scriptures, Braille slates, primers and other materials to aid in teaching those in this area who are handicapped with blindness.

"Not only were Talking Book records sent out in greater numbers in the homeland, but in response to urgent appeals sets of the Bible were

shipped to many foreign lands, including France, Switzerland, England, the Philippines, Japan and Ethiopia.

"An aluminum Braille-writer was sent as a gift to the Korean Bible Society for use in the production of a new edition of the Old Testament books in Korean Braille.

"For the third year the Society published in Braille the World-wide Bible Reading selections entitled "Faith for Our Day."

"The new booklet, 'Our Bible — How it Came to Us' was printed in Braille. Also it included a brief history of how the Bible came to the blind.

"The Society has distributed as of December 31, 1954 a total of 208,704 Scripture Talking Book records. The first records of the Bible were produced in 1935.

"There were sent out in 1954 a total of 55,076 volumes and Talking Book records, which made a grand total of 480,282 distributed throughout the world during the past 120 years.

"Beginning in 1835, the Society has distributed to the sightless embossed Scriptures in 40 languages and systems.

"Many calls from newly blinded veterans, from the homes for the blind and the aged, from finger-tip readers in the schools for the blind, from blind ministers, Sunday-school teachers and librarians, from those in various walks of life who have never seen the light of day, were answered. Who can measure the blessings which the Book continues to bring to them? The Bible is still the favorite Book of the Blind."

The work of translating portions of God's Word in languages which heretofore did not have any published portions and the enlarging and improving in other languages is carried on vigorously by the department of translations under the directions of Dr. Eugene Nida. Much of this work is carried on in the field with the help of the missionaries. Most of this work by the American Bible Society is carried on in Africa, the Philippines, Japan, South America and the Near East. Next year this work will be concentrated in the Sudan where our church has a large mission field.

Wherever it is possible the American Bible Society works through the churches to supply their missionaries with the Scriptures they need. But it also has its own colporteurs to get the Word of God in the hands and homes of the people. In many foreign lands workers on foot, on bicycles, even on camels, are engaged in this work.

This is also true in our own country. There are sixteen district secretaries (four of them colored men) who head a Bible depot from which Scriptures are distributed, and where churches and missionaries can obtain them at any time. We also mention here that last year more than a million Scriptures were supplied to the chaplains of our military forces at a cost of \$160,000.

In conclusion, let me give you a bird's-eye view of the distribution of our Bible Society in foreign lands. First in *Communist* countries.

Again 150 tons of paper were sent to East Germany where Bibles and Testaments were manufactured and distributed; 50 tons were sent to Hungary for the same purpose.

40,000 Gospels were sent to Denmark to supplement the work of the Danish Bible Society. Grants were made to the Belgian and French organization for Bible distribution.

In Iraq the circulation of Scriptures was doubled in one year. Here the work must be done by colportage exclusively. In Turkey, Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Egypt and the Sudan there are Bible depots and improvement can be reported, altho the work is difficult because of Moslem antagonism.

Latin America is a fruitfull field. 3,360,000 volumes were distributed last year. Brazil is the outstanding country. The situation in Argentina has also greatly improved. Although there is much opposition on the part of the Roman Catholic church in many parts of Central and South America, the request for Scriptures is growing continually.

The same can be said of the Far East, Korea, Japan, Hongkong and the Philippines. These countries continue to ask for more workers and more Scriptures.

I hope you will pardon my somewhat longer report. But if our people are to offer intelligently and from a loving heart, they need a vision of the glorious work of giving God's Word to all nations.

May I humbly request our Synod to recommend the American Bible Society to our churches in the United States for renewed moral and financial support.

Respectfully submitted,
HESSEL BOUMA

REPORT NO. 4

STATUS OF MISSIONARIES AT CLASSICAL ASSEMBLIES

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

THE Synod of 1954 appointed a committee "to study the advisability of altering the decision of (the) Synods of 1930 and 1939" concerning the status of home-missionaries at classical assemblies (Art. 109, p. 56). Your committee herewith respectfully submits the results of the study it has made in compliance with this mandate.

Your Committee has considered the following materials:

(1) The Decision of 1930 (Acts, Art. 111, p. 146), which reads as follows:

"(a) Wherever possible, a Home Missionary should be connected, as minister, with one of the congregations which he serves, in order that it may delegate him to the Classical assemblies;

(b) In the event it is not possible for a Home Missionary to be delegated to Classical assemblies as stated in a) above, it is within the jurisdiction of Classis, by way of exception to Art. 41, to grant a Home Missionary, when delegated by a church together with its Minister and an Elder, the privilege of membership in the Classical assembly. **Reasons:**

(1) Art. 33 requires that members shall have credentials signed by those sending them;

(2) Art. 41 states that the Classical meetings shall consist of neighboring churches that delegate. (The conflict with Art. 84 is more apparent than real.)"

(2) The decision of the 1939 Synod (Art. 89, p. 69), which merely affirms that "the decision of 1930 . . . applies also to missionaries in the new set-up of Home Missions," with appropriate grounds.

(3) An Overture to the 1954 Synod from the Alpine Ave. Consistory requesting Synod "to alter" the above decisions, upon the following grounds:

"1. These decisions are contrary to Art. 41 and Art. 42 of Church Order.

2. Classis is not a gathering of individuals, but of churches. 'According to Reformed church polity, no individual is, strictly speaking, a member of Classis. A minister or elder can only be said to be a member of Classis in the sense that his Church has delegated him to represent it at a certain classical gathering. Now this principle demands two things. First of all, that all who receive and exercise a decisive vote at our Classis shall actually represent one of the Churches of Classis through official delegation. And secondly, this principle demands that each Church be represented by an equal number of delegates.' (Monsma and Van Dellen, Church Order Commentary, pg. 190).

3. Synod itself ruled that the act of Synod of 1930, Art. 111, pg. 146, was 'in exception to article 41 of (the) Church Order.' Exceptions should not be made to a vital principle in Reformed Church polity. (Acts 1954, Art. 109)"

(4) An appeal of the Alpine Ave. Consistory concerning a decision of Classis G. R. West at its meeting of Sept. 15, 1953, and the reply of that classis (Acts 1954, Art. 154, pp. 95-97). These materials were fully and finally dealt with by the 1954 Synod (Acts, p. 97), but have been studied by your committee for the light they shed upon the present problem.

(5) Reports of study and advisory committees in the Agendas and Acts of 1930 and 1939 (Agenda 1930, pp. 21ff; Acts 1930, pp. 145f; Agenda 1939, pp. 33-36; Acts 1939, pp. 68f.)

Your committee, having considered the relevant materials in the light of Reformed church polity, cannot escape the conclusion that the contention of the Alpine Ave. overture is substantially correct. We firmly believe that the decision of 1930 ought for the sake of consistency to be altered, as Alpine Ave. requests.

We urge Synod to consider the following facts:

(1) A very basic principle of Reformed church polity is that of equal representation. As Art. 84 of the Church Order states, "No church shall in any way lord it over other churches . . ." The early Reformed churches knew by actual experience the dangers of hierarchism. They tried to take precautions against larger churches "lord-ing it over" smaller churches by equalizing the number of decisive votes at classical assemblies. Eventually the Reformed Churches of the Netherlands, and our own Christian Reformed Church, decided that the wisest way of assuring this principle was by enforcing it strictly according to the reading of Art. 41, C. O., as we have it in our present editions. Thus each church, however many ministers it may have, is to delegate "a minister and an elder," who, according to Art. 33, C. O., shall bring credentials and instructions and shall vote in all matters except those concerning their persons or churches.

Point (b) of the 1930 decision clearly conflicts with the principle stated above (despite the denial of it in Ground 2 of that decision). If a church be allowed to delegate its home-missionary, in addition to its regular minister and an elder, with a decisive vote (for that is what "the privilege of membership" implies), it exercises three votes at Classis instead of two, and has an unjustified preponderance of power. As we believe in the parity of office-bearers, so we also subscribe to the Reformed principle of the parity of the churches.

(2) Another basic principle of Reformed church polity is that "the classical meetings shall consist of neighboring churches that respectively delegate," as Art. 41, C. O., states it. The authority of

delegation resides specifically in the individual churches; the decision of 1930 is clearly at odds with this principle in giving the classes jurisdiction to decide who and how many shall be delegated to the classical meetings.

(3) Still another important principle of Reformed church polity contradicted by the 1930 decision is that the eldership is the ruling office of the Church, the ministry being but an extension of the eldership. The decision of 1930 allows a church to delegate more than one minister to classis. Why in the name of consistency ought not a church to have the right to delegate more than one elder in addition to its minister? If ministers should have reason to feel slighted when they are not delegated to Classis with a decisive vote, elders who are not thus delegated would likewise seem to have reason to feel neglected.

(4) At an early period in the Netherlands the Reformed churches often found it necessary to give a decisive vote to all available ministers because the general level of education was low and ministers were scarce. If there were a similar pressing need in our church today, the various articles of our Church Order mentioned above would have to be revised to allow a similar practice. However, more than the wording of the Church Order is involved; basic, long-established principles of church polity are at stake. Our churches have prospered in the past on the basis of those principles; we wonder what could compel us to forsake them.

Let it be remembered that the classes are gatherings of churches and not of office-bearers, as the Alpine Ave. Overture reminds us. Thus no office in the church in itself implies the right of membership in a classis. This membership is established only through proper delegation by a consistory. The same is, of course, true of the membership of Synod as well. There are invariably more than two ministers and two elders belonging to the churches which comprise a classis, yet only the two ministers and the two elders duly elected are delegated to Synod, the other ministers and elders being automatically excluded with no reason to feel slighted.

As a matter of fact, rule (b) of the 1930 decision is not at all necessary, since Art. 42 of the Church Order grants additional ministers an "advisory vote," meaning that they may use all the influence of persuasion and debate at the classical assemblies. In case a church has more than one minister, be they missionaries or not, it certainly has the right to delegate them to classical assemblies. However, this delegation should occur under the rule of Art. 42, C. O., with the privilege of the so-called "advisory vote." The importance of this "advisory vote" is not to be minimized.

There is, moreover, an opportunity for a home-missionary to be delegated to Classis with a decisive vote under Rule (a) of the 1930

decision, i.e., when representing one of the vacant churches under his charge. Your committee believes that Rule (a) is a good rule and should not be altered.

Your committee concludes, however, that Rule (b) of the 1930 decision should be eliminated, with its grounds, as inconsistent with Reformed church polity and the Church Order. It is little wonder that this rule has created such confusion as arose in the 1954 controversy between the Alpine Ave. Consistory and Classis G. R. West.

Our recommendation is therefore that Synod eliminate Rule (b) of the 1930 decision, with its grounds. Our *grounds* for this recommendation are the following:

(1) This rule contradicts Art. 84 and Art. 41 of the Church Order. Despite what the Synod of 1930 declared (in ground 2), the contradiction is *real*.

(2) The need for allowing home-missionaries or other ministers not delegated to Classis according to Art. 41, C. O., to exercise a decisive vote at Classis is not sufficiently urgent to justify abandoning basic principles of Reformed church polity.

(3) This rule moves toward clericalism, giving the ministers greater influence than the elders, whose proper task it is to govern Christ's Church.

Your committee takes the liberty of calling attention to two minor but significant matters within the range of its study.

* * * * *

(1) The indefiniteness of the term "Home Missionary" was one of the grounds upon which the 1954 Synod decided to refer this matter to this committee (p. 57, *Acts*). It appears that the Alpine Ave. Consistory had objections against applying this term to ordained city-missionaries, while Classis G. R. West contended that these should be included under the meaning of the 1930 decision. Although your committee has not been charged to make a recommendation on this question, we do desire to inform Synod that we see no reason why ordained city-missionaries working for a local church should not enjoy the same status as a missionary working for the denominational Home-Missions Board.

(2) Your committee likewise desires to state its opinion that the term "advisory vote" in Art. 42, C. O., is meaningless in the English language and ought to be improved. The English word "vote" means only and always a *decisive* vote. (The redundant term "decisive vote" has been employed in this report only for the sake of clarity.) The giving of advice is therefore not a vote at all in the proper sense.

The retention of this ambiguous phrase is bound to make confusion. Perhaps Synod will desire to call this matter to the attention of its committee now working on a revision of the Church Order.

Respectfully submitted,

N. J. MONSMA, *Chairman*

S. J. DE VRIES, *Reporter*

E. BRADFORD

PETER DAMSMA

CORNELIUS GREYDANUS

REPORT NO. 5

KOREAN MATERIAL RELIEF

*Synod of the Christian Reformed Churches,
meeting at Grand Rapids, Michigan,
in June of 1956.*

ESTEEMED BRETHREN,

FOR the past two years Synod has officially given the Grand Rapids Deaconal Conference the task of providing Material Relief to our Reformed Brethren in Korea. The following is a report of the work done this past year along with the financial report of receipts and disbursements.

The support of a Medical team which spreads the gospel as it cares for the sick in rural areas is being continued. The cry for powdered whole milk is only partially stilled. We wish we could do more. Some difficulty was encountered in sending the drugs and vitamins when Rev. Malsbary lost his APO No. We are sending them under a new method and expect better results. CARE and Multi-Purpose food shipments were also sent and were gratefully received. This amount should also be increased.

A large contribution was sent for the erection of a Gospel Hospital in Korea. The former buildings were crowded and very inadequate. Slides of the buildings being erected, shown by Rev. Van Baak, certainly showed that a lot of building was obtained for the money spent. Smaller gifts were also sent to aid some Korean Orphanages and to assist the Martyred Family Caring Association.

Another clothing drive was held in which 246 bales of used clothing were sent. There were about 60,000 pieces of clothing in this group. Included were approximately 1500 overcoats and 2000 suits. All clothing that was not in good condition was separated and turned over to the Mission in Grand Rapids. Sixty cases of whole powdered milk were sent along to fill up the shipment. This makes about 9,000 quarts of whole milk. Another clothing drive is to be held this spring.

Inasmuch as we are almost the sole support of this cause, we covet your prayers and submit the following recommendations.

1. That the work of material relief for our Korean brethren be continued under the direction of the Grand Rapids Deacons Conference.
2. That the Korean Material Relief Committee again be placed on the list of accredited causes with an eye to a possible re-location in the listing to aid our nearly depleted treasury. Note the financial report.

3. That Rev. Arthur Hoogstrate, our advisor, represent our Conference before your committee if any further information is required.

Respectfully submitted,

Grand Rapids Deacons Conference.

KENNETH ZAAGMAN, *Secretary.*

FINANCIAL STATEMENT
Of Grand Rapids Deacons Conference

Korean Material Relief Fund

Balance December 31, 1954\$13,648.60

RECEIPTS

January	\$4,350.89
February	970.64
March	1,348.82
April	2,667.42
May	3,144.88
June	1,107.82
July	721.39
August	1,669.33
September	2,128.95
October	1,097.53
November	443.51
December	3,114.88

Total Receipts \$22,766.06

\$36,414.66

DISBURSEMENTS

Hospital Medical Team	\$ 6,000.00
Powdered Milk	7,155.64
Vitamins and Pills	1,199.03
Clothing Shipment (Used)	5,392.26
Gospel Hospital Fund (Labor Cost)	14,753.35
CARE Packages	100.00
Multi-Purpose Food	150.00
Insurance Co. Bond for Treasurer	93.75
Korean Orphanages	135.00
Martyred Family Caring Assn	15.00
Miscellaneous Expense	97.24

Total Disbursements \$35,091.27

Balance — December 31, 1955 \$ 1,323.39

ACCOUNTANT'S STATEMENT

In the course of my examination, an audit of the receipts and deposits were made and were found to be in complete agreement. The bank statement of December, 1955, was reconciled with the total checks outstanding as of the above date and found to be a total amount of 7 checks in the amount of \$4,239.57. This plus your book balance of 1,323.39, will agree

correctly with your present bank balance of \$5,562.95. All test material was readily available and was found to be in good order. Because cash lends itself to precise determination, the audit leaves little likelihood of even an insignificant error.

Analyses were made of all the income and expense accounts and also found to be in good order. Due credit should be given to the treasurer for the neatness and manner in which he presents the Profit & Loss Statement.

Respectfully submitted,
Roy Peterson, Public Accountant

REPORT NO. 6

SERMONS FOR READING SERVICES

YOUR Committee begs to report briefly that Volume 11 of a book for Reading Services is being published and will be available in March of 1956.

The Synod of 1954 adopted the following recommendation, (p. 43, II, B, 4) "that the committee provide in its next report a fuller account of the need for and advisability of continuing the publication of additional volumes of sermons."

Your committee sent a short questionnaire to all consistories in 1952 seeking to know the demand for new sermon books:

We received replies from those generally who are most interested. We found that 109 copies of volume 9 were desired. The demand we feel, would be about the same today.

Our Publishing House never published less than 500, the cost would be about the same — something over \$1200 per volume. Today Mr. Buiten reports that he has on hand 87 copies of volume 9, and 74 copies of volume 10. There are many left of former volumes.

Our Committee thinks that Synod should cease publishing further volumes for a time — until it is clear there is a real demand for a new volume. There will be eleven volumes now, and copies may be had of almost every volume from our Publishing House. Mr. Buiten also thinks we should skip a year now and then.

If this recommendation is adopted our Committee further begs to be discharged.

Humbly submitted,

REV. P. DEKOEKOEK

REV. WILLIAM VERWOLF, *Sec'y*

REV. L. VOSKUIL

REPORT NO. 7

GENERAL COMMITTEE FOR HOME MISSIONS

To THE SYNOD OF 1956.

THE GENERAL COMMITTEE for Home Missions, which met on February 1 and following days of the current year, respectfully submits its annual report to your honorable body.

According to previous custom we have prepared our report under the following heads:

PART I
PERSONNEL AND ORGANIZATION

CLASSES	MEMBERS	ALTERNATES	
Alberta	Rev. R. Star.....	Rev. J. W. Van Stempvoort	
Cadillac	Rev. W. Huysen.....		
California	Rev. J. Hollebeek.....	Rev. B. Huizenga	
Chatham	Rev. Joseph Vande Kieft.....	Rev. Klaas Hart	
Chicago North	Rev. E. L. Haan.....	Rev. H. Leestma	
Chicago South	Rev. B. Van Someren.....	Rev. T. Versepunt	
Eastern Ontario	Rev. L. Van Laar.....	Rev. A. Schaafsma	
Grand Rapids East	Rev. H. Dykhouse.....	Rev. G. Vanderhill	
Grand Rapids South	Rev. W. Vander Hoven.....		
Grand Rapids West	Rev. E. Bossenbroek.....	Rev. L. Van Drunen	
Hackensack	Rev. G. Stob.....	Rev. D. Van Halsema	
Hamilton	Rev. A. Persenaire.....	Rev. C. Spoelhof	
Holland	Rev. J. De Kruyter.....	Rev. J. Hoogstra	
Hudson	Rev. O. Holtrop.....	Rev. H. Sonnema	
Kalamazoo	Rev. J. Entingh.....	Rev. H. Guikema	
Minnesota North	Rev. J. Mendendorp.....	Rev. H. Arnold	
Minnesota South	Rev. E. Holkeboer.....		
Muskegon	Rev. H. Botts.....	Rev. R. Bronkema	
Orange City	Rev. W. Prince.....	Rev. A. Baker	
Ostfriesland	Rev. J. Olthoff.....	Rev. G. Pars	
Pacific	Rev. J. R. Van Dyke.....	Rev. W. Verwolf	
Pella	Rev. W. Reinsma.....	Rev. T. De Vries	
Rocky Mountain	Rev. A. Poel.....	Rev. J. Meppelink	
Sioux Center	Rev. J. C. Ribbens.....	Rev. P. Huisman	
Wisconsin	Rev. R. Opperwall.....	Rev. C. Ter Maat	
Zeeland	Rev. J. Guichelaar.....	Rev. N. Beute	
	MEMBERS-AT-LARGE	ALTERNATES	TERMS
	Mr. C. Van Malsen	Mr. R. Dykema	1953-1956
	Mr. W. Hofstra	Mr. G. Tinholt	1954-1957
	Mr. F. Oldemulders	Mr. T. Hoeksema	1955-1958

Since the term of Mr. C. Van Malsen expires at this time, a member-at-large and his alternate must be elected for the term 1956-1959.

The Executive Committee presently comprises the following members: The Revs. E. Bossenbroek, H. Botts, H. Dykhouse, J. De

Kruyter, J. Entingh, J. Guichelaar, W. Vander Hoven and the Messrs. W. Hofstra, F. Oldemulders and C. Van Malsen, with the Secretary, the Rev. H. Blystra, as member ex-officio. Missionary-at-Large J. M. Vande Kieft serves on the Executive Committee in an advisory capacity.

Officers appointed were: Rev. J. Guichelaar, president; Rev. J. A. Mulder, vice-president; Rev. H. Blystra, secretary; Mr. W. Hofstra, treasurer; Mr. C. Van Malsen, vice-treasurer. Consequent his recent departure to another field of labor, Rev. J. A. Mulder, who faithfully served the Committee over a period of years, was succeeded as vice-president by Rev. J. Entingh.

The subcommittee for Church Extension comprises the brethren J. Entingh, J. Guichelaar, J. De Kruyter, W. Vander Hoven and H. Blystra.

The subcommittee having charge of the Fund for Needy Churches includes the brethren H. Bossenbroek, H. Botts, H. Dykhouse and H. Blystra.

The subcommittee for Finances comprises the brethren C. Van Malsen, F. Oldemulders, W. Hofstra and H. Blystra.

Moreover a sub-committee was appointed for Public Relations to promote the cause of Home Missions. Membership on this committee was assigned to Mr. C. Van Malsen and the Revs. E. Bossenbroek, H. Botts, and H. Blystra.

Our Missionary-at-Large, the Rev. J. M. Vande Kieft, serves on these several subcommittees as advisory member.

The General Committee for Home Missions at its annual meeting in February of this year elected the following officers:

President.....	J. Guichelaar
Vice-President.....	J. Entingh
Treasurer	W. Hofstra
Vice-Treasurer.....	C. Van Malsen

For our monthly and annual meetings the convenient facilities of our College and Seminary were always available, a service greatly appreciated.

PART II GENERAL INFORMATION.

Another year of Home Mission activity has come to a close. It has been characterized by diligent labors on the part of our missionary staff. The fields that are occupied, the work that is being done, and statistical accounts are recorded in Part III (Church Extension in the U.S.) and Part IV (Church Extension in Canada) of this our report to Synod.

The General Committee for Home Missions and its Executive Committee have throughout the year endeavored to give direction as well as encouragement to the many evangelization activities in compliance with

the will of Synod. As subsequent pages and recommendations will show, we have envisioned an expansion program which will entail more manpower and greater financial expenditures. We entertain the expectation that this meets with the mind of Synod.

Is there need for expansion? The answer must be affirmative if we reckon with the fact that the moral and spiritual breakdown in our land poses great dangers. However, in this selfsame disturbing situation we find our persistent as well as our glorious challenge to enlarge our gospel witness.

Is expansion possible? This question likewise can be met with an affirmative response. Fact is that among our membership a growing interest in evangelism, both neighborhood and national, is discernible. There are among us churches which have shifted from reverse or neutral to forward. Others are shifting from low into high gear. Therein lies our initial promise.

Moreover ours is the God, whose is the power to increase the service of our gifts and sacrifices, and to multiply the blessings we seek. To that end our total reliance must be upon the Lord, whose is the glory to stir up among our membership both doers and donors. Therein lies our ultimate promise.

Of our United States missionaries two were led to accept calls elsewhere, namely: Revs. Edward Boer and Peter Honderd. We gratefully remember their many, often strenuous and trying labors. We commend them for future blessings to the Lord. Others were added to the staff. Of these two, Revs. Isaac Jen and Nicholas Vogelzang are ordained missionaries; and Mr. David Boyd, and the Misses Elsie Koop and Marjorie Visser are lay-missionaries.

Our Canadian staff was reduced by one missionary, Rev. John Vander Meer having accepted a call to our Barrie, Ontario Church. He too has labored in season and out of season to seek the wandering and the lost sheep, and to strengthen the weak. We rejoice, though it be in another field, that he continues to cast his lot with our Church in Canada.

PART III.

CHURCH EXTENSION — U. S. FIELD

The fields and their missionaries.

Harlem, New York	E. Callender Elsie Koop Marjorie Visser
Chinese Mission, New York	P. Szto
Wanamassa, N. J.	P. Holtrop
Philadelphia	A. Haan
Columbus, Ohio	H. Sprik
Bradenton, Florida	W. De Boer
Champaign-Urbana, Illinois	(vacant)
Chicago, Illionis	J. G. Van Dyke

Chinese Mission, Chicago	I. Jen
Milwaukee, Wisconsin	(vacant)
Le Mars, Iowa	P. Honderd
Rochester, Minnesota - Hospital Chaplain	S. Miersma
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma	J. Jeffers
Albuquerque, New Mexico	H. Hoekstra
	D. Boyd
Salt Lake City	N. Vogelzang
Brookfield, Missouri	(vacant)
Lakewood City, California	F. De Jong
San Jose, California	G. Boerfyn
Alaska	W. Heynen
Itinerant Missionary	J. Zandstra
Service Pastor	H. Dykstra
Missionary-at-Large	J. M. Vande Kieft
General Secretary	H. Blystra

SPONSORING CHURCHES

MISSIONARIES	CHURCHES	CALLING AND/OR SUPPORTING
G. Boerfyn	Artesia	Calling
E. Callender	Paterson II	Calling and Supporting
Elisie Koop	Borculo	Supporting
Marjorie Visser	Central Ave. and Sumas... ..	Supporting
F. De Jong	Los Angeles	Calling
W. De Boer	Lee Street	Calling and Supporting
A. Haan	Passaic Northside	Calling and Supporting
W. Heynen	Bethel - Edgerton	Calling and Supporting
H. Hoekstra	Luctor	Calling and Supporting
	Pella II	Supporting
D. Boyd	Maple Avenue	Supporting
P. Holtrop	Paterson III	Calling
P. Honderd	Ireton	Calling
J. Jeffers	Pella I	Calling and Supporting
	Evergreen Park	Calling and Supporting
I. Jen	Park Lane	Supporting
	Plymouth Heights	Supporting
H. Sprik	Willard	Calling and Supporting
J. G. Van Dyke	Alpine Avenue	Calling
N. Vogelzang	Denver IIII	Calling and Supporting
J. Zandstra	Zeeland III	Calling and Supporting
H. Dykstra	Los Angeles	Calling

*Supporting churches pay the salary of the missionary either in part or in whole.

FIELD SURVEY.

Missionaries having submitted their annual reports, we herewith present the following resume.

1. EASTERN DISTRICT.

A. *Harlem*. In this field Missionary Eugene Callender, ably assisted by the Misses Elsie Koop and Marjorie Visser, labors in a "city jungle" among "city pagans" of which there are countless numbers in our land, and to whom we are privileged to bring the message of salvation in

Christ. The problems as well as the promising aspects of the work are related in part.

a. *General Survey.* The Parish Community — last year I reported that our parish community ought to consist of a “small” segment of the greater Harlem area. This “small” segment consisted of a section of Harlem that extended six blocks north and south and two blocks east and west. This area is inhabited by 29,000 people.

Since we have occupied our building our parish community has dwindled. It now consists of one block. 122nd St. between Seventh and Eighth Avenues. The reason for this dwindling does not lie in the fact that your workers are relaxing their efforts or are guilty of the sin of indolence, but, we have come to realize that this one block presents a great challenge. We have decided to intensify our efforts in this one block before attempting to extend our efforts to the other blocks. Actually, this one block parish community is more than our staff can adequately handle.

Our one block parish community is inhabited by about 900 people, practically all negro. There is one Puerto Rican family and about six white individuals who live in our block.

Housing is the *Number One* problem of our parish community.

The disease of overcrowding spreads as every day more houses post a sign: “Furnished Rooms for Rent.” In our own building, the individuals who rent our apartments, sub-rent some of their rooms. The disease spreads as a family moves out of their department; the next day the landlord moves three families in where there had been one before.

Religious tenor of the Community. In speeches and articles, I have often referred to our parish community as a “city jungle” and the inhabitants as “city pagans.” These terms are a dramatic way of describing the irreligious or perhaps non-religious people and aspects of our community.

I have reported that our community children know absolutely nothing about the Bible. They are merely the products of pagan homes and parents. Three families who now attend our services did not attend church services for 10 years. One family never attended church before. One individual stated that the only time she went to church was when she was an embryo in her mother's womb!

With the possibility of being guilty of immodesty, I can say that our efforts have changed the religious tenor of the community a little. This is not only our opinion, but the opinion of community leaders and residents. Many children are now attending regularly, many individuals are now attending church regularly.

Community Activities. We are quite aware of the fact that the welfare, religious and social, of the people of our parish community is tied

to events which occur in all of Harlem, New York City and the entire country. For example, legislation enacted by Congress concerning housing and schools vitally affects our community. Our parish has attempted in its small way to influence the course of these wider events because we believe that the Christian gospel is a gospel that includes justice for those who are not strong enough to resist by themselves the power of opposing and oppressing interests.

b. *Personnel.* Our parish personnel has been of immense assistance in our work in this community.

Mrs. Callender has been unusually busy taking care of all the correspondence, typing and mimeographing of reports, coordinating all of our activities and assisting in the teaching.

Miss Koop has been assisting with teaching and calling. She has organized the Mothers Guild that meets in one of the apartments.

Miss Visser has been assisting with teaching and calling. She supervises all the parish musical activities.

Besides their regular activities they assist in the social and recreational program of the parish.

Mr. John Vander Ploeg lives and works in New York and has volunteered his services to our parish. He has been of wonderful assistance to us, especially when we need some repairs and mechanical work done. He substitutes for me when I'm unable to teach one of my classes and at times when I am completely exhausted. During the summer we were deeply appreciative of the assistance of Miss Audrey Honderd. Her social work training was extremely valuable.

I cannot offer enough praise for the 18 volunteers from Paterson that worked with us during August and part of September.

c. *Summer Program.* The parish again looks forward to a summer of intensified activity and outreach. We hope to have all the necessary equipment in our new building before the Harlem schools let out for the summer. In the summer the children are out of school and people are on the streets where it is easy to reach them. The possibilities of reaching new individuals and of having new and rich experiences with old friends are very great.

The summer is a time when the parish program *must* expand to realize some of these possibilities and to enrich the religious and community life of our blocks.

d. *The Task Ahead.* The work that I have attempted to describe could not have been performed without the indispensable assistance of the Holy Spirit. All of us at the Harlem Parish realize that our efforts begin, continue and end in God. What we have described is the work of the Holy Spirit in action in our parish. Every call we make, every sermon preached, every class taught, every visit to a city official,

every talk to a landlord, every committee meeting attended is a concrete demonstration of the Holy Spirit at work in us, through us, and by us.

We are deeply grateful to our covenant God for this opportunity to make Christ and His teachings known to the people of this distraught and disorganized community. We are convinced that the Reformed faith, with its cardinal emphasis on the Son-of-God in all areas of human endeavor is the faith that we must proclaim. We preach and teach and try to demonstrate a faith of love and hope, a faith rooted in God's eternal love and in the hope of God's eternal promise.

It cannot be shallow, for the faith we offer must have enough strength to carry people through some of the most severe disillusionments that American society provides. But it must be positive; it must say, yes, we can; it must indeed carry them through that disillusionment with that power to change lives and change society that always lies just beneath the surface in our Christian faith and does those amazing things that make us humbly acknowledge that it is God's power, rather than ours, that changes men.

We are thankful to all who have assisted us financially or by supplying some of our parish needs. We are especially thankful to our calling churches for their generosity and interest in our efforts.

We fully realize that without the support, counsel and vision of the General Committee of Home Missions, there would be no Mid-Harlem Community Parish.

In this year, we look forward to a new building, and new facilities. We anxiously await the confession of faith of more individuals. We long to baptize more covenant children. We want more boys and girls of our neighborhood to come to know that a welcome is awaiting them in our parish facilities. We want to become a city church that meets human need."

B. *New York-Chinese.* Pursuant the decision of Synod of 1954, Mr. Paul Szto has labored among the Chinese in the New York area. His efforts among the Chinese intellectuals at Columbia University have been continued. New mission opportunities were discovered among the Chinese in Bayside, Queens, Long Island and Chinese children in Midtown, Manhattan. Of these activities Mr. Szto reports:

1) The New Work in Bayside, Queens, Long Island.

As the Chinese intellectuals gradually settled down in this country so at the expired date for application to adjust one's status under the Refugee Acts of 1953 in June 3,000 Chinese intellectuals, it is reported, have applied for permanent residence. There are about 6,000 to 7,000 such Chinese stranded in this country and since 1951 many of them have concentrated in a few big cities. It is generally believed, though no accurate figure is possible, that there are 1,500 to 2,000 of them in

New York City. And there are about 300 such families in Queens, Long Island.

The trend of the Chinese intellectuals in New York is the same as an average American city-dweller, that is, to move to the suburbs when one is married and children are born into the families. I therefore suggested that a survey should be made of this situation in Queens and this was approved by the Eastern Home Mission Board and the Executive Committee for Home Missions respectively. They also charged me to prepare a detailed written report for further consideration. However, a providential opening brought us to start mission work immediately in July for two months in the home of Mrs. S. C. Liu when her daughter and son-in-law were on home-leave from the United Nations to the Far East.

Using the home of Mrs. Liu in Bayside, the eastern end of Queens, as a base we have been able to contact about seven or eight families in that area and a few others in Forest Mills-Jamaica area, the center of Queens. We have since then maintained a worship service for the adults and a Sunday School for children every Sunday afternoon, first in the home and later in the Dutch Reformed Church in the neighborhood. The attendance has been between 30 to 40. And in August we had a Daily Vacation Bible School for two weeks with 20 children enrolled in it.

2) The Old Work in Uptown, Manhattan.

While we develop our new work among the families on Long Island, we have faithfully maintained the work in the Columbia University area all these months because there are still many Chinese intellectuals in need of our spiritual care and concern. In fact we have also made some progress in this strategic location so far as student life is concerned. The China Institute discontinued its Metropolitan Student Center in this area last spring, for lack of funds, leaving the students to have more time to come to our home. The Chinese Students and Alumni Services and Center has decided to terminate its work in the summer of 1957 and this should also stimulate us to a greater effort in this area.

Beginning with our concentration to work among the intellectuals I have had ample opportunities to develop a Christian Apologetics to Chinese culture in general and to the American-educated students in particular. Thus my preaching and teaching have been geared into the existential situation in which we find ourselves and to apply the Gospel of Christ to this very situation. In this way we have finished the Book of Acts and the Epistle to the Romans and gained a better hearing from these intellectuals particularly a few new students from Formosa. The attendance has increased from 15 to 20.

With the arrival of our third child in October the apartment becomes less useful for meeting purposes and more work has to be done on

personal basis. This has proved to be quite rewarding both with those who come to my study for counselling and with those whom I have called and visited. As I have more occasions to meet the older scholars and professional people I have also felt quite at ease to witness to a number of prominent Chinese. Gradually it seems, under the guidance of the Spirit, that I have finally begun to make some impact on these Chinese intellectuals in New York and near-by areas, to the glory of our God.

3) Children's Work in Midtown, Manhattan.

When some of the families began to request some attention be given to their children in the uptown area, efforts were made to meet their need. However, it was not possible to get permission to use any place, church or otherwise, for that purpose, in the neighborhood. After searching for some time we have thought of the Central Baptist Church for that purpose because that church has allowed a Chinese singing group to use its premises. Being conversative in their faith the pastor consented to let us use its rooms for released-time program. But that church is located at 92 Street, 25 blocks from Columbia, with the result that only the families of the Chinese laundries in that vicinity send their children there. It has also developed into a two-hour children's class on Monday afternoon instead of released program for one hour on Thursday. This work was begun in November and the attendance has been about 30 children, occasionally with a few mothers to form a separate class. Since it has appeared to be quite promising in its own way we have kept it as long as we are able to bring the gospel to these children and families though they do not exactly belong to the work among the intellectuals. It is hoped that if meeting place be secured for the Columbia University area itself this group of children may be easily incorporated into other children of the intellectuals.

4) General Summary.

Having traced the development of our mission activities in different areas through the year I would like to conclude this annual report with the following summary:

a. In the Columbia University area we have got to know a few more friends and new students. The attendance at the morning service has been quite steady with an average of 15, from a group of 40 - 50. Every day two or three individuals come to our home for personal fellowship and counselling. This is purely a spiritual ministry because we are not in a position to offer them anything except the gospel of grace. In spite of our inability to help them materially these friends still come to us constantly for fellowship which at least indicates to a certain extent they have been drawn by the Spirit to this Christian home. Furthermore every week-end we would have one or two over-night guests to have fellowship with us.

b. In Queens we have gradually consolidated these ten to twelve families into a more unified group before we can make further contacts. Two or three families have been very cooperative in our endeavor as they did much to make both the Thanksgiving service and Christmas celebration a success. The attendance is about 30, half adults and half children. With a more centralized location the number might be increased easily. As a whole, this field is very promising indeed.

c. The children's work in the midtown area is also very challenging because 30 children is quite a number for our type of mission work. The future of this work will depend partly on its own progress and partly on its relation to our other work.

d. In addition to these stated meetings I usually spend one day a week for calls and visits in Manhattan and Queens respectively. There are some hospital calls too when I am informed of such cases. For more than half a year I have visited a lady quite regularly. This lady had attempted committing suicide. Her response to the gospel has been very good. Together with those who come to the meetings and our home I have contacted about 100 persons each week.

e. As the written word is also very effective in mission work we send out a weekly bulletin to 100 individuals and plan to publish a monthly or bi-monthly supplement to about 400-500 on our mailing list. Through correspondence we maintain contacts with those we meet in conferences and trips. I have also recorded two sermons for the Voice of America to be beamed to Red China.

f. Mr. Chao, who was baptized in November 1954, has come to our services faithfully whenever possible though he still works in restaurants. He also went to the Third Church for communion with us. Mrs. Liu is still waiting for confession of faith. I have also paid special attention to a few other individuals for possible church membership eventually. And the designation as the Chinese Christian Reformed Church has helped much in integrating our work with the denomination.

g. Judging from the success of the work in Harlem as a team it is my earnest prayer that eventually this work would not only become permanent but also have assistance from other mission workers to labor together in our Lord's vineyard. In the meanwhile we still value the voluntary service of Mrs. Abbei Gordon who comes to help us in the week-ends and who is learning something of the Reformed faith from us.

h. Finally, I would like to express gratitude for the blessing I received from the fellowship in the committee meetings, classical meetings and other contacts with our Christian Reformed people throughout the year and over in many places. It is from them I have learned to be truly Christian Reformed and to bring the same to the Chinese whom God has called me to serve."

C. *Wanamassa*. We rejoice that Missionary Paul Holtrop has remained in Wanamassa notwithstanding the fact that attractive calls were received in the course of the year. Of his field and work the missionary tells us:

"At the age of two years as an organized church Wanamassa has a membership of 19 families and 2 individuals, numbering 81 souls. However, 3 families and 1 individual, numbering 17 souls, are not residing here, nor are they expected to become permanent active members with us again.

The church has its program in full swing and is established as a fixture in the community. Gradually families moving in, and others, can be expected to show interest. Not great immediate growth is foreseen, but the same was the case last year, and since then 22 souls have been added to the roll.

During the past year about 1500 homes have been canvassed or re-canvassed, with little result in attendance. This canvassing was done largely by Seminarian Esler Stuart and teams from the Wanamassa membership. It appears that foundations for a continuing mission witness in the area have been laid.

During 1955 we had little opportunity to serve our servicemen, as few of our Christian Reformed boys, and still fewer service-wives, were in the area. When a goodly number were at Fort Dix we had a couple of Young Calvinist meetings there, and a number of them came to us Sundays, especially for the evening Young Peoples meeting and evening worship.

Other activities of the missionary included periodic (every few months) radio addresses over the local "Morning Chapel" broadcast, leading in prayer at Township commencement exercises, at Memorial Day services, and such, taking an active interest in the Christian Day School begun in this area last September, attending the Eastern Home Mission Board meetings, reporting to Classes Hackensack and Hudson, and going on the speaking tour of Women's Missionary Union meetings in October.

The year 1956 should see completion of the repayment of loans by the local group for church furnishings and finishings. At present a committee of the consistory is investigating the feasibility of Wanamassa becoming a calling church."

A total of twenty-two additions were received. Of these, four were from our own Church; the remaining eighteen, of which two were unchurched, came from the Christelijk Gereformeerde Kerk, the United Presbyterian, the Methodist, and Episcopal Churches respectively.

D. *Philadelphia*. Missionary A. Haan has devoted his talents to the Philadelphia field. In the following accounts he touches upon possibilities and problems that are met in large metropolitan areas.

"The first annual report from your missionary in Philadelphia comes at the first anniversary of the Home Missionary's work here. And with all due regard to our denominational educational facilities, this year has taught the most.

The first thing that strikes a person about Philadelphia is that it is big. Three and a half million people covers a lot of territory. The first thought of a Home Missionary is that once you have put your foot in Home Mission work in the middle of three and a half million people, you have started something that you can never stop.

Where should one missionary begin in that many people, assuming that our mission program is evangelism and not just finding a home for a few Christian Reformed families in scattered cities? Everywhere is the obvious answer. We have resolved the problem of beginning by securing property in the fastest growing township in the metropolitan area. And 'fastest' in Philadelphia means that this very little township is growing from 7,000 people in 1955 to approximately 30,000 in 1960. 'Fast' means that seven house-building projects are being built within three quarters of a mile from our property; the largest being 1200 homes across the road from our property which was pasture a year ago, and now has 600 houses on it. And that is going on all around Philadelphia, to say nothing of the two million people within the city limits.

A parsonage is already under construction, and the Executive Committee is presently passing on church plans. The Lord willing, sometime in late 1956 there will be a path from the second floor of the Y.M.C.A. to a chapel.

In the interim we are preparing. Our numbers are growing. Our average attendance for the year was near 30. Our constituency is varied. Our group is growing in knowledge, of what we are here for. Our group is growing in the knowledge and ability to organize the efforts of everyone in the goal of evangelism and the organized self-propagating church. Our nucleus is strong, very strong. Our program for evangelism is set up completely.

It has been a prosperous year, a happy year, an instructive year. As an arm of the Church of Christ we are thankful. He has given us our daily bread. He has given all that is necessary for body and soul. Much more than we could have asked."

E. *Columbus*. The work here continues under the guidance of Missionary Hubert Sprik. A convert from Roman Catholicism has been added to the membership. Here too, as in so many other American communities, the divorce and lodge problems loom large.

A building site, in the city where all property is priced unusually high, has been acquired in a new and growing residential section. Plans for re-location and the erection of a chapel are under consideration, in-

cluding possible Christian School facilities. It is expected that when this project is completed the work in Columbus, with the favor of the Lord, will become better established and the gospel outreach enlarged.

Besides the regular morning and evening worship services, three Bible classes are held every week with a total attendance of eighteen. Some one hundred scholars came to receive instruction in the Daily Vacation Bible School making it necessary to use a barn and a neighbor's kitchen to accomodate the pupils.

F. *Bradenton*, Florida, has been opened in the course of the year and presently comprises fourteen resident families. Here Rev. Willis De Boer, a new missionary on our staff, recently began his labors of evangelism. A convenient place of worship has been dedicated to the service of the Lord.

G. *Lake Worth and Miami*, Florida, with twenty-five and nineteen families respectively, have become calling churches. Hence we now have two congregations and one mission church in the "Everglade" State.

2. ILLINOIS - WISCONSIN.

A. *Chicagoland*. The labors of Missionary J. G. Van Dyke in this field were blessed with the organization of the Palos Heights Christian Reformed Church. The congregation, organized with twenty-six families, reports normal growth. Of the membership "eight have come from the Methodists. In the morning service there practically always are a number of people without church connections." Some families without our background are being instructed in the Reformed persuasion.

Neighborhood evangelism is part of the congregational program. "A number of members are faithful in calling on residents in the neighborhood. They go two by two and leave literature such as we ourselves prepare and such as is available from denominational sources. They help the minister in casting out the nets. And at stated times in Oak Forest Home for the Aged the members bring songs and words of cheer and comfort.

Plans are being prepared for calling a minister. These plans also include: building a parsonage, acquiring a loan, a campaign for funds."

B. *Chinese Mission - Chicago*. Rev. I. Jen, our first Chinese ordained missionary, provides interesting information about his field and activities.

"We started our mission work among Chinese intellectuals in South-east Chicago near the end of June, 1955. It should be noted, therefore, that this annual report covers only about six months.

There was already a small group of Chinese Christians in this Chinese Gospel Church when we came. They are people who had come

to the United States as students but have now chosen to remain in this country due to the change of condition in China. Most of these people have completed their studies and have regular jobs in Chicago. Many have since been married and raising families. The largest single group of Chinese intellectuals in Chicago is concentrated around the University of Chicago area. We have been using, since two years ago, the facilities of the Woodlawn Baptist Church at 62nd and University Avenue. We use the chapel for Sunday worship service and the lower auditorium in the basement for Sunday School classes.

Chiefly due to the fact that the Woodlawn Church has to use its building morning and evening for services on Sunday, we now hold our worship service on Sunday afternoon at 3:00 P.M. This is not an ideal situation. First of all, this makes it impossible to explore the possibility of having two services on Sunday. Then too, it is not conducive to the spirit of the Lord's day to have the whole morning spent idly at home. (This does, however, give me and my family the opportunity of worshipping with the congregations of two of the supporting churches in Evergreen Park). Furthermore, some people who might otherwise have come to our church on Sunday but did not come because they had other engagements in the afternoon and thus either skipped the church service entirely or went to another church in the morning. Lastly, the present setup makes it impractical to have Sunday School and worship service at different hours because of limitation of time for the space we now use, thus unnecessarily deprive several teenagers and younger children the opportunity of coming to the service since they go to Sunday School classes.

(1) Sunday Worship Service — The average attendance at the service since we came to this church is 25. This figure includes only one or two children since, as I mentioned above, most children go to the Sunday School which holds its meeting at the same hour. So the figure would be somewhat higher if we had some of the younger people and children of the Sunday School to join us at the worship service, which should be a normal condition in a regular church. The record attendance is 67, with forty-two adults and twenty-five children, at the Christmas service on Sunday, December 25th. The service is conducted in Chinese. But when there are visitors who do not understand the Chinese language, I generally use English for the sermon and in one of the prayers.

(2) Sunday School — The Sunday School has been in charge of an American friend for quite some time now. He is a good and sincere Christian and willing to help the Sunday School. He also arranges to invite two others, girl students, of the Moody Bible Institute to teach the other two classes. As he did not keep a record of attendance, and since I must conduct the worship service while the Sunday School classes meet, I could not find out exactly how many students attend the

classes. He estimates about 15 for the average, with perhaps three or four non-Chinese students. According to my knowledge, the Sunday School will need some change and improvement.

(3) Bible Study and Prayer Meeting — We meet in our living room every Wednesday evening at 7:30 P.M., with Bible study and discussion, singing and a short session of prayer. The average attendance is 8-9, the highest being 13 and 12. In this Bible study meeting, I seek to explain the teachings of the Scriptures to them so that they may learn and know more about the Bible, and gradually appreciate the Reformed interpretation which we believe to be the most consistent interpretation of the Bible. So far, those who come to these meetings do so regularly, and only occasionally have there been some visitors. We are thankful to God for those that do come to these Bible study meetings faithfully. Some of them told me that they had never attended a Bible study meeting before. They have also expressed their appreciation for the fine opportunity of Bible study.

(4) Fellowship Meeting — The Fellowship meets once a month, usually on the third Friday of the month. The nature of the meeting is Discussion of one or more questions of Christian doctrines of practice for one month, and Testimony for the next. For the past few months, the average attendance is about 15.

(5) Visitations — I regularly visit prospective members on Saturdays, and sometimes also on Tuesday and/or Thursday evenings. From my experience I know that it is much better to visit couples and families when we call on them also as a couple (husband and wife), than when I go there alone.

Every mission work has its encouragements and discouragements, and my work is no exception. But looking back over the past six months, we can see the hand of God. Our discouragements and disappointments are overshadowed by encouragements and progress as well as by the promises of God in His Holy Scriptures. And we trust that with the power and blessing of our God, this work shall develop and progress.

We are thankful for the gracious leading of the Lord step by step to the present field of work. When we look back to the years that have passed, we must confess that His care is wonderful and His counsel is above our expectations. I cannot even begin to count all His blessings which He has bestowed upon me and my family. I can only thank and praise Him for His goodness, and humbly resolve to do my best, with the help of His Spirit, for His Church in the years that lie ahead."

C. Champaign - Urbana. Last year we reported that our denominational mission activity in this field had been terminated. However, our Bethany, South Holland Church, sponsoring church for the field, was minded to hold on a while longer. The activity, prayers, and vision of

this congregation have been blessed. Some new families took up residence in the twin cities of Illinois and affiliated with our membership. The attendance at morning and evening services gave cause for encouragement. Hence the request to re-enter the field found favor with the Executive Committee for Home Missions and the representatives of Classis Chicago South.

Efforts to date the obtain a resident missionary have been unsuccessful. In the interim Missionary J. Zandstra, called for itinerant work, is devoting much time to the field.

The consensus of opinion being that the services held in an Adventist Church in an old residential area held out no prospects of growth, a church and parsonage were purchased at very reasonable cost from a Baptist Church in need of larger facilities. Expectations are that in this new area the promise of growth is greater and opportunities for evangelism larger.

D. *Milwaukee*. Missionary Edward Boer relates:

"1955 has been a year of great blessing for the Milwaukee congregation. Our numbers have increased, there is evidence of spiritual progress, and we have experienced the joy of seeing visible fruit upon our mission endeavor. Two families from the community were received into our fellowship this year, plus one individual with a Roman Catholic background. Two of our young people made profession of their faith, two infants were baptized, and the total membership has increased to 84. Thus, in spite of the many struggles in the past, under God's blessing the church is steadily moving forward. The persistence of this group (formerly a very small nucleus) is now being rewarded — and also the labors of past years. The congregation expects to become a calling church in 1956. The vote to become a calling church was virtually unanimous at its mid-December meeting. The church has able and consecrated elders and deacons, and is doing well in meeting its financial obligations.

The Vacation Bible School conducted in July was in many ways highly successful, but only one permanent addition was made to our Sunday School as a result. In almost every instance the children were already enrolled in other Sunday Schools. We experienced the same in previous years. It helps to explain the slow growth of our Sunday School.

The prospect for the future is promising. Though Milwaukee is strongly Catholic and Lutheran there are many opportunities for enlarging our witness. Milwaukee should always present a big challenge to any minister who is called to serve here. At present we are working more or less intensively with several families and individuals.

We are deeply grateful for God's many blessings. To Him be the praise!"

We regret that Brother Boer, who proved himself to be a competent missionary, was led to accept the call to our North Haledon Church. We pray that the Lord will prosper him and his family in this new field of labor.

E. *Madison.*

A request was received from Classis Wisconsin to re-enter this field. Considering previous and unsuccessful efforts expended in Madison, the evidently small potential, and the reportedly high cost of property, entrance at this time was deemed inadvisable.

3. MIDWEST.

A. *Le Mars.* Of this field Missionary Peter Hondred tells us:

"Progress in the Le Mars field has been gradual in this past year. We have greatly appreciated the use of our new church building. It has had a stabilizing effect upon the members and it has given a sense of permanency to the work in this town. The congregation is now in position to become a subsidized church. Looking back upon the work of this past year it is hard to determine the impact we have had upon this community. One thing is very evident and that is the constant difficulty we face of breaking down the barrier in our attempt to reach the outsider. The work in Le Mars has primarily been Church Extension work and not Evangelization. The difficulties encountered with evangelistic work in this community is due to the fact that very few families are unchurched. The families who are unchurched are very reluctant to enter our church, often giving the reason they are not able to dress properly to feel at ease with our people.

The greatest impact we have made upon this community has been through our radio ministry. Throughout the whole year, each Sunday from 4: to 4:40 o'clock, we have been broadcasting over the Le Mars Station. This is a very popular station for the Le Mars folks.

In our canvass we found many listeners and very favorable comments on the message brought. Our attempt has been to bring a very distinctive Reformed message. We have not succeeded in gaining new families by means of this radio broadcast but are making our church known. We are succeeding in entering into many homes which otherwise would not be accessible to us.

As to the prospects of Le Mars the future looks bright. At the present time we have in our Catechism classes children from five different families who are not as yet members. Our expectation is that some of these families will become members in the near future.

The town is doing much to encourage industry to locate here. This will have an effect upon the future of the church. More families will settle in this community.

One indication of the effectiveness of the work is the inquiry we receive in regard to the teaching of our church. There is today even in

Le Mars a dissatisfaction with the superficial messages brought by many of the ministers. There is a desire for something more substantial. We are trying to impress upon the minds of the people that our church is remaining true to the Historic Christian Faith."

B. *Sioux City*. The blessed ministry of Missionary Jack Zandstra in Sioux City has been terminated. The Brother was led to accept the call as itinerant missionary. Moreover the conviction prevailed that Sioux City had progressed sufficiently once again to enter the category of calling churches. Salary assistance from the Fund for Needy Churches has been assured. May the congregation ere long have its own pastor. And may the evangelism opportunities that abound in Sioux City be pursued with unabated perseverance and prayers.

C. *Rochester*. Rev. Sidney Miersma of our Hollandale, Minnesota, Church has continued his pastoral labors at the Mayo Clinic. He writes: "Another year of blessing is drawing to a close. I had the privilege and joy of making my weekly calls. During the last quarter I made thirteen trips and called on forty-eight patients. This work is greatly appreciated by our people." Truly a ministry to burdened lives and anxious hearts which merits our constant support.

4. SOUTHWEST.

A. *Oklohama City*. This evangelism outpost is occupied by Missionary James Jeffers. The important event in this field has been the erection of a chapel, brick construction. The total cost approximates \$25,000.00 including the building site. The contractor and sub-contractors planned well to keep all costs down to a minimum. Dedicatory services were held in January, 1955. Until then Sunday services had been held at the downtown Y.W.C.A., which because of its location in the business center of the city retarded progress, it being difficult to organize study groups and a Daily Vacation Bible School.

"During the past year 159 calls were made on Back-to-God-Hour listeners, some of which lasted 1½ to 2 hours. The results of the calls cannot be measured for few of the visited come to church. But they are receiving a witness of Jesus Christ and the love of God for His children."

Moreover 650 homes were contacted in the residential district where the church has been built. "This is necessary so that the people of the neighborhood will know about our church before we occupy it. The reception has been most gratifying. All but a very few have gladly welcomed us. We have several prospects for regular attendance — how good or how mediocre cannot be said." Then too homes have been visited, where sick and shut-ins were the objects of pastoral neglect, to bring messages of comfort and cheer.

"The discouragements are always overshadowed by the truth that it is not we who change people's hearts but the Spirit of God. Our first

complete year has been a blessed one and we are looking forward to a greater witness in our new building. And God will bless that witness, as He has promised.

May our Lord and our God enable us to put forth greater efforts in reaching the lost and the unchurched in our own nation. May His glory ever be the motive for all our actions and all our plans."

B. Albuquerque. This field served jointly by Rev. H. Hoekstra and Mr. D. Boyd shows much promise, especially among our Indian friends, as is evident from the following account of Missionary H. Hoekstra.

"Sometimes one feels that reports are necessary evils; but such is not the case with the annual report. It forces one to review a whole year's activity, and then the natural inclination is to compare it with the previous years. When one does so, he finds that there has been progress which was not realized. Such was the case in compiling the facts for this report. There have been considerable gains made in the last year. Our attendance figures are up. Because such figures must always be interpreted, they do not give the whole picture; but they do reveal that an increasing number of individuals have heard the Word of God on the Lord's Day. The average attendance in Sunday School for the year 1955 was forty-seven percent more than in 1954. The attendance at our morning services shows an increase of forty percent and that of our evening services twenty-seven percent. This may not be phenomenal growth, but it is encouraging and a cause for rejoicing.

Besides the work on the Lord's Day, a greater impact was made on the community and the work among the Indians was more vigorously pursued after the arrival of Mr. Boyd. Through personal work, The Back-to-God-Hour Rally, articles in the daily papers, and regular advertising, the name Christian Reformed has become better known in Albuquerque. This is important. We are considered by many as a new denomination or sect. The word Reformed means little to the average resident of this city.

Again we can report that the number of Indian students who are worshipping with us has increased. It now requires two chartered buses to transport them to our place of worship. Their interest is encouraging, and there is evidence that the Spirit is working in the lives of some of them. This is the third year of regular attendance for some of the students. Four of this latter group have expressed their desire to profess their faith in the Lord. The work among the Indians is thus being blessed and the Lord is permitting us to see fruits from our labors.

The housing project across from our church property did not get under way in 1955. Perhaps this is a blessing for us because we have been too crowded to invite anyone to worship with us. Our overflow crowd in the morning is a hindrance to our mission program. Many Sundays we have from twenty-five to thirty listening to the service

in a room adjoining the auditorium. They listen by means of a public address system but cannot see the speaker. Those in the auditorium are crowded. The facilities for maintaining a Sunday School are also deficient. We hope that we can have adequate facilities when the housing projects gets underway. The delay has been made known just recently. The owner of the property is trying to get a portion of it re-zoned so that he can put up a five to six million dollar shopping center in addition to four hundred homes. If the city commission approves the proposed project, building will start in the spring or early summer. It is from this group that we hope to build up our Sunday School and gain some new members.

There are many things for which to be thankful as one looks back over the year now coming to a close. We are thankful for health and strength which enabled us to pursue the task appointed us. The coming of Mr. Boyd and his family was a great blessing and portends even greater things for the future. There have been professions of faith, and five are being catechized with public profession in mind. There have been opportunities to tell others about our wonderful Savior and to comfort those who know Him. We thus are thankful for what God has done here, for the prayers and support of others through which he has encouraged us, and for the support of the Committee for Home Missions which was always sympathetic to our needs. To our faithful God we give all of the praise, and pray that he may make us more worthy servants."

C. Salt Lake City. We now have a missionary in this field in the person of Rev. Nicholas Vogelzang. Here too the work of the Lord shows promise. As evidence we have culled a few paragraphs from the first report of our missionary, in the Mormon capitol.

"Two Catechism Classes have begun, one with pre-confession students, 11 in number and another class of those ages 10, 11, 12, 13: This last group number 14. Among those in our classes are children of parents themselves unbaptized or non-confessing. Some are from Mormon homes. The Christian School under the teacher, Miss Ann Bultsma has 27 pupils with plans for a 5th grade next year and an additional teacher. 5 pupils are from other Evangelical Churches. One pupil is a Mormon.

The Church's work under Rev. C. Kuipers at Intermountain School in Brigham City is showing real progress. Approximately every two weeks a group of Indian young men and women worship with us, are taken into our homes, entertained and returned to the School 60 miles away. A class of Young People is preparing for Confession of Faith. We have received under Rev. Kuiper's tutelage, one young father in Confession of Faith. He with his child are to be baptized soon. His Profession will also be heard at that time.

Mixed marriages between Mormons and Believers continue to cause family problems. The Group, however, is showing increased stability over a year ago. The Lord has dealt bountifully with His people here even though He has given them much sickness and hospitalization. Increased conviction of sin and spiritual depression is evidence of the Lord's working with His children. There is a growing Christian consciousness of right and wrong among the peripheral members. Slow progress in sanctification can be seen."

5. CALIFORNIA.

A. *Lakewood City.* Missionary Frank De Jong, whose labors in Lakewood City have been prospered writes:

"My report for the year 1955 touching the work at Lakewood does not differ a great deal from that of last year. It has been a year of blessings, of addition of members and also of subtractions. Children were born and were presented in baptism and new members were received into the fellowship of the church, both by public confession and by baptism, two of which were adults. Of those who made profession of faith, two were formerly unchurched, two came from the Christian Church, and one each from the Methodist and Baptist Churches respectively. The number of families constituting the membership of the church did not change much due to the moving away of several, all of them good substantial families of the church. That is the way it goes in this fluctuating area of the far west.

In June the Lakewood Church began to call according to the advice of the General Committee and of our Classis. As yet no pastor has been obtained.

Extra activities carried out here in Lakewood include the Daily Vacation Bible School, the delivering of magazines to 24 ocean freighters, messages to the aged at the Pioneer Sanitarium and leadership at the 12th Annual Bible Conference. At the close of the summer I gave daily lectures for two weeks to the teachers of 'Released Time Education' in North Long Beach."

B. *Buena Park - Anaheim.* Rev. Frank De Jong continues his report:

"An important decision this past summer was the choosing of a new field of labor and the purchase of 3 acres of land in this new area — described as Buena Park - Anaheim. This new field has promise to become a very fruitful work once we have succeeded in establishing ourselves in that new neighborhood. After the beginning of the new year I plan to begin regular mid-week meetings with the interested families and to make plans also for the erection of a chapel on the three acres which now belong to the denomination.

As the year draws to a close, I wish to state once more that I have enjoyed the work very much and have experienced a most cordial re-

lationship with the Classical Home Mission Committee and the Executive Committee for Home Missions. May the Lord bless you and all of us together in this great work of his Kingdom."

C: *San Jose*. Covering the period from January 1 to December 1, 1955, Missionary Gerrit B. Boerfyn makes mention of blessed progress. He has this to relate: "The gracious hand of the Lord has been upon us our work in San Jose. We cannot report large additions but we can report a gradual increase in membership, attendance, and I believe a growing in grace.

A comparison shows the greatest increase in our Sunday School. Most of this increase has been due to the fact that more families from the community have sent their children. At the beginning of this year the average attendance in Sunday School was 37 and the past month was 52, and the past few Sundays our attendance has been over 60. In addition to children from our own membership we now have children coming from 13 homes. In a few cases — 4 families — the adults also attend.

A comparison also shows a marked increase in giving. In March of the past year the budget envelope system of giving was introduced. The budget of \$5.00 per family per week has been met. We were able to pay all of our operating expenses, make all the monthly payments on the parsonage, pay out quotas in full, and pay off \$1,000.00 on our indebtedness, and buy some new equipment such as tables and chairs.

Another significant thing is the distance that our people have to come to attend services. One family formerly of the Presbyterian Church has joined our church and drives in from Santa Cruz 35 miles from here. Another family not of our background comes in from a distance of 25 miles. They have signified their desire to become members. Others come 20 miles.

On January 1, 1955 we numbered 15 families and two individuals, consisting of 32 confessing members and 30 baptized members. Our present membership is: 20 families consisting of 47 confessing members and 36 baptized members.

There has been a good spirit of harmony, peace, and a willingness to work together. The families take turn doing the janitor work at the church. Many strangers and visitors compliment us on our attractive church property.

Let no one think it is easy to get the unchurched interested. One mother had promised to have her children ready at an appointed time when they would be picked up for Sunday School. We stopped for five Sunday mornings and the fifth Sunday were successful in getting them to come. Another mother also promised and after stopping three Sunday mornings the father asked us not to stop again. A subsequent call to the home urging the mother or father to come with the children has brought no response.

With the blessing of the Lord, San Jose should be ready to become a calling church in a couple of years. A big problem is their large indebtedness. I am giving instruction to an unchurched family that has been attending our church for at least six months, two other families have expressed a desire to become members. We are also trying to get into the local school so that we could get the children to our church for an hour each week for released-time instruction. We need to find a way to transport them.

It has been a privilege to be engaged in the Home Mission program of the church. May our humble efforts bring forth fruit that will bring glory to God."

D. *Service-Pastor, Harry A. Dykstra.* Since the service-pastor labors of Rev. H. A. Dykstra are confined to California and he devotes part of his time to our church of Escondido, his report which is indicative of much and blessed kingdom labors is placed here.

"Service rendered at Escondido: For this congregation I have regularly preached twice a Sunday, three Sundays each month. I have also acted as Counselor and assisted at Consistory and Congregational meetings. I have also conducted one service (mid-week) in the Holland language once each month. Besides that, I have conducted the Catechism classes, accompanied one of the elders in family visiting and tried to build up the spiritual life of the little congregation by friendly calls at the homes and visits to the sick. Conditions in the congregation are good. Eight young folks made confession of faith. Losses and gains in membership have given a slight increase for 1955.

Service rendered at our Redlands home: The number of guests has been small. Usually a few every week. Mrs. Dykstra makes all comers feel welcome and our facilities are adequate. Very many of the permanent parties in the Armed Forces are now married. The men in Basic Training have limited liberties and then move elsewhere for permanent assignment.

Service rendered to the Armed Forces: This work has been carried on with joy. San Diego to the south and San Francisco to the north are the focal points. About ten days each month are spent in the northern part of the field. As a rule I serve one of the northern churches one Sunday each month, most often the church of Alameda. There is a meeting for Servicemen after the evening service and that meeting has been worthwhile. Enthusiasm high and attendance good. I also have a monthly meeting in San Francisco with good results. Fort Ord continues as main Training Base for the Army. The number of our men in training there varies. Last month I contacted forty. We have a monthly meeting in the Fort Ord 1st Street Chapel. All men are visited. The cooperation of many churches in reporting the presence of men to the Young Calvinist can be much improved. However, I usually find even those not reported.

As time and strength permit, I make personal calls on the men scattered throughout this State. I also try to contact the men of the Fleet as the ships come in. The monthly Sunday evening Servicemen's Meeting in San Diego follows my message at the evening service. The actual number of men in this State in the Armed Forces is difficult to determine because there is so much going back and forth. For November I sent my monthly schedule to more than two hundred personnel based in this State. Correspondence continues to take considerable time. An average of four hundred pieces of mail each month.

This work calls for much away-from-home effort. As a rule I am absent from home more than half the days and nights of each month. Travel is quite extensive, usually running more than three thousand miles each month. I find the appreciation of all parties concerned to be generous. No complaints have come to my knowledge. My schedule is a very full one and the Lord gives adequate strength and all parties concerned splendid cooperation.

The literary side of this work is also developed. I write regularly for *The Banner* and *Young Calvinist*. Also contribute annually to *Spires*, *Daily Manna* and *Family Altar*. There are many requests for speaking from our own people and also from other groups. These are accepted as time and strength permits."

6. ALASKA.

A. *Anchorage*. From America's "last frontier" the following interesting account has been received from Missionary William Heynen.

"1. *The Picture at Present*. During this, our first full year of activity in the Anchorage Chapel, the nature of our group and the work has changed. From a group made up of almost entirely of servicemen and their families it has become a Chapel group which, if we count the children, is well over half civilian. At present some 16 families regularly attend our services and count this as their church home. There are 10-12 single servicemen and 3 single civilians. In addition there are a number who attend occasionally. We have children of 8 additional families in Sunday School and these families attend our Chapel on the occasions when they do go to church.

There is a strong, growing Sunday School with an average attendance throughout the year of 40. The Calvinist Club continues to meet twice a month, as does the ladies circle. A senior choir and a junior choir meet each week. An effective Daily Vacation Bible School was held during the summer.

Financially this little group does well. They have gathered \$4,000. during the year in offerings and gifts. They have made improvements on the building, nearly completed payment on the electric organ and are facing the new year with a proper balance on hand.

2. Demands for the future.

a. An intensified program of instruction for those of non-reformed background in the teachings and practice of our Church. Many of those with some reformed background need this as well. A number of those attending the services are receptive to that and some are positively hungry for it.

b. Reorganization. Up to this time all of the business affairs of the Chapel have been conducted by the Calvinist Club and its officers. The time has come when the Calvinist Club is only one organization in an overall church program. A general meeting has been announced urging all those attending the services to attend and to select a Chapel Council, adopt a budget (our first), discuss financial needs and plans for the future. This is intended to serve as an interim arrangement until such time as a church can be organized.

c. A continued and strong emphasis upon reaching into the community and drawing others into our fellowship.

d. Promoting interest and resettlement on the part of members of our churches in the States to join with us in establishing our church here. There is an active interest on the part of a number of young people known to us. This we hope to encourage. A few solid families would be a real asset as has been the experience of Monsey and similar friends. We do not look upon this as a substitute for community evangelism but as an aid to it and a part of it.

3. Conclusion. The Christian Reformed Church now has a foothold in Anchorage, Alaska. With the blessing of God, much prayer, strong faith and intensive work it will grow and be strengthened. Although the time when a church can be organized in Anchorage is still distant, it is in view. The Lord will lead us on."

B. *Fairbanks.* Rev. Heynen continues his report:

"1. The Present Picture. Our work in Fairbanks, the farthest north of our denominational stations, has remained almost entirely a ministry to servicemen and their families. It has consisted of two visits each month with strong emphasis upon Bible Study and Prayer, special observance of holidays, many hours spent in calling and personal work.

This has been the year in which the Fairbanks Chapel rose out of the perma-frost. The story of the erection of that building will never be fully told since the few people who know it will hesitate to tell it. Although not yet fully complete it stands even now as a monument to the courage and faith and sacrifice of a small group of devoted young people.

Constantly passing through cycles of rotation, the group at present is smaller than it has been but it may soon grow again. Meanwhile the needs of those who are there are none the less real and are perhaps even more pressing when the group is smaller and the sense of isolation and

loneliness more acute. At present we minister to about 25 of our young people there.

2. Demands for the future.

a. The completion of the building. The building should be in use within a few months and be ready for our summer program when the time comes.

b. The developments of a program of action similar to that carried on in Anchorage and similar fields in the States. Uniting and strengthening the present nucleus we should reach out into the community with Sunday School, Vacation Bible School and, most urgent of all, regular worship services. Using radio and other media we should seek to let the full impact of our distinctive message and way of life be felt in that challenging community. It is to that end that the Chapel is being built there.

c. A man must be placed in Fairbanks. We are deeply grateful that the Board has agreed to place a student in Fairbanks for the summer months. This should offer an excellent opportunity to lay the initial ground work.

3. Conclusion. Serious consideration should be given to opening Fairbanks as a second field in Alaska, contingent upon the results of the summer program. It is physically impossible for one man to do justice to these two fields. We can continue a limited ministry there although not without some expense to the effectiveness of our work in Anchorage. If Fairbanks is to be developed on a permanent basis it will demand enlarging the Alaska staff.

In addition to the above and the work outlined in the statistics we have been active in other capacities also. We have continued our operation of a hospitality center for our boys here. Although the numbers have decreased, over 1800 meals and lunches were served during this year under the tireless guidance of the good wife. Six jail services were conducted, three T.V. broadcasts and a number of radio devotionals. We have become increasingly active in the religious life of the community and in the Anchorage Ministerial Fellowship which represents some 40 churches and the Chaplains of the two large military bases nearby. At the last meeting I was elected president of this organization. We have prepared several articles for publication, have served as contributor to the Young People's page of the Banner, have made reply to many inquiries about Alaska and have put out a volume of correspondence without the aid of a secretary.

We have been blessed with good health and were able to be in our pulpit in Anchorage for every service of every Sunday and holiday of the year without benefit of exchanges. We are grateful for God's favor and rejoice in his continued blessing upon the labors of His unprofitable servants."

The Missionary-at-Large, Rev. J. M. Vande Kieft, and the Secretary, Rev. H. Blystra have been fully occupied throughout the year with their respective assignments of conferences, correspondence, speaking and preaching engagements, and service-pastor activities.

7. STUDENT PASTORS.

During the summer recess twenty-five Seminarians from our Seminary were given student-pastor assignments, or twelve more than in the previous year. Of these student pastors eighteen served in Canada and seven in the States. Reports tell us that these "internships" have been valuable for the student-pastors and a blessing for the fields served.

STATISTICAL SUMMARY

	Fields	
ORGANIZED	OPENED	PROJECTED
Lake Worth, Fla.	Buena Park-Anaheim, Cal.	Franklin Lakes, N. J.
Miami, Fla.	Brookfield, Missouri	Boston, Mass.
Palos Heights, Ill.	Chicago - Chinese.	Syracuse, N. Y.
		Buffalo, N. Y.
		South Bend, Indiana.
		Chicago - Tinley Park.
		Greater Detroit.
		Albia, Iowa.
		St. Louis, Mo.
		Fort Lauderdale, Fla.
		Fairbanks, Alaska.
Baptisms:		53
Adults		6
Infants		47
Confession of faith:		52
Christian Reformed Church		21
Unchurched		10
Other Churches		21

RECOMMENDATIONS — U.S. FIELDS.

1. *New York — Chinese Missions — Mr. Paul Szto.*

After a detailed study of the Annual Report of Missionary Paul Szto your committee has the following recommendations to present to your honorable body:

a. That Mr. P. Szto be authorized to pursue with vigor the work which has already begun in the Queens area. That he do so for one year and then present a report of his thorough survey and analysis to the Eastern Home Missions Board and to the General Committee for Home Missions.

b. That the Eastern Home Missions Board be requested and authorized to cooperate with Mr. Paul Szto in the above mentioned detailed survey and analysis of the field and its possibilities.

Grounds:

1) The results of the good work already performed by Missionary Szto in the Queens area warrants such a vigorous prosecution of this field.

2) No thorough survey and analysis of this area has until now been made.

3) Only after such a detailed survey and analysis will we be able to decide intelligently as to whether or not we should continue in this field.

2. *Mr. Albert Huisjen.*

For reasons of health and age, Mr. Albert Huisjen, for many years connected as lay-missionary with our Nathanael Institute in Chicago, requested the General Committee for Home Missions to grant him immediate retirement. This request was granted, same to go into effect as of April 1, 1956. Moreover the Nathanael Board was requested to retain the services of Mr. A. Huisjen on a part time basis in connection with the publication of the "Shepherd's Voice." Synodical approval is herewith requested.

3. *Special Allowances.*

a. *Battle Creek.* Classis Kalamazoo has again endorsed the request of Battle Creek for financial aid to the extent of \$500.00 for 1957 to carry on its local evangelization project. We so recommend.

b. *Cleveland East Side.* Classis Kalamazoo has again endorsed the request of Cleveland East Side for financial aid to the extent of \$4000.00 for 1957 for payment of the associate pastor for evangelism. We so recommend.

PROPOSED CHURCH EXTENSION BUDGET, U.S., 1957

Salaries (23) @ \$4,000.00	\$92,000.00	
Layworkers (6)	19,200.00	
Account Rochester, Minnesota	500.00	\$101,700.00
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Children Allowances (44)		\$ 6,600.00
Utilities	\$ 3,323.50	
Auto insurance	3,158.60	
Supplies	7,298.60	
Travel	16,951.00	30,731.70
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Maintenance	\$ 1,275.00	
Fire insurance	600.00	
Moving	4,600.00	
Taxes and rent	10,310.00	
Administration	6,260.00	
Contingencies	15,000.00	38,045.00
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Seminarians (10)		
Salaries	\$ 5,000.00	
Expenses	2,555.30	7,555.30
		<hr/>
Total proposed operating budget		\$184,632.00
Less credits received in 1955:		
Toward salaries	\$17,562.50	
Sale of real estate	83,242.69	\$100,805.19
		<hr/>
Operating budget credits		\$ 83,226.81

To meet this budget Synod is requested to set the per-family quota for Church Extension for 1957 at \$14.00.

PART IV
CHURCH EXTENSION - - - - - CANADA

The fields and their missionaries.

FIELDS	MISSIONARIES
Belmont-Truro, N. S.	R. J. Bos
New Glasgow, N. S.	(Roseland IV - supporting church)
Port-William-Middleton, N. S.	
Charlottetown, P. E. I.	
Halifax, N. S.	
Montreal, Quebec	G. André
Orillia, Ontario	S. Brondsema
Collingwood, Ontario	
Alliston, Ontario	
Campbellford, Ont.	H. Moes
Peterborough, Ont.	
Lindsay, Ont.	
Stamford, Ont.	A. Persenaire
Burlington, Ont.	
Greensville, Ont.	
Renfrew, Ont.	J. Rubingh
	(Lee St. - supporting church)
Pembroke, Ont.	
Cobourg, Ont.	A. H. Smit
Stratford, Ont.	C. Spoelhof
Lucknow, Ont.	
Listowel, Ont.	
Cochrane, Ont.	(Vacant)
New Liskeard, Ont.	(Vacant)
Portage la Prairie, Manitoba	A. Disselkoen
Kenora, Man.	
Transcona, Man.	
Selkirk, Man.	
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan	G. Vander Ziel
Regina, Sask.	
Melfort-Red Deer Hill, Sask.	
Bellevue, Alberta	P. J. Hoekstra
High River, Alta.	
Vauxhall, Alta.	
Peers - Edson, Alta.	J. Hanenburg

Alix, Alta.

Crescent Spur, Alta.

Wetaskiwin, Alta.

LaGlace - Grande Prairie

Telkwa, B. C. G. Van Laar

Smithers, B. C.

Terrace, B. C.

Chilliwack, B. C. (Vacant)

Okanagan Valley, B. C. P. De Koekkoek

Penticton, B. C.

Vernon, B. C.

Alberni, B. C., Vancouver Island (Vacant)

Victoria-Duncan, B. C., Vancouver Island (Vacant)

Courtenay - Campbell River, B. C., Vancouver Island (Vacant)

From the annual reports received information may be gathered re the fields served by our Canadian missionaries.

1. MARITIMES. Of his several fields *Missionary Ralph Bos* relates: "Although the number of new immigrants that came this year was not large, two of our groups have so grown that they could be organized as congregations, Charlottetown on Prince Edward Island and Port William in Nova Scotia. This has given these groups a feeling of accomplishment and stirred them to increased activity. Their offerings have increased and they have introduced the budget system. Both have rented places which they have for their exclusive use. This has made two services possible and they have a place for catechism classes and society meetings.

The Belmont church has found a suitable place in Truro and will now be known by that name. In active families this church has grown very little. However, this church has received some worthwhile additions which give hope for the future. No less than five families have purchased farms here in the past year. This will help to stabilize church life.

New Glasgow, 40 miles from Truro, has made some progress. This group is too small to be organized and too badly scattered. They are now meeting every Sunday. Technically they are members of the Truro church. As such two elders have been chosen from their midst in order to give them some official supervision.

Halifax has had occasional services this year. This is a city of 100,000 and the capital of Nova Scotia. It is a busy and flourishing harbor city, The attendance of these occasional services has been encouraging. If a missionary could live here, I see a flourishing Christian Reformed Church here in the not-too-distant future.

We conducted Sunday services at six places. We have also had occasional home services at three other places. Catechism classes have been carried on in three places for a total of five classes.

An extra worker is necessary in this extensive field. In that way more intensive work could be done."

2. QUEBEC. In this province we have a vigorous and promising congregation as the account of *Missionary Garret André* reveals.

"Montreal is our only church in the vast Province of Quebec. This Province, with the exception of the city of Montreal, being overwhelmingly French and Roman Catholic, does not attract staunch Protestant immigrants. Montreal, however, having a comparatively large and active English segment which — interesting to note — finances and directs most of the business and industry, affords abundant opportunity for the engineer, the technician, the artisan and the tradesman.

Hence the constituency of our congregation here consists of folk coming from the larger cities of The Netherlands such as Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Delft, The Hague, Leerdam, Eindhoven, et cetera. Eighteen of our families are young married couples, fourteen of which are without children. Most of the families live in limited quarters in modern apartment buildings.

The congregation has enjoyed an increase of ten families in 1955. Hence today we have thirty-seven registered families, sixteen individuals, and fifty-four baptized members; or a total of one-hundred and forty-one souls. And besides this twelve interested adults.

The services are regularly held, one Dutch and one English. Average morning attendance is about one hundred; for the late afternoon service it is forty-five. Additional activities in the congregation are: A Catechism class for the Y.P., a special confession class, Sunday School for the children, a Y.P. Society, and a Mr. and Mrs. Society. Most of the mid-week meetings are held in the manse. A budget of \$3.00 per family has been adopted for 1956. A decision has been made to proceed with calling a minister; request for permission and needed support are to be presented at the January Classis.

An abundance of self-confidence is in evidence. Hopes and wishes go out to a complete church edifice instead of a mere Y.M.C.A. room. And a happy day it will be when such can be realized! Because, a people accustomed to well-established congregations and attractive church buildings in the cities of the Netherlands chafe under and grow impatient with the modest beginnings of an immigrant congregation.

We trust that in due time with the Lord's blessing every need will be fully satisfied."

3. ONTARIO.

a. *Missionary Samuel Brondsema*. Development, during the past few years, of the fields which he has served and is serving, is sketched by the missionary.

"There is nothing quite so interesting and fascinating as to observe how things grow and develop. "Great oaks from little acorns grow,"

and the same is true of all plant life. It is true also in the life of man. So, under normal circumstances and with the blessing of God, there is also growth in the life of a congregation. Perhaps not a spectacular growth, which arrests the attention, but oftener a steady growth.

Such was the case also in the home mission field in which I have been permitted to labor the past seven years. In Toronto the growth was spectacular. At the first meeting held in May, 1949 there were only 17 individuals present. A year later the church was organized with 14 families. When we left in the fall of 1952 there were two good-sized congregations, each of which has now a minister of its own.

In October of 1952 Barrie was the only congregation in this area, numbering 27 families. But 1953 saw a great change. Some 14 families left to organize a congregation at Orillia, 25 miles to the northeast. Other families grouped together to organize a congregation at Alliston, 30 miles to the southwest. In the fall of the same year families from the Owen Sound church organized a new congregation in Collingwood, 35 miles northwest of Barrie.

In the meantime Barrie itself continued to grow in numbers. This growth made two things necessary, the erection of a church of its own and the calling of a minister of their own, who was installed in July, 1955.

Therewith our labors in and for Barrie came to an end and we could devote more attention to the other three churches. Also as a result of fewer immigrants arriving last year there has not been much numerical growth in these churches. But there has been inward growth, with the result that Orillia presently is about to call a minister of their own. Alliston in conjunction with Orangeville plans to do the same. Collingwood is carrying on negotiations with a view to purchasing a building which, at a small cost, can serve as a place where all the congregational activities can be carried on.

And so church life in this area is growing, and with the blessing of God will continue to grow. In the future, no doubt, we shall see this growth more from the inside, as the numbers increase as a result of births and marriages. And that will be the more normal growth, which fills the heart with hope for the future."

b. *Missionary Herman Moes*. Concerning the three fields committed to his care the missionary reports:

"*Campbellford's* membership was greatly reduced during this year. It began with 33 families and ended with 27. One family joined the Presbyterian Church. This family was under discipline because of neglect of the means of grace. One family returned to the Netherlands. Six families moved to other parts of Canada; one family was added by marriage. If this church does not get any additions by immigration it is likely to sustain losses. However those that are new members are more likely to stay.

The Consistory has been very faithful in discipline and family visiting. As yet it has not been possible to conduct more than one service. Of nine services five are conducted in English, the rest in Dutch. They have elders who are able to read in English.

Peterborough. This church began the year with 31 families and ended with 33. It gained six by families moving in but lost three who undertook to start a congregation of the Free Christian Reformed Church. These had been members of the Christelijk Gereformeerde Kerk in the Netherlands and object to the Conclusions of Utrecht. None of the families have moved away to other places. Eleven of our families have purchased the property on which they now live. During the course of the year our congregation at Peterborough acquired a building of its own which provides a spacious auditorium and four roomy classrooms. The congregation now looks forward to continued steady growth. The spiritual condition is satisfactory. The consistory was enlarged by two elders at the end of the year. This was very necessary because the two elders were not able to take care of the work.

Lindsay. During the year 1955 this church grew by four families. The new families have in general raised the spiritual tone of the congregation and being good sized families have increased the attendance considerably. The congregation can also be said to have gained stability by the fact that twelve of the families have purchased the property on which they live.

I have been blessed with health so that outside of my vacation I have not missed a single service. For that we thank our God. May His blessing rest upon our Home Mission Board and its Executive Committee."

c. *Missionary Adam Persenaire.* As his colleagues so Missionary A. Persenaire has been abundantly occupied. Of the fields served he relates:

"During the year 1955 your missionary served the following churches: Wellandport, Burlington, Greenville (or Calvin), and Niagara Falls-Stamford. In the spring of the year my work at the first-named place (Wellandport) came to a close. On the 24th of April I preached my farewell, and a few weeks later I was privileged to install their first pastor, the Rev. Jac. Geuzenbroek. This year no new congregation was organized within my district. Since my arrival in 1948 one or two congregations were added each year (only 1949 and 1955 were exceptions). The Greenville church was organized at the close of 1954. But although no new congregations were added, the three churches which I did serve during the whole year did make considerable progress. At the beginning of 1955 not one of them was as yet in the calling stage. At present all three have entered into that stage. Burlington was the first to ask for "hand-opening." It did so early in the year.

A few months later Stamford became a calling church. And at the close of this past year Greenville decided to petition the January Classis to grant unto it permission to call.

The following particulars may be stated about each of the churches:

Burlington: This church now numbers about 55 families. The attendance at the services has greatly increased during the year, which necessitated a remodeling of the auditorium, so as to be able to seat more people. At the beginning of the year the average attendance was 135 in the morning and 100 in the afternoon. At present it is 175 and 150 respectively.

Greenville (Calvin): This church in my district has probably made the greatest progress. It was organized in November 1954 with 34 families. At the close of 1955 it has 44 families, and prospect of obtaining a few more in the near future. It has a faithful membership. Already it has decided to buy a site for a church and parsonage for \$5,000.00, strategically located on a main highway (No. 5); and as previously remarked, it has decided to become a calling church. The attendance at church services has increased in the morning from 100 to 150 and in the evening from 65 to 100.

Niagara Falls-Stamford: This church was organized in the summer of 1952, and for three years had a struggling existence, during which it could only hold its own. This was due to the large turnover of families which it had every year. This last year, however, it has grown some, and has become more stabilized. This is reflected in its decision to become a calling church. It gained six families, and now numbers 42 in all. This is a numerically weak, but a very loyal and harmonious group. It originally belonged to our St. Catharines church.

May the Lord grant that all the work done may bear fruit that will abide forever; and may He continue to give me strength to serve in this coming year, and in whatever place He would make use of me."

d. *Missionary Albert Smit*. In the course of the past summer the missionary was transferred to another field. Of his previous and present assignments he writes:

"During the year 1955 I labored in the Ottawa-Williamsburg field until the end of August. Then both Ottawa and Williamsburg had their own pastors and we were transferred to the Cobourg field.

Both Ottawa and Williamsburg congregations have grown very rapidly, so that now Ottawa has 80-90 families and Williamsburg 50-60.

The Ottawa congregation is situated in the Capitol of Canada. The Canadian government has big plans (and they are already being carried out) for improving and beautifying the city, since it is the National Capitol. And with that the city has grown rapidly, so that shopping centers are springing up everywhere. This has caused the price of land to go up by leaps and bounds. And therefore for a time we despaired

of being able to buy building lots for the price our people could afford. However, we finally found a very suitable plot, large enough for a church and parsonage and a good sized parking lot. It is located just outside the old city limits, but in a year or so it will be within the city.

Plans for both church and parsonage are now ready and building is to start early in the spring. The Ottawa church is a good Reformed group. The great majority of the members love our Reformed heritage and are true and faithful. The membership is Canadianizing very fast. This is, of course, because it is a city church.

We are glad that Dr. Schrottenboer accepted the challenge of the Ottawa church. He is already laboring there and according to reports is very successful in his ministry.

Williamsburg is a rural church. It is situated in the village Williamsburg, which is surrounded by nice farms with good land. Many of the families have bought farms, although some have bought too far from the church, so that now they are much nearer to the Kemptville district. Williamsburg is only 6 miles north of the St. Lawrence River and will, therefore, be vitally affected by the Seaway, once it gets agoing. Iroquois and Morrisburg lying on the St. Lawrence south of Williamsburg are now being moved north towards Williamsburg. Present Iroquois is to disappear entirely and Morrisburg partly. A new fourlane highway running east and west is now being built not far south of Williamsburg, and that, no doubt, will make a town of this village. And, of course, the congregation will also benefit from this. The congregation built its own church last year and this summer bought a parsonage. Then they called Candidate Cecil Tuininga and, of course, they were very happy when he accepted their call. Rev. and Mrs. Tuininga were both born in Canada (Alberta) and therefore understand Canadian ways and can be a great help to the congregation. Williamsburg is glad to have its own pastor and to have Rev. Tuininga.

Cobourg: We have been in Cobourg, Ontario, since the first of September. Cobourg is 32 miles west of Trenton and 28 miles east of Bowmanville. And so this is the logical place for a church between these two large congregations. Our meeting place is not ideal. We meet in an old house, which was recently bought for a YW-YMCA. However, we hope to be able to rent the Orange Lodge building soon. We now have 24 families, but in the area of Port Hope and Cobourg many people can be placed and we expect this group to grow. We have sent a request to the next meeting of Classis to be organized into a congregation.

Kemptville-Spencerville. At the request of Classis Eastern Ontario, I also spent a number of days in the Kemptville-Spencerville area to look into the need of beginning services in that area. We visited all the families we felt might be interested, and we came to the conclusion that it would be desirable to hold services in Kemptville. This place is 40

miles north of Brockville and about the same distance south of Ottawa and about 30 miles north-west of Williamsburg. Kemptville has about 2000 inhabitants. The land just north and northeast of Kemptville is marshland, but a little farther away the land is good. There are three of our families living in Kemptville and a few not too far away. We therefore started service there on November 20. We are meeting in the Pentecostal Church. We have afternoon services only, to begin with. They have classical appointments and I go there one a month. Ten families attend regularly, a few families come from time to time.

The churches in Eastern Ontario have made great strides forward this past year. May the Lord further bless these churches and use us in building them."

e. *Missionary John Rubingh*. Excerpts from the account of the missionary reveal that he and his helpmeet, like their colleagues, are busy in the work of the Lord.

"The Field assigned to me extends roughly for about one hundred miles from south-east to north-west with preaching centers at Pembroke and Renfrew. A couple of families live near Corkery and Carp, which are to the south-east portion. A number of our people work at Petawawa, a military camp, and have been working there for a number of years. The government has a large and permanent set-up there.

One family came to us at Renfrew from Edmonton. Five in family; stayed at the parsonage for three weeks before we could find a house for them. One family who did not go to church and had no Bible in the house comes quite often now. We do family visiting all year round according to opportunity. Too bad that we can not do more of it during the daytime. Then we would be through, now we don't get around even once per year. Personally I make many pastoral calls.

A Daily Vacation Bible School, which met all day, was held at Pembroke for two weeks. We had fixed up a room for Mrs. Rubingh in the church so she did not need to come home to Renfrew each night. They hope to hold it again next year. On more than three-fourths of my Sundays at Pembroke-Renfrew I preached three times per Sunday. This also involved traveling 150 miles. During these winter months we decided to hold afternoon services at Pembroke so I need to preach only twice per Sunday. An Elder reads at the second service."

f. *Missionary Charles Spoelhof*. As his report shows the missionary has served fields both in Ontario and in the West.

"This past year, 1955, I served the congregations at Guelph, Listowel and Stratford, Ontario during the months of January, February, March and April. I was then transferred to the West, to serve the congregations on Vancouver Island, B.C., for the balance of the year.

Guelph, Ont.: At Guelph there is a steady growth. At the beginning of the year the congregation numbered 32 families, an increase over

the previous year. Now it numbers 40 families. The congregation first met in a hall. Returning from the West Coast at the close of the year, I learned that the congregation has, during my absence, with the aid of our denomination Church Help Fund, obtained buildings of its own — a parsonage and a church, with a seating capacity of 250. Dedication took place December 7th. The congregation has also received permission to call. Two calls have already been extended, but they met with declines. May this growing congregation ere long enjoy the services of a resident pastor.

Listowel, Ont.: At Listowel too there is growth. At the beginning of the year the congregation numbered 18 families; now the congregation numbers 25. I also conducted the catechism classes there.

Stratford, Ont.: The Stratford congregation is small. The number of families decreased this past year. It happens at times that a small congregation becomes a feeder for a larger congregation. That has been the experience of Stratford. Three families of Stratford transferred to Kitchener. To our regret, some families left our church for other denominations. But there is still a good nucleus at Stratford. We hope and pray that Stratford may experience numerical growth.

Kitchener, Ont.: I served as counsellor of Kitchener the first four months of 1955. I conducted services there occasionally during this period. Since we resided in Kitchener, I also made hospital calls locally.

Vancouver Island, B.C.: We were transferred to Vancouver Island in response to a request of Classis Pacific to the General Home Missions Committee at the annual meeting in February, 1955, for someone to take the place of Rev. Rientjes. But since three of the congregations on Vancouver Island are calling, the Executive Committee stated it was to be a temporary assignment. The Home Mission Committee of Classis Hamilton thereupon consented to a transfer for six months.

Our first assignment at Victoria, B. C., was entirely different than planned. We were called upon to conduct a double funeral service for two prominent and beloved young people, who met death by drowning in Thetis Lake on Victoria Day. We took up residence in Victoria, B. C., and in addition to ministering to our Victoria church, we also served Duncan, 40 miles north of Victoria, and Courtenay, with Campbell River, 130 miles north of Victoria. I conducted the services at Duncan-Victoria on 15 Sundays, on seven of these Sundays conducting three services.

Victoria and Duncan are jointly calling a minister. Already they have met with three declines. It's a challenging field. We hope and pray that they may soon be favored with a pastor. Victoria numbers some 35 families, Duncan close to 30. At our farewell service at Duncan two children were baptized. The same Lord's Day in the fare-

well service at Victoria, we had the wonderful experience of baptizing a family — father, mother and two children; also a child of another family; furthermore there were three other young people who made profession of faith.

We have enjoyed the work during the year. We thank the Lord for the blessings He has given.”

4. MANITOBA.

Missionary Arie Disselkoen. Of the fields committed to his care the missionary writes:

“During 1955 we were able to labor without any hindrance, and with much joy. We hope and pray that God’s blessing may rest upon what we were enabled to do by God’s grace.

Most of my time was spent at *Transcona*, which is the largest group and nearest to home. There was a gradual growth, through births, marriages and additions. Efforts are made to bring up the quotas, and there is some increase in offerings. Efforts to get a minister were unsuccessful so far. A month-long Vacation Bible School was held, we trust with blessing.

Kenora — With increased numbers at Kenora, the desire grew to become an organized church. Permission was given by Classis and organization was effected by the consistories of Winnipeg and Transcona on October 4. Those joining were 12 families, consisting of 21 confessing, and 46 baptized members. A loan was received from the Home Missions Committee to purchase the church we were using. We believe there are prospects for growth at Kenora.

Portage la Prairie — came under my care with the departure of Rev. M. Dornbush. Student J. Van Dyk worked here during the summer, with blessing we believe. More have moved out since no farms can be bought here. There remain 11 families with a few singles. However, those remaining carry on faithfully.

My work at *Selkirk* was stopped since Kenora and Portage la Prairie took more of our time. All those living here were members of Winnipeg’s Church and could attend there. They are under Winnipeg’s care now.

In all three places of my field there is a fine spirit of unity and peace prevails amongst them. Attendance is good, though we are seeking to improve it.”

5. SASKATCHEWAN.

Missionary Gerrit Vander Ziel. The missionary has a large parish, an entire province, and is doing a blessed work among resident and scattered saints.

“It is with gratitude to our Covenant God that we may again present

our annual report. God has granted us health so that unhindered we might perform our work. What a wonderful blessing of our God!

We have covered most of the Province of Saskatchewan. We went North up Prince Albert and Nipawin and South to the U.S. border; we went East to the Manitoba border and West to the Alberta border. We traveled over roads which often were rough and muddy as they wound through the rolling prairie with its diversity of color.

We are sending out 120 bulletins every other week for contact, guidance, and strengthening of the spiritual tie. We have made 450 calls and held the usual consistory meetings in both churches, catechism classes, various societies attended, etc. We might also visit the Mental Hospital in North Battleford a few times, with the Mental Society of Saskatoon furnishing the transportation. We might reach out into the community by our attendance at the Ministerial Association, its Educational Committee, by speaking at the Immanuel College of the University of Saskatchewan (with a request for another in the near future), by representing our church at the British and Foreign Bible Association here in Saskatoon. And thus we have endeavored to carry on our work spreading our influence and the Word both within our ecclesiastical boundaries and outside its confines. May the Lord graciously bless all that work unto the coming of His kingdom.

Might we be privileged to report in our last annual report that the congregation of Saskatoon was busy building a church then I may now report that they are worshipping in their own building, which is practically completed, with a seating capacity of 200. Saskatoon is a city of 70,000 and rather centrally located for your Home Missionary to reach out from here into the various parts of the Province. Our congregation is growing, at the beginning of the year she numbered 26 families and at present she numbers 28 families with 140 souls.

Regina is a city of 80,000 and growing fast as is also Saskatoon. Both these centers have grown 10,000 in population during this past year. Surely favorable centers where both our Churches are located in the province of Saskatchewan. At the beginning of the year this congregation numbered 13 families, at present she numbers 17 families, or 80 souls. This congregation meets every Sunday in the Y.W.C.A. at a rental of \$2.50 a Sunday. They have a building fund and so are looking forward to the future to eventually have a building of their own.

We again have visited places where they had a Christian Reformed Church years ago but where a few stragglers have been left behind. I have visited Cramersburg (an article in The Banner aroused my interest). Here we found nothing remained except for a house in which a store and a postoffice was kept and a cemetery. When Cramersburg folded the church in Shackleton was begun 12 miles distant. Some of the children of the oldtimers are still living there but with many of

them religiously it is not well. What an object lesson for parents who settle in isolated districts from our church!

We have looked up all those scattered in this province of whom we had an address. From the hub city, Saskatoon, we reach out into all directions to find them in a province with its 237,975 acres and 880,000 in population. 23 families are scattered who can rarely attend church and 17 individuals. Among those scattered eight souls moved into Saskatoon and 4 souls in Regina during the course of this year. 4 families moved out of this scattered area of the province into other provinces but within close proximity of one of our churches, hence this too may be put down as gain. So too, due to our contacts, some of those living 180 to 200 miles away have attended our services once or twice during the Summer. However, we have found that the longer a family stays in a locality where there is no church of ours the more difficult it becomes for them to pull up stakes and move under the wings of our church.

And so we close this report with thanks to God and the prayer that God's blessing may rest upon this and upon His kingdom work everywhere."

6. ALBERTA.

a. *Missionary John Hanenburg.* Many are the cares of our kingdom harvesters. This can readily be gleaned from the account of Missionary J. Hanenburg.

"When the year 1955 began I was missionary in charge of the following fields: Barrhead-Westlock; Lacombe (Bethel) and Alix; Peers and Edson; La Glace and Grande Prairie; Crescent Spur (B.C.) and Wetaskiwin. In time and season I preached in all of them, nearly every Sunday three services. Besides I was appointed as counselor for Beverly and Edmonton II. Later on when Edmonton I became vacant and I was appointed counselor there too, I managed to obtain release from Edmonton II which has since then been served by Rev. A. De Jager as counselor. During the last two months of 1955 I was privileged to assist in the organization of two new congregations — Edson and La Glace — in each of which consistories were installed and the sacraments administered.

At about the middle of the year both Barrhead-Westlock and Beverly received their own ministers thereby moving out of the missionary-stage into the subsidized stage. Later on in November, Lacombe Bethel, joined this same classification when she acquired Candidate B. Den Herder as her own pastor. That leaves me with the care of Peers, Edson, Alix, Crescent Spur, La Glace, Grande Prairie and Wetaskiwin. Besides we have scattered families in Peace River and Dawson Creek whom I contact when time and circumstances allow.

Peers-Edson I will name together for I serve them together. They are now two congregations, but are trying to get a minister together. So far they have not succeeded. They number about 38 families together. The new parsonage in Peers is being completed next to the Peers church which also is new although not yet completely finished. The Edson congregation meets in rented halls. The consistory is trying to acquire a building site. These two churches have promising numbers of children and young people, but who need instruction and guidance such as a pastor can supply. Canadianization has progressed so far that with a view to the needs of the young of the churches a possible Holland minister is simply out of the question.

Alix. In this village, 25 miles due east of the town of Lacombe, six of our families come together each Sunday for worship (reading) services. As often as possible I minister to them. For more than a year there has been no growth here. No doubt the slow-up of immigration is in part the reason for this. They are a loyal group whose memberships are with the First Church of Lacombe whose consistory supervises the administration of the sacraments in this group.

Crescent Spur — a hamlet on the Jasper-Pr. Rupert line of the CNR system, is a lumbering community to be reached only by rail. Here six of our families are employed, make good wages, come together each Lord's Day for informal services and fellowship. I go here during the week on occasion for a Wednesday evening service, which is highly appreciated. This place does not offer a future for an established church as far as I can judge. But our interest is in these families that they too be not swallowed up in the surrounding Canadian world and/or churches such as there be. The decreased flow of immigrants has also prevented growth of *Wetaskiwin*, a fine farming town 40 miles south of Edmonton where I was asked to take over the spiritual care of a number of Reformed families. Had there been farm-families available for settlement last summer we might have had the beginnings of another church here. Now, however, things are uncertain here. For several families have moved away, eventually others may go too. The larger city with opportunities for better wages attracts many.

La Glace and Grande Prairie and surrounding territory likewise should be reenforced with more of our own families. Nonetheless, La Glace has increased sufficiently as to warrant the organization of a church. We hope this may attract others interested in farming to this community. This year I hope to give this region more than ordinary attention, D.V. Weather and roads permitting I plan to go there for some weeks again in the spring. A young and new congregation needs extra care and attention.

In conclusion: The work is changing somewhat. The past year year was largely devoted to integrating and solidifying what we had. Through the ordinary work bestowed on our groups and churches we

have tried to build them spiritually, strengthen them in the face of trials and temptations, and to assist them in acquiring a place in the Canadian scene. Not the least it was a year with no phenomenal increases in numbers and with no spectacular things to report. Unless immigration is stepped up again the work of some of us may in the foreseeable future come to an end, or may have to be revised drastically as to its purpose, and methods."

b. *Missionary Peter J. Hoekstra*. Being a member and president of the Denominational Immigration Committee, the missionary is always fully occupied. Being one of our earlier men in the work, he can point to the progress that has been made.

"This report will give a "birds-eye" view of my work and field. When the great "trek" of immigrants started in 1947 to Canada I was the minister of the Nobleford Church. I was appointed member of the Immigration Committee by Synod of 1946. In 1949 I accepted the call as "Itinerant" Home Missionary for Alberta. My territory included the entire province of Alberta, but soon the Revs. Hanenburg and G. Van Laar helped me out in the Central and Northern parts. This left me South Alberta. My policy has been to get the Churches developed so far that they call their own ministers. The result was by God's blessing that three churches called and received their own pastor this past summer. They are: Medicine Hat, Brooks and Calgary.

Medicine Hat - (about 30 families) called a minister together with Burdett Christian Reformed Church and were favored by the acceptance of the Rev. A. Selles who took up his work the latter part of October. Reports are that he is doing good work, preaching in each church every other Sunday, both churches contribute equally to his support, and the two are classed as one in receiving subsidy.

Brooks - (about 30 families also) called and received the Rev. (Cand.) Wm. Van der Beek. The first call they made was successful. Brooks is one of our oldest (immigrant) churches and was sorely in need of intensive work by a minister. God blessed them. I ordained Candidate Vander Beek and he is doing good work.

Calgary: (151 families) A large and fast growing church in a large and fast growing city in the foothills of the Canadian Rockies. It is 3 years almost to the day that we moved to Calgary. The work was begun about 2 years before when the late Herman Wierenga (Fieldman for Edmonton) and I planned the start in Calgary. We sat in a Hotel and called various contractors if they needed any help. By evening we had a half dozen families placed. When these arrived in the Spring I started holding meetings in a City Mission Building. Later we met in the Calvinist Hungarian Church until we — with money from the Building Fund — bought our present building. This was soon too small and we had to hold four services, three in Calgary and one in Bowness.

Calgary after many efforts has its own pastor. Rev. T. E. Hofman arrived in November and has made a good start. The following fields are presently served by me:

High River (12 families) - 40 miles to the South of Calgary. A small group. At one time numbering 30 families. But the proximity of a large city plus local problems and situations the small church has a hard time to keep going. A good spirit prevails. It is one of these places which needs the constant influx of new immigrants but suffers when this stops. I take care of all the pastoral work as much as possible plus catechism classes during the week, and being close to Calgary they are favored with more preaching (mine) than other places.

Bellevue (8 families) - located in the Crow's Nest Pass about 160 miles South and West of Calgary. A mining community plus lumber. Hard hit by depression in the mining industry, yet our families maintain a foothold. A good spirit prevails amongst the group. Two services are held every Sunday. The elders conduct the Catechism Classes and a deacon the Sunday School.

Vauxhall — being the farthest away from Calgary, about 200 miles South and East, receives the least of my services. The two nearest ministers, especially the Rev. Dornbush, help this church considerably. I go there as often as possible. A good spirit prevails. The people work mostly for the irrigation system. A fine new church building was built in 1954. The Consistory takes care of all the catechism classes and family visiting.

Trochu — Is a new development from out of the Red Deer Church. Classis Alberta has requested me to work this field.

Bowness — is presently under Calgary, but very likely, in the near future, will request organization. Then it will fall under my supervision until they receive a minister. There are some 30 families living in this suburb of Calgary who belong to our Church in Calgary. Many Reformed families worship with us. The scattered in and around Calgary fall under my care."

7. BRITISH COLUMBIA.

a. *Missionary Paul De Koekkoek*. An interesting account of Missionary P. De Koekkoek re his activities, including a radio ministry, has been received.

"I have nothing sensational to report from the Okanagan Valley. Things have developed in a modest way — much as hoped and prayed for. That we were permitted to carry on in this goodly country with some limited "success" inclines us to much thanks to our God.

As must be clear to you from our periodic reports, the high spots in my field still are Vernon, Kelowna and Penticton.

Vernon-Kelowna (36 miles apart) constitute one congregation, organized in November, 1954. 16 families are in the Vernon group and

6 in the Kelowna section. Together they are presented to the "Year-book" as 22 regular families. Some 6 other families belong also, but they are too far off for regular and contributing (financially) church fellowship. They live farther North, the direction in which our Valley church life is likely to move eventually. V-K also numbers some dozen "singles," some of whom may be "doubles" before long.

Penticton — 75 miles from Vernon to the South, and 38 miles from Kelowna, is for two-thirds a new group. Old Timers did not see fit to co-operate here. During the summer 5 families moved in, and one mother (of Hervormde background) joined with her 3 children by confession of faith. Accordingly the group there stands at 9 families and one single individual. Altogether there is, as noted above, some progress. The total gain in souls amounts to 82. As to the spiritual atmosphere, this is healthy, gaged by the financial returns.

Economically things are a bit uncertain. The heavy early frost has damaged the fruit trees considerably. Although not as seriously as in 1949-1950, it is expected to be rather severe, and if that will prove to be true next spring, this will have a decidedly depressing effect on church growth. There will be less work and (what seems worse sometimes) less confidence in this valley. Future developments therefore will, no doubt, be influenced by what will happen in the fruit industry, although not exclusively. The reported proposed expansion of the lumber industry and the importation of natural gas may pull us through nicely. The climate and pleasant scenery is likely to continue to draw some people. Our 1955 gain was largely due to the attraction of our moderate climate, and the record cold on the Prairies this winter is expected to freeze or breeze more people to our better and more healthy climate. Wisely or not, our people will move, and East and West (of "The West") will meet in the O.K. Valley.

My work — I present a 15-minute radio message in the Holland language from Kelowna every Sunday morning. Tape recording makes that possible. It proves to reach many Hollanders of different faiths and there is evidence that it touches them also. I feel that this testimony should be continued, and so do others. The Back-to-God messages are broadcasted from Vernon every Sunday evening. Occasional responses are sent to me for home calling. It is too bad that our present decidedly Dutch complexion will not draw any Canadians to our church. An attempt to draw some "outside" children to our Vernon Sunday School did not succeed for the same reason. That's why we are happy that the neighbors are reached through radio. It may be preparatory to later activity among them.

In Penticton and Kelowna we have our Sunday meetings in halls rented from the Anglican churches. Vernon meets in the chapel in the basement of our home. It holds about 80 people (full seats), so that

we can handle about 100 including the little ones. Our record attendance was 85. That suggests that with some more expansion we should look for another building, a church by itself. And when it gets that far we shall be glad to relinquish the honor of having the church in our home. Our Pentiction manse still is our trailer. It will do for me every other weekend. It is less acceptable for Mrs. De Koekkoek in the winter time. We have learned to appreciate that modern electric blanket, 'Nough said!

We are thankful to our God that He enabled us to carry on thus far, and that He has not withheld His blessing upon the work imperfectly done. We also appreciate the thoughtful cooperation of the Committees concerned with this work. We hope and pray that the work in the Okanagan may still further contribute to the growth of the Kingdom of our God."

b. *Missionary Gerard Van Laar.* For the area which he served the missionary has praise. "The climate here in the Cascade mountains is very good, and not severe at all in winter. People here do not live in 'the sticks', and modern conveniences are here just as well as in other places." His report continues: "It is with gratitude to God that we can report on our work here in *Telkwa-Terrace-Smithers*, B.C., Canada. Last year, 1954, a church was built in Terrace. This year a church was built in Telkwa and dedicated November 8. It will seat 175 people in its auditorium. Much work was donated under direction of our carpenter. After the church was entirely finished, the treasurer announced that only \$7,500.00 debt was against it, the loan granted by the Church Help Fund. There was continual unity and cooperation while the church was in building so that the work was finished at the scheduled time. 'In unity there is strength' and Telkwa certainly proved that. The Lord has blessed the efforts, and with grateful hearts to the Giver of all good and perfect gifts, the congregation dedicated its church to the service of God. Your Home Missionary spoke the dedicatory sermon based on Psalm 27:4. Greetings from other churches, songs and music and speeches were all conducive to the spirit of joy and thanksgiving to God for the blessings received.

Jointly Telkwa-Smithers are calling. So far they have been disappointed. We know that all things are governed by the Lord our God. Also the call of His ministers. May it please Him to send the man of His choice in due time to serve Telkwa-Smithers. Classis has decided that your Home Missionary should continue to serve the churches here, until such time as Telkwa-Smithers has a minister of its own, otherwise at least one year. The churches here are in need of it. Withdrawing from this field now at this time would disintegrate the churches because we are so far from our Classis-center, and other groups of our churches.

Terrace probably will be ready to call next year. When Telkwa-Smithers gets a minister, and your Home Missionary is placed in another field, Terrace would be neglected altogether. But Terrace is a growing community, and our congregation there undoubtedly will grow with God's help. Next year the highway to Kitimat will be through, which is only 40 miles, and Terrace is bound to grow. Our congregation in Terrace is a loyal group and contributes toward kingdom causes to the utmost of their ability. The consistory there greatly desires your Home Missionary to be stationed in Terrace as soon as Telkwa-Smithers will have a minister of their own. Work could be done in Kitimat and Prince Rupert if more of our people would move there. But up to now those places do not attract our church people, because of Sunday labor. Because of the fast growth of Kitimat, more opportunities will present themselves for work in other industries than merely in the aluminum plant. This undoubtedly will attract more of our people to settle there in the future. Before that is realized, we hope that our Terrace congregation will have a minister of their own. There is 30 miles of pavement now between Smithers and Terrace. Every year more will be added, which facilitates traveling. Congregational work continues as usual. Family visiting has been done the earlier part of this year, and will begin again after New Year. Society life flourishes. May the Lord continue to bless the work and cause the churches to grow in spiritual power of our Lord Jesus Christ."

STATISTICAL SUMMARY

FIELDS ORGANIZED:	Port William	Nova Scotia
	Charlottetown	Prince Edward Island
	Kenora	Ontario
	Aurora (New Market),	Ontario
	LaGlace-Grand Prairie,	Alberta
	Edson,	Alberta
BAPTISMS:	Adults —	6
	Infants — 254	Total: 300
CONFESSIONS OF FAITH:	Christian Reformed Church	174
	Unchurched	7
	Other Churches	19
		Total: .....200

(Note: Since one of the brethren did not submit figures the above statistics are incomplete).

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TOTAL SUMMARY FOR THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA

FIELDS ORGANIZED:	9
BAPTISMS	Adults — 12
	Infants — 301
	Total: 313
CONFESSIONS OF FAITH:	Christian Reformed Church
	Unchurched
	Other Churches
	Total: .....252

These returns are incomplete — see above Note.

PROPOSED CHURCH EXTENSION BUDGET, CANADA, 1957

Salaries (14) @ \$4,000.00.....	\$56,000.00	
Children allowances (8)	1,200.00	\$57,200.00
Utilities	\$ 1,746.23	
Auto insurance	1,467.90	
Supplies	1,130.42	
Travel	19,716.08	
	<u>\$24,060.63</u>	24,060.63
Maintenance	833.01	
Fire Insurance	500.00	
Moving	429.49	
Taxes and rent	3,437.79	
Administration	6,260.00	
Contingencies	6,000.00	
	<u>\$17,510.29</u>	17,510.29
Seminarians (19):		
Salaries	\$ 9,500.00	
Expenses	2,731.52	
	<u>\$12,231.52</u>	12,231.52
Total proposed budget		<u>\$111,002.44</u>
Less credits received in 1955:		
Salaries	\$11,498.63	
Contributed by our Canadian churches served by our Missionaries	6,784.14	
	<u>18,282.77</u>	
Sale of real estate	26,062.42	
		<u>44,345.19</u>

Operating budget less credits\$66,657.24

To meet this Budget Synod is requested to set the per-family quota for Canadian Church Extension in 1957 at \$1.50 per family.

RECOMMENDATIONS CHURCH EXTENSION.

A. BRANCH CHURCHES. REPORT.

At the April, 1955 meeting of the Executive Committee for Home Missions "the matter of Branch Churches was referred to the Church Extension Committee for study and advice." (Art. 19) This decision was motivated by the desire to have clarity with respect to the place and purpose of the "branch church" in our Home Missions program, and the apparent confusion that exists with a view to the authority vested in the missionary, the provisional office bearers, and the calling church.

The name "branch church" is not found in the Church Order, but the concept contained therein can be traced to Article 39 of the Church Order which reads:

"Places where as yet no Consistory can be constituted shall be placed under the care of a neighboring Consistory."

In their Church Order Commentary Van Dellen-Monsma write: "the fact that Classis places localities in need of a Church under the care of a Consistory is understood, though not specifically mentioned." (p. 75) The article dates back to the time of the Reformation when churches were charged with responsibility for the ingathering of dispersed and persecuted believers.

Observations.

1. The *intent* of Art. 39 is to care for the scattered saints, to evangelize those that are without, and to bring about the organization of autonomous congregations.

2. The *execution* of this charge in a particular locality is given by Classis to a neighboring church. The inference is, that such localities are close-in or reachable by the Consistory to whose care they have been committed.

3. The *care* expected of the Consistory so appointed "includes the fullest spiritual care which circumstances permit a Consistory to give." (Van Dellen-Monsma - p. 175-176).

Specific duties mentioned by these brethren are: preaching of the Word and administration of the sacraments; appointment of provisional officebearers; organization of Catechism and Sunday School classes and the appointment of suitable teachers; home visitation; and community canvasses.

Questions.

1. Is the branch-church plan practicable in our present Home Mission program? The answer to this question can be both affirmative and negative. Conceivably when a mission field is close-in and reachable the services of a neighboring church could well be enlisted. And if the Consistory is minded to discharge the duties referred to, then it virtually takes full charge of the field. However, the fact is that we have fields which are hundreds, and even a thousand or more miles distant from one of our nearest churches. And with the favor of the Lord and the guidance of the Spirit we hope to occupy other distant areas in our land. But then difficulties arise as:

a. Since a Classis must appoint a neighboring church, to the domain of which Classis shall such a field be assigned? Experience has shown that a given field may be equally close or equally distant from several of our Classes. Preferably it might be left to the mission field constituency to determine to which Classis it desires to belong. But even then as in the case of Lake Worth, Florida and Classis East, Classis may rule that the request for organization and classical affiliation should be addressed to another Classis, in this case Hackensack.

b. A church removed 200 miles or more from a given field can hardly be recognized as a neighboring church, and the field as a branch of such a church.

c. Again the care as outlined in sub 3) above is by reason of distance beset with difficulties and clearly impossible of execution. In that case the field can hardly be designated as a branch church in the accepted sense of "neighboring field" of the calling, sponsoring, and supporting church.

2. May a missionary administer the sacraments in the absence of a supervising Consistory from a neighboring — which in reality may be a far distant — church?

To this question an affirmative answer can be given. Reasons :

a. The Synod of 1578, Art. 11 decided "that to localities in which a Church should be gathered and organized a Minister should be sent who should use some of the most God-fearing men of such localities to help him in the government of the Church and the care of the poor; further, he should urge his listeners to confess their faith and come to Holy Communion."

The inference is that with the help of appointed assistants, the minister (missionary) sent was permitted to administer the sacraments. "This method of procedure was confirmed in 1581. In response to the 10th question considered by this Synod it was decided that a minister sent out to gather Churches should, beginning the work of organization provisionally, appoint some of the most God-fearing brethren as Elders and Deacons by whose help he should administer the Lord's Supper." (Van Dellen-Monsma, The Church Order Commentary, p. 174).

b. The composite "Form for the Ordination (or: Installation) of Missionaries" evidently points in the direction of an affirmative answer. (Cf. Psalter Hymnal — Liturgical Section, p. 108 ff).

This form listing "the important duties which will devolve" upon missionaries both in the Home and Foreign fields states:

"Again you are bound, if it please God to make your work fruitful unto the gathering of a church or churches, to administer the sacrament of holy baptism, according to the institution of the Lord and the requirement of the covenant."

Presumably the missionary may, or stronger still, must in distant and virgin fields administer the sacrament of baptism before provisional officebearers have been appointed. And we are inclined to say with Prof. W. Heyns (Handbook for Elders and Deacons, p. 213): "and what in this respect is true of Baptism must be true also of the Lord's Supper." The more so if the assistance of "some of the most God-fearing men" has been obtained.

Again quoting from the form for ordination (or: installation) :

"Further, you are called to ordain elders and deacons, wherever it is

necessary and possible, even as Paul charged Titus, saying 'For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and appoint elders in every city, as I gave thee charge.' But, 'Lay hands hastily on no man.' Titus 1:5; 1 Tim. 5:22a." "Moreover, as a minister of Christ and steward of the mysteries of God, you are charged with the administration of the Lord's Supper, according to the institution of Christ."

Clearly the Form quoted, teaches that the prerogative to administer the sacraments, to appoint provisional officebearers, or to ordain elders and deacons is the prerogative vested by the sending church in the missionary.

c. The duty and prerogative of the missionary to administer the sacraments is recognized and practised in the Foreign Field by our missionaries, where they have a believers roll but not as yet an autonomous congregation with duly ordained officebearers, nor a neighboring church to supervise.

If it be objected that the practise in the Foreign Field by force of circumstances must differ from that in the Home Field, then our reply is twofold. First, the "Form for the Ordination (or: Installation) of Missionaries" makes no distinction between the duties that devolve upon the missionaries in each field. And secondly, if it is scripturally and principally wrong for a missionary in a distant Home Field to administer the sacraments without the supervision of a classically appointed Consistory, then the same objection obtains in the Foreign Field.

3. Does the Home Missionary have the authority personally to appoint provisional officebearers?

Considering the argumentation and quotations under question 2) above an affirmative answer must be given.

Pursuant this study of the branch church issue by the Executive Committee, the following recommendations are placed before your honorably body:

a. That in our Home Mission program, which has also addressed itself to evangelism in distant cities as well as neighboring communities, we refrain from speaking of branch churches and the organization of branch churches under the supervision of a Consistory which is far removed from the field of labor and consequently cannot exercise its administrative responsibilities.

b. That we recognize the authority of the Missionary to administer the Sacraments to groups of believers, though these have not yet been organized into autonomous, self-governing churches. This by virtue of the mandate and authority given the missionary by his calling and commissioning church, and his duties as set forth in the Form for the Ordination (or: Installation) of Missionaries.

c. That the missionary appoint a supervisory committee, as a procedural step, and this shall in each instance take place with the approval of the General Committee for Home Missions and/or its Executive Committee, and that of the Missionary's commissioning church.

d. That the term of service of the supervisory committee shall be for one year or less, with eligibility for immediate reappointment.

e. That the calling church be encouraged to make the Missionary and fields of labor the object of its special intercession, its financial support, and its consistorial concern.

f. That the membership papers be deposited with the local church, though as yet unorganized.

B. REGIONAL MISSIONARIES-REPORT.

At the June 23, 1955 meeting of our Executive Committee our esteemed M-a-L, Rev. J. M. Vande Kieft signified "that in view of his age, his forty years of service in the gospel ministry, and his physical wellbeing he is no longer able to carry on the exacting work that belongs to the assignment of the Missionary-at-Large, and therefore desires that his M-a-L assignment be terminated as of September 30, 1955. Upon motion the Church Extension Committee is instructed to consider this request in conjunction with Brother Vande Kieft and serve the Executive Committee with advice." (Art. 31)

On July 21, 1955 the Church Extension Committee presented its report. Our minutes of that date (Art. 19) record:

"Pursuant a conference with the Rev. J. M. Vande Kieft, the Church Extension Committee recommends that the brother continue for the present in his function as Missionary-at-Large but that his load be lightened. Adopted.

Moreover a motion prevails that the Church Extension Committee be instructed to prepare recommendations for the annual meeting of the General Committee regarding an eventual successor to the M-a-L and/or the appointment of district secretaries."

In compliance with the instruction then given we submit the following:

History.

Since 1946 when the Synod tendered him the appointment of M-a-L as successor to Rev. H. Baker, Rev. J. M. Vande Kieft has been diligently and faithfully engaged in the discharge of this kingdom assignment.

However, due to the migration of our kinsmen from the Netherlands to Canada, beginning in the summer of 1947, the demands on the time and energies of the M-a-L became far greater than in previous years. Though the assistance rendered by the Secretary for Home Missions,

according to instructions received, brought a measure of relief the work load remained both heavy and exacting. Much time had to be spent in travel both in the U.S. and Canada, numerous conferences had to be attended, and new fields had to be investigated, opened, and given initial care. Be it said to the lasting credit of Brother Vande Kieft, that he was ever ready to serve, never complaining, and determined to go all out in the service of his Lord and His Church.

Yet it was increasingly realized that with our projected evangelism advance, primarily in the U.S., the work load of conference, consultations, and the investigation and opening of new fields far exceeded the capacity of any one M-a-L, however competent and devoted. Consequently since our M-a-L is now seeking emeritation we face the question, shall a successor be called to take his place in due season or shall a different method of work be inaugurated? This question is motivated by four principal factors:

- a. The present work load for one M-a-L is too exacting; it being impossible to do justice to the several assignments.
- b. The urgency to expand our evangelism program in other and more fields than has been the case to date.
- c. The consequent need of more manpower and the wise distribution thereof throughout the U.S. and Canada.
- d. Due to the large and promising number of seminarians and pre-seminarians at our school we will have considerable manpower available for the years that lie ahead.

To reduce the work load and to realize the objectives mentioned under sub b), c) and d) above we deem that the calling of regional missionaries is a necessary, progressive, and promising procedure.

Name.

In the February 1, 1955 minutes (Art. 12) we employ the term "itinerant missionary."

Upon reflection we express our preference for the name "regional missionary." Reasons:

- a. The term "regional" signifies that the regional missionary has an assignment other than that of the resident Home Missionary.
- b. The term "regional" further signifies that the missionary is assigned to a specified region or district.
- c. The name "missionary" implies that the assignment of the regional missionary is primarily evangelistic in nature.
- d. Thus the duties of the regional missionary can well be regulated by the directives for the itinerant missionary, adopted at the February 1, 1955 meeting. These directives are:

A. Selection of fields.

1. In the selection of fields to be investigated the missionary shall be

guided by Art. 3-2), b), c) of the Home Mission Order, Supplement A of the Home Mission Order, and information obtained from the Denominational Radio Office.

2. The selection of a particular community to be investigated shall be made by the Executive Committee in consultation with the itinerant missionary and the Classical Home Missions Committee within whose bounds the field may be regarded as located.

B. Surveys.

1. Surveys in a specific field selected for investigation must be intensive and exhaustive as well as extensive.

2. Detailed and informative written reports of surveys made are to be placed before the Church Extension Committee, which subsequently will serve the Executive Committee and/or its General Committee with advice re further procedure.

C. Meetings.

1. During the investigatory period, meetings — if and when held — are to be of an informal nature with the express intent to bring a scriptural message, to acquaint the group with our Church, and to elicit responses on views and sentiments that obtain among the constituency.

2. Formal worship services are not to be introduced without the knowledge and approval of the Executive Committee.

3. Appointment of additional paid personnel rests with the Executive Committee.

D. Opening new fields.

1. No field is to be opened except a resident missionary be available.

2. The resident missionary is to be introduced to the field opened by the itinerant missionary in order that the resident missionary may be informed and oriented with respect to the community, the constituency contacted, and the mission program to be inaugurated.

RECOMMENDATIONS.

Pursuant this report the General Committee for Home Missions recommends to Synod:

a. That Synod express itself in favor of calling regional missionaries to take the place of the M-a-L as now provided for in the Home Missions Order, Art. 18.

b. That Synod give approval for the calling of regional missionaries.

c. That Synod authorize the calling of five regional missionaries; three to be assigned to the U.S., namely: The East, the Central West, and the Far West; and two to be assigned to Eastern and Western Canada respectively.

d. That Synodical authorization be given the General Committee

and/or its Executive Committee for the calling of these regional missionaries as and when needed.

e. That Synod approve the term "regional missionary" instead of the term "itinerant missionary" now in use among us.

f. That Synod declare the directives adopted for the work of the itinerant missionary, to be applicable to the regional missionary.

g. That the following directives be added:

1) The regional missionaries shall be responsible to the General Committee for Home Missions and/or its Executive Committee, to which Committees they as well as the resident missionaries shall submit monthly reports re their activities.

2) Preaching and speaking engagements in the churches for the promotion of evangelism shall be conducted by the regional missionary as time permits.

3) Conferring with the several home missionaries and Classes relative to the needs of the respective fields in their region.

4) Serving as contact man between the General Committee and other home missionaries in his region.

5) Serving the General Committee and its Executive Committee in an advisory capacity.

h. That Synod declare that Art. 18 of the Home Missions Order, in which the task of the M-a-L is set forth, as no longer in force.

Ground: The calling of regional missionaries and the directives regulating their work supercede Art. 18 of the Home Missions Order.

i. That sub 4) of Supplement D of the Missions Order re the work of the Secretary for Home Missions, which reads: "He shall cooperate with the Missionary-at-Large in the performance of his duties as directed by the General and Executive Committees for Home Missions" be replaced by "He shall establish and maintain contact with the Churches and Emigration Bureaus in the Netherlands in regard to those who emigrate from the Netherlands to the United States and Canada."

Ground: This immigrant assignment, formerly entrusted to the M-a-L, should be maintained and in our judgment can best be performed by the Secretary for Home Missions.

C. CHURCH EXTENSION IN THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA — *Change of Name and Funds.*

a. That we no longer make a distinction between Church Extension in the U. S. and Canada.

Grounds:

1) The special emergency status of our Canadian field no longer exists.

2) Our churches in the U. S. and Canada constitute the one Christian Reformed Church of America.

3) Continuance of the distinction implies the existence of two separate, though closely related, ecclesiastical groups.

b. That the moneys in the two funds — Church Extension in the U.S. and Church Extension in Canada — be placed in one fund.

c. That this one fund be henceforth designated as Fund for Evangelism and Church Extension.

Grounds:

1) Evangelism and Church Extension are inseparably related. Evangelism, scripturally conceived of promotes church extension and Church Extension, scripturally conceived of promotes evangelism.

2) The two interrelated activities of Home Missions, namely Evangelism and Church Extension have been and are maintained by the financial resources of the same fund.

D. OPENING NEW FIELD.

Synodical permission to open ten new fields in 1957, if and when exploratory surveys warrant, is requested.

PART V

DISPLACED AND NON-RESIDENT MEMBERS

During the year the names of 103 members were received; of those 41 are communicant and 62 baptized members.

PART VI.

YOUTH IN MILITARY SERVICE

Spiritual activities in behalf of our youth in the armed forces have been carried on throughout the year. Rev. Harry Dykstra, our full-time service pastor, and Rev. William Heynen have give guidance, comfort, and cheer to our youth in California and Alaska.

Classes Orange City and Sioux Center, Holland and Zeeland, and Chicago North and South have ministered regularly to our lads in Fort Sill, Oklahoma, Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri, and Camp Chaffee, Arkansas respectively. Due to discharges and decreased attendance it must be determined whether regular services in the latter camp are still warranted. Revs. Willis De Boer, Corneal Holtrop, Paul Holtrop, H. Hoekstra, Roger Posthuma, J. M. Vande Kieft, and H. Blystra have rendered part-time service at other military, naval, and air bases, as time and opportunity allowed.

Happily it cannot be said of our Church — as in the case of others — that we neglect or forget our youth in the service, beset by the ever present perils of immorality and profanity among “men living on the animal level — not like sons of God.”

This service must go on. "We must not forget that the army is our army. As Christians it is our responsibility to see to it that our influence is felt." And as another wrote: "The peacetime draft constitutes a serious problem for young people. It takes them at a time when they are becoming fully awake sexually . . . Hundreds of thousands of young men go away from home for the first time to live under a strange discipline in an all-male environment." (Quotations from the Christian Century, Jan. 11, 1956, pp. 45, 46, 47).

We again request that Synod recommend the Soldier's Fund to our churches for needed offerings.

PART VII THE FUND FOR NEEDY CHURCHES

A. INFORMATION

1. During 1955 recipient churches received their allotments as approved by Synod.

2. Moving expenses were paid to churches making request for same to the extent of \$1,419.00.

3. The schedule of payment for 1956 has been made available to the Synodical Budget Committee for perusal.

Recipient churches have been notified as to the amount of aid granted.

B. RECOMMENDATIONS.

1. We recommend that the minimum salary to be paid the ministers by the respective churches receiving aid from the Fund for Needy Churches for 1957 in the United States be set at \$3600.00; in Canada at \$3800.00.

2. We recommend that mileage on the field be granted subsidized churches for payment to their pastors over and above the first 5000 miles on the field according to the following schedule —

a. In the U.S. the maximum mileage for which payment is granted is set at 3500 miles.

b. In Ontario (Canada) the maximum mileage for which payment is granted is set at 5000 miles.

c. In the Western Province (Canada) the maximum mileage for which payment is granted is set at 6500 miles.

3. We recommend that the rate per mile at which this mileage is to be paid be set at: For the United States 5c per mile; for Eastern Canada 6c per mile; for Western Canada 7c per mile.

4. We recommend that a children's allowance in the United States of \$125.00 per child, in excess of the salary allowed be granted for 1957; a similar amount to be paid in Canada, inclusive of the government child allowance if and when paid.

5. We recommend that the minimum per family contribution toward the pastor's salary of families belonging to subsidized churches for 1957 be set at \$65.00 in the United States; and at \$45.00 in Canada.

6. We recommend that the denominational per family quota for 1957 for the Fund for Needy Churches be set at \$4.50.

PART VIII

REPORT OF THE TREASURER FOR THE YEAR 1955 CHURCH EXTENSION FUND, UNITED STATES

SCHEDULE A

RECEIPTS

Balance, January 1, 1955		\$ 26,695.83
Treasurers of Classes	\$178,508.87	
Gifts: Individual	\$ 997.00	
Societies	4,596.64	
Churches	5,295.71	
	<hr/>	
	10,889.35	10,889.35
Salaries: Society	875.00	
Churches	16,687.50	
	<hr/>	
	17,562.50	17,562.50
Dividends		968.66
Interest		1,890.78
Refunds		2,636.60
Sale, Homes and/or Chapels		83,242.69
		<hr/>
	\$295,699.45	295,699.45
		295,699.45
Canadian receipts		8,940.32
Transfer from Canadian account		4,113.30
		<hr/>
Total balance and receipts		\$335,448.90

DISBURSEMENTS

Salaries, Missionaries	\$ 69,563.99
Expenses, Missionaries	29,447.71
Special services	11,728.37
Seminarians	5,288.46
To reserves	1,571.98
Homes and Chapels	272,297.60
Moving expenses	3,173.00
Administration	5,025.51
	<hr/>
	398,096.62
Minus transfer	4,113.30
	<hr/>
	\$393,983.32
	393,983.32
	<hr/>
Deficit, December 31, 1955	\$ 58,534.42

II
SCHEDULE B
INVENTORY OF SECURITIES

Van Agthoven Estate:		
227½ com. shares Clev. Elec. Illum. Co.	\$ 7,621.25	
10 pref. shares Clev. Elec. Illum. Co.	1,000.00	
16 com. shares Little Miami R.R.	800.00	
	\$ 9,421.25	\$ 9,421.25
91 com. shares Clev. Elec. Illum. Co.		3,048.50
United States Bonds		7,500.00
		19,969.75
Reserves	\$127,330.63	
Deficit, December 31, 1955	58,534.42	
Net reserves	\$ 68,796.21	68,796.21
		88,765.96
Total reserves and securities		\$ 88,765.96

III
SCHEDULE C
MISSIONARY HOMES AND CHAPELS

Disbursements to December 31, 1955	\$805,817.89
Disbursements to December 31, 1954	619,069.87
	\$186,748.02
Increase	

	EXPENDED	CREDITS
Albuquerque (Arnold)	\$ 4,745.84	
(Manzano)	17,450.00	\$ 67.29
(Chapel)	500.00	731.50
Anchorage	521.28	
Bradenton (Home)	17,866.24	
(Chapel)	22,000.00	200.00
Buena Park	20,040.50	
Champaign (Home)	5,500.00	
(Chapel)	30,000.00	
Chicago (108th St.)	155.49	16,126.51
Columbus	40,093.07	195.00
Compton		8,105.28
Fairbanks	4,000.00	
Gr. Rapids (Thomas St.)		14,222.25
Gr. Rapids (Shangrai la)	23,641.04	
Harlem (Home)	1,178.28	
Harlem (Chapel)	8,435.90	
Hawthorne		14,171.08
Highland, Ind.	16,272.23	
Holland		15,257.39
Iowa Falls		500.00
Lake Worth	20,003.60	
Milwaukee		2,000.00
Oklahoma City	22,050.00	
Philadelphia	14,123.66	
Phoenix		500.00

Salt Lake City (Home)	2,194.94	
Salt Lake City (Chapel)		1,340.00
San Jose		5,000.00
Tucson		500.00
Urbana	289.39	2,326.39
W. Allenhurst	972.00	
Willmar		2,000.00
Worth	362.00	
	272,395.76	83,242.69
Discounts		2,405.05
	85,647.74	\$ 85,647.74
Net increase	\$186,748.02	

IV
SCHEDULE A
CHURCH EXTENSION FUND, CANADA

RECEIPTS

Balance, January 1, 1955			\$ 97,663.89
Treasurers of Classes		\$135,045.29	
Gifts, Individual	\$1,000.00		
Societies	385.00		
Churches	710.83		
	\$2,095.83	2,095.83	
Salaries		11,498.63	
Refunds		80.93	
Interest		315.53	
		\$149,036.21	149,036.21
Canadian receipts			46,271.52
			292,971.62
Transfer to other funds			11,989.92
			\$280,981.70

DISBURSEMENTS

Salaries, Missionaries	\$ 63,452.45	
Expenses, Missionaries	3,171.66	
Special services	518.52	
Supplies	283.00	
Seminarians	9,039.19	
To reserves	315.43	
Homes and Chapels	16,722.91	
Administration	5,025.52	
Canadian expenses	38,771.00	
Transfer to other funds	11,989.92	
Total	\$149,289.70	149,289.70
Balance, December 31, 1955		\$131,692.00
Reserves	\$25,558.03	

V
SCHEDULE B

MISSIONARY HOMES AND CHAPELS

Disbursements to December 31, 1954	\$307,971.51
Disbursements to December 31, 1955	306,517.21

Decrease	\$ 1,454.30
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	RECEIPTS	EXPENSES
Aylmer	\$ 725.00	
Barrie		\$ 22.50
Bloomfield	455.60	
Cobourg		18,079.68
Cornwall	29.00	96.69
High River		500.00
Kenora	3,775.00	
Lethbridge	500.00	120.40
London	1,031.50	1,115.64
Nanaimo	2,914.00	20.00
Ottawa	438.52	1,059.99
Peterboro		900.00
Portage la Prairie	8,568.80	
Toronto	10,900.00	
Saskatoon		488.28
Vernon		60.00
Discounts	1,130.06	
Totals	27,192.48	25,738.18
	25,738.18	
Decrease	\$1,454.30	

VI
FUND FOR NEEDY CHURCHES
SCHEDULE A

RECEIPTS		
Treasurers of Classes	\$140,598.56	
Mission festival	106.25	
Interest	1,094.00	
Dividends	773.54	
Redemption of Bonds	800.00	
Refunds	544.17	\$143,916.52
Canadian receipts	8,211.28	\$152,127.80
Transfer of funds		7,134.06
Total		\$159,261.86
DISBURSEMENTS		
Deficit January 1, 1955		\$ 32,529.94
Subsidies	\$95,515.00	
Children allowances	15,295.84	

Mileage	1,316.25	
Moving	254.00	
Administration	5,025.51	117,406.60

Canadian Subsidies	34,795.16
Children allowances	5,652.85
Mileage	2,861.38
Moving	1,165.00

	44,474.39	
Transfer of funds	7,134.06	37,340.33

Total deficit and disbursements \$187,276.87 187,276.87

Deficit, December 31, 1955 \$ 28,015.01

**SCHEDULE B
INVENTORY OF SECURITIES**

227½ com. shares Clev. Elec. Illum. Co.	\$ 7,621.25	
10 pref. shares Clev. Elec. Illum. Co.	1,000.00	
16 com. shares Little Miami R.R.	800.00	\$ 9,421.25
United States Bonds		37,500.00
Washington, D. C. Chr. Ref. Church Bonds		6,500.00
Total		\$53,421.25

**VII
SOLDIER'S FUND**

RECEIPTS

Treasurers of Classes	\$22,062.60	
Individuals	390.64	
Societies	2,050.78	
Churches	1,240.71	\$25,744.73
Canadian receipts		443.66
Transfer of funds		742.56
Total		\$26,930.95

DISBURSEMENTS

Deficit, January 1, 1955		\$14,493.00
Salaries	\$ 4,716.67	
Expenses	20,061.38	
	24,778.05	
Transfer of funds	742.56	24,035.49
Total deficit and disbursements		38,528.49
Receipts 1955		26,930.95
Deficit, December 31, 1955		\$11,597.54

VIII
CANADIAN RECEIPTS AND DISBURSEMENTS, 1955

RECEIPTS

	Church Ext. U. S.	F. N. C.	Church Ext. Canada	Soldier's Fund
Classes	\$8,841.30	\$ 8,211.28	\$11,973.48	
Churches	99.02		700.00	\$ 443.66
Sale, buildings			24,092.40	
Rents			1,970.02	
Pulpit supply refund			6,841.86	
Other refunds			693.76	
Totals	\$8,940.32	\$ 8,211.28	\$46,271.52	\$ 443.66

DISBURSEMENTS

Missionary expenses			\$24,763.48	
Special services			1,306.76	
Buildings			9,015.27	
Seminarians		1,167.94	3,192.33	
Subsidies		39,280.07		
Mileage		2,861.38		
Moving		1,165.00	429.49	
Discount on deposits			63.67	
Administration				\$ 1.00
Totals		\$44,474.39	\$88,771.00	\$ 1.00

RECEIPTS

Extension, U.S.	\$8,940.32		
Fund for needy churches	8,211.28		
Extension, Canada	46,271.52		
Soldier's fund	443.66		
Total			\$63,866.78

DISBURSEMENTS

Fund for needy churches	\$44,474.39		
Extension, Canada	38,771.00		
Administration	1.00		
Total			83,246.39

Operating deficit, 1955			19,379.61
Balance, January 1, 1955			\$21,416.11

Balance, December 31, 1955 on deposit, Bank of Montreal \$2,036.50

A
ANNUAL STATEMENTS, 1955

RECEIPTS

Balance, January 1, 1955			\$ 77,336.78
U. S. Receipts	\$612,609.37		
Non-deposit	1,911.51		
Canadian Receipts		\$614,520.88	
		63,866.78	
			678,387.66
Total, Balance and Receipts			\$755,724.44

DISBURSEMENTS		
United States	\$638,933.02	
Canada	83,246.39	
		722,179.41
Balance, December 31, 1955.....		33,545.03
On Deposit in Old Kent Bank.....	\$ 31,508.53	
On Deposit in Bank of Montreal.....	2,036.50	
		\$ 33,545.03

EXTENSION, U.S.		
RECEIPTS		
Balance, January 1, 1955.....		\$ 26,695.83
U. S. Receipts.....	\$295,699.45	
Canadian Receipts	8,940.32	
		304,639.77
Transfer of Funds.....		4,113.80
		335,448.90
Total, Balance and Receipts.....		\$393,983.32

DISBURSEMENTS		\$ 58,534.42
Deficit, December 31, 1955.....		\$ 58,534.42

EXTENSION, CANADA		
RECEIPTS		
Balance, January 1, 1955.....		\$ 97,663.89
United States Receipts.....	\$149,036.21	
Canadian Receipts	46,271.52	
		\$195,307.73
Transfer of Funds	11,989.92	
		183,317.81
Total, Balance and Receipts.....		\$280,981.70

DISBURSEMENTS		
United States	\$110,518.70	
Canada	38,771.00	
		149,289.70
Balance, December 31, 1955.....		\$131,692.00

FUND FOR NEEDY CHURCHES		
RECEIPTS		
United States	\$143,916.52	
Canadian Receipts	8,211.28	
		\$152,127.80
Transfer of Funds		7,134.06
		\$159,261.86

DISBURSEMENTS		
Deficit, January 1, 1955.....	\$ 32,529.94	
United States	\$117,406.60	
Canada	37,340.33	
		154,746.93
Deficit, December 31, 1955.....		\$ 28,015.01

B
SOLDIER'S FUND

RECEIPTS

United States	\$25,744.73	
Canada	443.66	\$26,188.39
Transfer of Funds.....		742.56
Total Receipts		\$26,930.95

DISBURSEMENTS

Deficit, January 1, 1955.....	\$14,493.00	
Disbursements	24,035.49	
Total, Deficit and Disbursements.....		38,528.49
Deficit, December 31, 1955.....		\$11,597.54

CASH ACCOUNT

Balance, December 31, 1955 in Ch. Ext. Canada.....		\$131,692.00
Deficits, Dec. 31, 1955 in Ch. Ext. U. S.....	\$58,534.42	
F. N. C.	28,015.01	
Soldier's Fund.....	11,597.54	
Total		98,146.97
Net Balance, December 31, 1955.....		\$ 33,545.03
In Old Kent Bank.....	31,508.50	
In Bank of Montreal.....	2,036.50	
		\$33,545.03

Mindful that the Lord builds his Church through the labors of his servants we heartily commend Synod to the guidance of the Spirit.

Humbly submitted,

The General Committee for Home Missions
H. BLYSTRA, *Secretary*

General Committee for Home Missions of
The Christian Reformed Church.

Gentlemen:

At your request, I have examined the receipts and disbursements of your Mission for the year ending December 31, 1955.

My examination included such tests of accounting records and other auditing procedures which I considered necessary under the circumstances. Cash balances at the Old Kent Bank were verified by direct confirmation. Canadian bank balance was verified from the bank statement. Securities on hand were verified at the vault of the Old Kent Bank, Leonard-Alpine branch.

The hereby presented statement of receipts and disbursements for the year 1955 does, in my opinion, present fairly the transactions of your Mission.

Respectfully submitted,
PETER B. VANDER MEER.

Grand Rapids, Michigan.
March 15, 1956.

CHRISTIAN SEAMEN'S AND IMMIGRANTS' HOME

ESTEEMED BRETHREN :

THE CURRENT membership of this committee consists of Rev. Oren Holtrop, Rev. M. Baarman, Mr. C. Lont, Mr. Frank Dykstra and Mr. Adrian M. Visbeen. Rev. Holtrop took the place of Rev. Thos. Van Eerden who left us in July for a pastorate in another part of our country.

During 1955 the work ran along on an even keel with no spectacular events to report. Our Business Manager's report at year end revealed that 605 people were given specific aid, mostly at the request of our people in many parts of our land. In addition many more are given on the spot help or advice on the pier. A steady decline can be noted from year to year in the number of immigrants reaching our shores.

As we peer into the future we are faced with a real problem. Until a few days ago rumor persisted that the Holland American Line would move to New York occupying a new large modern pier that is to be built. Definite news releases now reveal the signing of contracts and we can consider it "de facto." Only such time as is required for construction, presumably about two years, separates from us the seamen and the immigrants work. In such a case our present locations would be of no value for the bulk of the work. New York locations would be prohibitive. Presumably a few small freighters would still use Hoboken giving access to a limited number of seamen. But contact with the crews of the passenger liners and the immigrants would indeed be difficult. Because of the early date at which this report is prepared and the fact that the information is so recent, your Board cannot make any recommendations to this Synod. This move being a slow process we will have time to gather facts and make recommendations to the next Synod.

Our Chaplain, Rev. David Grasman's reports indicate that some 60 odd, more formal services were held at which more than 1400 persons heard a message from the Gospel. There were a considerable number of personal conferences which are deeply appreciated by the men of the sea.

Last spring our Chaplain toured with a mission group among several of our mid western churches presenting our work. Many are not acquainted with our Home and this gave an excellent opportunity to present our cause. We would appreciate more such opportunities in other sections of our church.

We are not able at this time to submit a report on the matter of sale of 310 Hudson Street to the Hoboken Christian Reformed Church.

Our proposed budget for 1957 is presented herewith upon which we request approval. It has been submitted to and approved by Classis Hudson. We would direct Synod's attention to the large number of churches which make no contributions for this work by way of the recommended offering. Every Classis is represented but only 230 churches out of 466 have had part in this work. We would therefore again petition Synod to recommend this mission activity to the churches for prayer and support.

Sincerely,

Seamen's & Immigrants Home
ADRIAN M. VISBEEN, *Secretary*

PROPOSED BUDGET FOR 1957

ANTICIPATED RECEIPTS FOR 1957

From Churches	\$15,000.00
Societies	850.00
Seamen's Home	1,750.00
Interest 80 shares Little Miami R.R.	350.00
Holland America Line	600.00
Donations	650.00
Total	\$19,200.00

PROPOSED BUDGET DISBURSEMENTS FOR 1956 & 1957

	1955 Actual	1956 Anticipated	1957 Anticipated
Salaries			
Chaplain w/auto	\$ 4,250.00	\$ 4,250.00	\$ 4,250.00
Manager	4,220.00	4,220.00	4,220.00
Custodian — Heat, light, rent	2,700.00	2,700.00	2,800.00
Annual Allowance — Mr. Fisher	1,200.00	1,200.00	1,200.00
Parsonage	900.00	*630.00	*630.00
Exemption on Real Estate		270.00	
Heat, electricity, water	1,204.20	1,250.00	1,250.00
Telephones	177.42	175.00	175.00
Maintenance and Repairs	2,375.08	2,000.00	2,500.00
Insurance	975.83	400.00	975.00
Miscellaneous	1,218.17	750.00	1,200.00
Totals	\$19,220.70	\$19,670.00	\$19,200.00

*Due to exemption on Real Estate Tax on Chaplain's Home.

Submitted by,
CORNELIUS J. LONT, *Treasurer*

REPORT NO. 9

CALVINIST RESETTLEMENT SERVICE

To the Synod of 1956

ESTEEMED BRETHREN IN CHRIST:

YOUR COMMITTEE mandated to activate a program of assurances procurement in behalf of Holland immigrants under the REFUGEE RELIEF ACT of 1953 herewith respectfully submits its report to your honorable body.

The Refugee Relief Program, now in its third, last and crucial year, has been lagging behind in attaining its projected goal totaling 214,000 extra-quota immigrants from 13 nationals and other categories. Our own churches were charged by Synod and entreated by your Committee to assume responsibility for our proportionate share of the 17,000 Netherlanders included in this program. To date our record in fulfilling this obligation has been scanty and disappointing. The response has been slow and reluctant despite the continued recommendation of the Synod — quote “Synod urges upon all our churches in the U. S. to give this program their united prayerful cooperation and active support.” Acts of 1955, p. 69, Art. 113, I B. Despite also the special appeals addressed to Consistories and Diaconates and the various general appeals by the State Department, the President of the United States, Commissioner Pierce J. Gerety and the Governor’s Committees of over 40 of the 48 States in the union, besides many Local Committees in all the major cities.

In an article for *The Banner* that appeared about the time this report was prepared for the Agenda (issue February 17, p. 204) we gave a picture of our program in action and a survey and accounting of what we may term its “partial success”.

Consider the challenge of the none too rosy prospect in the light of the situation that obtains. “Only two countries — Italy with an allotment of 60,000 and Greece with 17,000 — have reached and passed their limits. Italy has registered 85,934 and Greece 29,828. But neither country has sufficient sponsors in the United States to provide the necessary assurances to match all the applications. In this regard the United States as one of the major sponsoring and receiving nations is falling behind. As concerns our own CALVINIST RESETTLEMENT SERVICE Committee of the Christian Reformed Church, we are not doing so well. In fact our status is poor and calls for decided improvements.

The Netherlands with only 3,356 applicants out of its 17,000 allotment has been issued 1,387 visas; 73 refused; 212 cancelled action, and

1,684 applications still in process. As Calvinist Resettlement Service Committee cooperating with the CHRISTELIJKE EMIGRATIE CENTRALE in the Hague we had hoped to at least provide assurances for our proportionate share of 1,360 persons (272 families — less than one family or five singles per congregation of the Christian Reformed Church in the U.S.A.).

We have to date over 75 application forms awaiting sponsors and only ten families (22 adults and 29 children) provided with assurances and resettled among us in their new fatherland.

In appraising this unhappy situation we have a number of explanations and justifications. Surely, it is not due to wilful neglect and heartlessness on our part. There are deficiencies and detriments in the law itself, and in its regulations. In his REFUGEE RELIEF ACT AMENDMENTS, submitted by President Eisenhower to the Congress on May 27, 1955 he made no less than ten recommendations. Some of these would greatly expedite the process, liberalize the terms, and oil the machinery. In introducing these amendments, the President reaffirmed the high purpose of this Program (Italics ours) *"The Refugee Relief Act of 1953 . . . was enacted to enable the United States to participate with other nations in a great humanitarian effort for the relief of tragic victims of the postwar world, and for the reduction, in a measure of overpopulation stresses in friendly nations. Thus we would promote friendly relations with the nations of the world. Beyond this it was our purpose to further the interests of the United States by bringing to our shores an eminently desirable immigration within the absorptive capacity of this country. The immigrant has brought greatness to our land and a tremendous love for his adopted country. The foreign-born and their descendants — which include all of us — have given devoted allegiance to the United States, in war and in peace, and have helped give to America a unique position of leadership among the nations . . ."*

More recently, in PRESIDENT EISENHOWER'S PROPOSALS ON THE REFUGEE RELIEF PROGRAM IN HIS STATE OF THE UNION MESSAGE TO THE CONGRESS, JANUARI 5, 1956, he urged action by Congress without delay: "I am happy to report substantial progress in the flow of immigrants under the Refugee Relief Act of 1953; however, I again request this Congress to approve without further delay the urgently needed amendments to that Act which I submitted in the last session."

The last three of the ten amendments proposed by the President are particularly applicable also to our Calvinist Resettlement Service program for sponsoring immigrants from the Netherlands under the Refugee Relief Act. Especially No. 8 is pertinent as follows: "Another obstacle to the achievement of the purpose of the Act is the requirement of individual sponsorship and guarantees of each application for admission. Where responsible, voluntary welfare organizations are

prepared to give assurances with respect to applicants by name, it is unnecessary to add the burdensome requirement that individual sponsorship of each such applicant also be provided. I recommend that where such agency assurances are given, individual assurances not be required in addition."

No. 9 Amendment: "At present, special visas may not be issued to wives, husbands or children of persons admitted under the Act unless they come to the United States together. If the members of the person's family are following at a later time and are otherwise admissible, then the special visas should be equally available to them."

No. 10 Amendment: "There are many refugee families in Western Europe whose members would make useful and productive citizens of the United States, but who would face separation if they should avail themselves of the provisions of the Refugee Relief Act. This they are unwilling to do. They would face separation because of the fact that one of their members is ineligible for admission to the United States under the health standards of our general immigration laws, particularly as respects tuberculosis. "We in the United States no longer regard tuberculosis with dread. Our treatment standards are high and modern treatment is increasingly effective. The United States, to its own benefit, could permit many of these families, within the existing numerical limitations, to enter under safeguards provided by the Attorney General and the Surgeon General of the United States assuring protection of the public health and adequate treatment of the afflicted individual and also assuring that such individual will not become a public charge. I urge that the Congress give consideration to amendments that would enable this to be done."

"It is my earnest hope," thus our President concluded, "that the changes in the Refugee Relief Act that I have outlined can be accomplished during the present session of the Congress. The enactment of these changes will permit effective administration of the Act by the Executive branch of the Government and greatly aid the success of the program. The persons permitted to enter the country under the program will make a fine contribution to the body of our citizens. And we shall again reaffirm that the great tradition of sanctuary lives on in America."

It is still uncertain whether, or when, Congress will take action on these proposed amendments and others that may be added by members of Congress. Deputy Administrator Pierce J. Gerety has stated that an extension of the Refugee Relief Act will be necessary if Congress agrees to the President's recommendations. He emphasized the continuing need of citizen sponsors in the Program to bring in all applicants who are lacking sponsors, and those who will apply in the months ahead.

Currently there is a new and increasing public interest under the impetus of the Governor's Committees and other government and

voluntary agencies. We must not let this wave of widespread and growing national concern in the program escape us, or pass us by, while we fail to do our part and the Act under which this program operates is speeding to its end.

Our Committee has consulted with Mr. FREDERICK SCHULTZ, Migration Attaché at the Netherlands Embassy, 1470 Euclid, N.W., Washington, D. C. The Netherlands is now rated as one of the countries for which there is urgent need of assurances.

We have also conferred with Mr. WILLARD C. WICHERS, Director of The Netherlands Information Service, Midwestern Division, a government Agency of the Netherlands. He is himself active as a member of a Committee representing the Reformed Church of America in promoting the sponsorship program under the Refugee Relief Act for the eligible Holland immigrants. He informed us that special grants are to be given the Immigrants as "landing money" to aid upon first arrival, and in addition, an insurance policy which went into effect February 7, 1956, covering sickness and accidents during the first three months of residence in the U.S.A.

Mr. Wichers advised that we as denominational Committee and as an accredited Voluntary Agency pursue a course of full sponsorship obligations, in behalf of, and with the backing of the Christian Reformed Church. This would mean that the citizen-assurer be directly designated by us, and act for us, while we carry the responsibility involved. We appoint a member of our Committee, or another, and act jointly with and for him as the "agency-assurer." In Grand Rapids a Local Voluntary Committee was recently organized and is now functioning along this line for the purpose of providing assurances and bringing in eligible immigrants under the Refugee Relief Act. They are assuming direct corporate responsibility as Committee, although one is assigned as "citizen assurer." It is significant that a former member of our own Calvinist Resettlement Service Committee is now serving as Secretary of a sub-Committee of this Local Committee. He too, has advised that we simplify and expedite our program by direct sponsorship as outlined above. Rather over-optimistically, he declared: "Why, our Christian Reformed Church could sponsor a thousand Holland immigrants under this Act!"

Another interesting conjuncture pertaining to local response in Grand Rapids is the organization of another similar Local Committee which is omitting the Netherlands in its sponsorship program on the ground that "these are being taken care of by the Christian Reformed Church in its Calvinist Resettlement Service Program." Surely this places us under the greater challenge and obligation to provide assurances and to help bring in those of our reformed faith and spiritual heritage, in the spirit of our merciful Lord and according to our own commitment.

OUR PROGRAM IN ITS EXECUTION.

As we thus revise our program procedure under the Refugee Relief Act, Form DSR-8, we select those whom we would sponsor from the application forms sent to us by the C. E. C. (CHRISTELIJKE EMIGRATIE CENTRALE) of The Hague. For each family, or individual, we would assume the responsibility of guaranteeing housing, employment and assurance that they would not become public charges. We would designate a citizen, acting for us and in our behalf as the sponsoring agency of the Christian Reformed Church. When these assurances are duly processed and we receive notification that the visas are granted and the approximate sailing date is set, we go into action. We enlist the aid of our churches — consistories, diaconates and the entire membership, acting in the communion of saints, to provide what may still be lacking in housing, job and eventual care. Upon arrival we have a welcoming Committee on hand ready to receive them and give the initial start as they begin life anew in this country, their new fatherland in the midst of their fellow believers.

Not for selfish reasons, nor for boasting in any achievements of our own, do we seek the cooperation of all our churches in this program of Christian mercy and friendship. As an expression of loyalty to our faith, and to the faith of our fathers, at the eve of our Centennial Commemoration and re-consecration to that faith and its implications, we should give priority recognition and support to our own Calvinist Resettlement Service Program seeking the higher, spiritual welfare of the immigrants first in the Kingdom and Church of God, that the temporal blessings may be added unto them.

As to the PROSPECTS, we dare not predict, since so many factors enter in both in The Netherlands and in our own country. And the prolonged, cold postwar-crisis may again erupt into the holocaust of an atomic world war. We are called to watch and to be sober unto prayer and to be ready when the Lord comes again in glory.

In the meantime we cannot sit by in fearful tension, or relax in ease and pleasure. Our Program calls for action as part of the Lord's work. There is urgency in view of the dwindling months of the life of the Refugee Relief Act of 1953. It will probably be superceded by another Act incorporating the proposed amendments and making it more suitable and effective. We, too, should take advantage of the present wave of interest and sympathy for this cause shown throughout the nation.

COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP.

The Committee as it was reconstituted by the Synod of 1953 (cf. Acts of 1953, Art. 164, No. 23, page 156) consists of the following:

- | | | |
|------------------------|---------------|-----------------------------------------|
| Rev. Wm. Van Rees | — CHAIRMAN — | appointed by Synod |
| Rev. J. M. Vande Kieft | — SECRETARY — | appointed by Synod |
| Gerald Lyzenga | — TREASURER — | Deacon appointed by West Leonard Church |

Norman Krombeen	— Deacon appointed by Oakdale Park Church
Jay R. Piper	— Deacon appointed by Alpine Ave. Church
Clarence Beute	— Deacon appointed by Grandville Ave. Church
John Vander Meer	— Elder appointed by Mayfair Church
Gerald S. Zylstra	— Elder appointed by Neland Ave. Church

Miss Agnes Flonk, Assistant to the Secretary — address: 847 Hancock St. S. E., Grand Rapids, Michigan, as one having a warm heart for the cause and a competency in the understanding and technique of our program, has continued her valuable services to our Committee. A great deal of paper-work and correspondence is required in a program of this kind and scope.

FINANCES.

Our Treasurer, Mr. Gerald Lyzenga, 1145 Arianna Ave. N.W., is submitting the Committee's Financial Report, duly audited, to the Budget Committee of Synod. Our expenses have been operational so that the balance of the Hungarian Calvinist Displaced Persons Fund was sufficient to meet them.

The Netherlands government provides transportation for its emigrants insofar as they are unable to pay for it themselves. Our Committee will incur additional expenses as it enlarges the scope of its work in activating its program. In view of this and contingencies that may arise, we respectfully request a recommendation by Synod for financial support from our churches or diaconates by way of a donation or by taking an offering for the cause.

RECOMMENDATIONS.

1) We humbly *recommend* that the CALVINIST RESETTLEMENT SERVICE COMMITTEE of the Christian Reformed Church be continued by this Synod of 1956 for another year as it is presently constituted and under its previous mandate (cf. Acts 1954, Art. 126 C, page 70).

2) That the Committee be authorized by Synod, at the expiration of the Refugee Relief Act, to re-orientate and re-activate its program in accordance with the provisions of further anticipated legislation in the matter enacted by the Congress of the United States.

3) That Synod once more impress upon the hearts of all our churches and people in the United States, as we face the challenge of our Centennial Year in 1957, that this program of helping to bring fellow-saints of the household of God into our country, is worthy to receive their united support and active cooperation.

4) That Synod recommend the Calvinist Resettlement Service Committee to our churches for an offering or a contribution by Diaconates or Consistories.

Respectfully submitted,
CALVINIST RESETTLEMENT SERVICE COMMITTEE

REVISION OF FORM OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

THE *Committee for Revising the Form of the Lord's Supper* was instructed to endeavor to improve linguistically and liturgically the draft submitted to the 1954 Synod by a previous committee bearing in mind the 1954 injunction, "No extensive revisions or abbreviations of our beautiful and well-rounded Form for the Lord's Supper shall be made." (Acta 1955, Art. 93, p. 57).

After considerable discussion and after correspondence and interview with the President of the last synod and one of its members (men who feel that there are serious weaknesses in our present form), we have reached the conviction that a linguistic and liturgical revision would not satisfy and that a thorough-going revision of both form and content is imperative. Grounds:

1. As Wielenga has long since pointed out, the Form, which came originally from the pen of Olevianus, is a compilation and that being the case there is bound to be discordant elements in it.

2. The present form abounds in archaisms and tautological phrases (e.g. sins and accursedness, abhor and humble himself, etc.) which nullify its impact upon the hearers.

3. Comparison of the Form with the sacramental section of the Belgic Confession discloses an obvious imbalance. Whereas Art. 35 of the Confession emphasizes the fact that the Lord's Supper is a communion of the body of Christ in which we receive spiritual food and drink unto life eternal the form stresses the element of remembrance and thus partakes of a Zwinglian rather than a Calvinistic character.

4. The present place of the Creed and the Lord's Prayer in the form may well be questioned.

If the synod differs with us on this score and still feels that its 1954 declaration must be observed and that no radical revision should be made, your committee would suggest that a new committee be named.

Respectfully submitted,

DR. GEORGE GORIS.

DR. JOHN H. BRATT

DR. WILLIAM H. RUTGERS

DR. JOHN TIMMERMAN

REPORT NO. 11

THE MINISTERS' PENSION AND RELIEF ADMINISTRATION

ESTEEMED BRETHREN IN CHRIST:

THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES of the Ministers' Pension and Relief Administration humbly submits the following report to your honorable body.

PART I

PERSONNEL AND ORGANIZATION

The Board is composed of:

Rev. J. O. Bouwsma, *President*
Rev. J. Beebe, *Vice President*
Rev. F. Handlogten, *Secretary*
Mr. L. Heeres, *Treasurer*
Mr. J. Jonker, *Vice Secy-Treas.*

The alternates are: Mr. W. De Hoog, Mr. B. De Jager, Rev. D. Drost, Rev. T. Yff, Mr. G. B. Tinholt.

Two members of the Committee have completed one three-year term, and are eligible for reappointment: Rev. J. O. Bouwsma and Mr. L. Heeres, who have served as President and Treasurer, respectively. The following nominations are presented: for Rev. Bouwsma's position, Rev. Bouwsma and Rev. E. Joling; for Mr. Heere's position, Mr. Heeres and Mr. Peter Marcusse (Holland):

The term of one alternate expires this year: Mr. Walter De Hoog. The following nomination is presented: Mr. Walter De Hoog and Mr. Bert Brower (First Zeeland):

The president, Rev. J. O. Bouwsma, has been designated to represent the Board at Synod should further information be desired.

PART II

INFORMATION ON PENSIONERS

The Board has been informed of the emeritation of the following:

1. Rev. K. Tebben by the Classical Committee of Classis Ostfriesland, effective Dec. 1, 1955. Grounds: 1) The brother's impaired health, due to his wife's illness, which has been of long duration. 2) The Doctor's advice. 3) The conditions referred to in grounds 1 and 2 above incapacitate the brother for doing ministerial labors in an organized congregation.

The Board feels constrained to call Synod's attention to the uniqueness of said emeritation, and also to inform Synod that the Board is not fully

convinced of the ground of ill health on the basis of the Doctor's report.

2. Rev. E. J. Tanis by Classis Muskegon at its meeting January 11, 1956. Retirement to be effective in June 1956. Grounds: 1) Length of service—45 years in the Christian Reformed ministry. 2) Age—69 years old. 3) Advice of a physician.

The following pensioners have been removed by death: Revs. Martin M. Schans, John Walkotten, and J. C. Schaap. The Revs. Schans and Walkotten leave a widow as pensionary. The following widow pensioners have also died: Mrs. Jennie Fryling, Mrs. Henry C. Bode, Mrs. E. Tuuk, and Mrs. Lina Drukker.

The number of pensioners as of February 27, 1956 was 43 ministers, 82 widows, and 1 orphan.

Ten ministers are not affiliated with our Pension Plan, which means that neither they nor their families are covered by the pension provisions.

Classis Pacific declared the Rev. Clifford Vander Ark eligible for a call effective March 15, 1955. With the acceptance of the call to our Sanborn, Iowa church Rev. Vander Ark's name was removed from the list of the emeritated.

PART III

THE MINISTERS' PENSION FUND

1. Average Salary.

According to the rules adopted by Synod the average salary of the ministers in active service shall be determined on or before March 1st. The average 1956 salary of the 413 reporting is \$4,595.25. A statement with the names of the ministers and the amount of the salary of each is available for Synod.

The pension for a minister, which is 50% of the average salary computed to the nearest multiple of 10, is \$2,300.00. That of a widow, which is 40% of the average salary computed to the nearest multiple of 10, is \$1,840.00. The ministers pensions are increased by \$160.00 and that of the widows by \$130.00.

2. Budget for 1957.

ANTICIPATED RECEIPTS

Quotas (47,000 families @ \$4.50)	\$211,500.00	
Less Shrinkage	18,000.00	
		<hr/>
		\$193,500.00
Ministers, 3½%, 500 @ \$164.50		
Estimated average salary \$4,700)		82,250.00
Interest		2,000.00
		<hr/>
Total Anticipated Receipts		\$277,750.00

ANTICIPATED DISBURSEMENTS

Pensions, Ministers (50 @ \$2,350)	\$117,500.00
Pensions, Widows (85)	149,800.00
Dependency Allowances	2,400.00
Additional Pensions	10,000.00
Administration	1,800.00
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Total Anticipated Disbursements	\$281,500.00
Deficit	3,750.00

The quota for 1956 is \$4.50. We recommend that Synod retain the same quota of \$4.50 for 1957.

3. Statement of Receipts and Disbursements.

STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS AND DISBURSEMENTS

January 31, 1955 to January 31, 1956

CURRENT PENSION FUND

Cash on hand January 31, 1955		\$ 55,698.34
RECEIPTS		
Quotas from Classical Treasurers	\$187,637.74	
Ministers, 3½%, 4½% of Salary	73,216.73	
Interest	1,713.00	
Legacies	100.00	
Miscellaneous	138.08	
<hr/>		
Total Receipts		\$262,805.55
Total		\$318,503.89
DISBURSEMENTS		
Pensions to Ministers	\$ 89,284.16	
Pensions to Widows	134,242.58	
Administrative	1,651.99	
<hr/>		
Total Disbursements		\$225,178.73
Balance January 31, 1956		\$ 93,325.16

RESERVE PENSION FUND

United States Bonds	\$67,800.00
Federal Savings & Loan Assn	10,000.00
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Total Reserve	\$77,800.00

4. Report on Classical Quotas.

The following eight classes met their quota in full: Chicago North, Chicago South, Grand Rapids South, Grand Rapids West, Holland, Kalamazoo, Wisconsin, Zeeland.

The following seventeen classes failed to meet their quota in the amount of the averages shown:

Alberta	\$4,008.38	Minnesota South	\$ 590.62
California	892.08	Muskegon	31.50
Chatham	2,782.13	Cadillac	69.04
Eastern Ontario	3,092.34	Orange City	130.50

Grand Rapids East	310.50	Ostfriesland	237.50
Hackensack	53.50	Pacific	1,421.69
Hamilton	4,494.18	Pella	28.25
Hudson	40.50	Sioux Center	4.63
Minnesota North	613.25		

Details on the payment of quota by the individual churches is available should Synod desire same.

PART IV
THE MINISTERS' RELIEF FUND

1. This fund was established by Synod to aid those ministers, widows and orphans whose pensions are inadequate because of adverse conditions. It is maintained by the free-will offerings of the congregations. We are thankful that it is not necessary to request a free-will offering for this year. The balance on hand is adequate.

2. Statement of receipts and disbursements.

STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS AND DISBURSEMENTS

January 31, 1955 to January 31, 1956

CURRENT RELIEF FUND

Cash on Hand January 31, 1955\$5,872.42

RECEIPTS

Legacies	\$ 148.41
Interest	1,010.60
Rochester, N. Y. Deaconate Ubels Fund Surplus	747.43
Individual Donation	5.00
Total Receipts	\$1,911.44
Total	\$7,783.86

DISBURSEMENTS

To Ministers	\$ 175.00
To Widows	1,314.17
Total Disbursements	1,489.17
Balance January 31, 1956	\$6,294.69

RESERVE RELIEF FUND

United States Bonds \$48,300.00

A detailed statement of Relief Disbursements shall be submitted to the Advisory Committee of Synod and, if Synod so desires, to Synod itself in executive session. This is in accordance with the rules adopted by Synod.

The Board has sought, at all times, to administer the funds in a responsible way. The cost of administering the monies of the funds was kept below three-fourths of one percent.

PART V
AUDITOR'S REPORT

A copy of the complete, detailed auditor's report has been filed with the Stated Clerk of Synod. A copy, together with the proposed budget for 1957, was also forwarded the Special Advisory Budget Committee of Synod.

PART VI
MATTERS REQUIRING SYNODICAL ATTENTION

1. The recommendation to set the quota at \$4.50, which is the same as for 1956. Cf Part III, 2 above.
2. The appointment of two members to the Board, and also one alternate. Cf Part I above.

Humbly Submitted,
F. HANDLOGTEN, *Secretary*

REPORT NO. 11-A

**THE MINISTERS' PENSION AND RELIEF
ADMINISTRATION**

ESTEEMED BRETHREN IN CHRIST:

THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES of the Ministers' Pension and Relief Administration wishes to present the following study report with recommendations.

I. MANDATE (See Acts of Synod, 1955, Article 98, page 59)

Synod adopted the overture of Classis Eastern Ontario "to study the matter whether emeritated ministers or their widows should not be provided means to move from their last charge to their chosen place of retirement residence. Reason: At present ministers or widows must make this move at their own expense. For many who serve in distant churches this is very burdensome."

Synod referred the above "to the Board of the Ministers' Pension and Relief Administration, with a mandate to consider especially how something may be done through the Relief part of the emeritus funds."

From the above your committee feels that its mandate is twofold: First, to make a study of the payment of moving expenses of all emeritated ministers or their widows from their last charge to their chosen place of retirement residence. Secondly, to consider "how something may be done through the Relief Fund."

II. CONSIDERATION

The Letter of Call in general use throughout our churches contains the promise: "Convinced that the laborer is worthy of his hire, and to encourage you in the discharge of your duties, and to free you from all worldly cares and avocations while you are dispensing spiritual blessings to us . . . do promise and oblige ourselves to pay . . . Moreover, we promise free transportation to yourself, your family, and your belongings (under provisions stipulated in Articles 5, 10, and 11 of our Church Order)." From that promise it may be inferred that a minister upon retirement and a widow of a minister dying in active service should not be obligated to pay the expenses incurred when moving from the last charge to the chosen place of "retirement residence."

It would not be feasible to require the church served last by the minister retiring or the minister who died in active service to assume the obligations of the moving expenses of such a minister or widow. The burden on a small church would be too great. Such a rule would deter a congregation, not financially strong, from calling an older minister.

Can something be done through the present Relief Fund set-up? The answer is, no. First, the rules for the administration of the Relief Funds read, "Lack of personal means shall be the basis upon which application of aid from this Fund shall be granted." (Article IX, 5) The above overture refers to paying one moving expense of *all* ministers and their widows. Secondly, even though "lack of personal means" were established, there are definite limitations set upon the amount available. "The total Pension and Relief granted a minister in one year shall never exceed 66-2/3% of the average annual salary of the ministers of the Christian Reformed Church; nor shall the total pension and relief to a widow exceed 50% of such aforementioned salary." (Article IX, 3) Should there be relief needs for living expenses the first year, there would be little or nothing for moving expense. This is not hypothetical, rather the records indicate that maximum relief has been given the first year in which the recipient also incurred considerable moving expense.

III. RECOMMENDATION

1. That Synod declare that ministers retiring and widows of ministers dying in active service should not be obligated to pay the expenses in moving from the last charge to the chosen place of retirement residence, within the continental United States and Canada. Details must be formulated before it can be implemented.
2. That Synod provide for the payment of such moving expenses through the Synodical Treasury.

Humbly submitted,

REV. J. O. BOUWSMA, *President*

REV. J. BEEBE, *Vice President*

REV. F. HANDLOGTEN, *Secretary*

MR. LOUIS HEERES, *Treasurer*

MR. JERRY JONKER, *Vice Secy-Treas.*

**THE MINISTERS' PENSION AND RELIEF
ADMINISTRATION**

ESTEEMED BRETHREN IN CHRIST:

THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES of the Ministers' Pension and Relief Administration presents the following study report with recommendations.

I. MANDATE

"Synod instructs its Pension and Relief Fund Committee to give serious study to a possible retirement age for ministers, since at the present time there is no specific rule to cover this. Home Missionaries may retire at 65 years of age. They must retire at 70 years of age. The Committee is to report to Synod of 1956 with possible recommendations." (Acts of Synod, 1955, Article 104, page 65.)

II. CONSIDERATION

In its earnest consideration of the above mandate the Committee has sought to consider every factor. Whatever its recommendation, it was felt it should not conflict with the rights of the consistories, it should not overrule the profit of the churches, and it should not void the conscience of the ministers.

III. RECOMMENDATION

Ministers shall have the privilege of retiring at the age of 65 years, with automatic retirement at 70 years. However, the minister reaching 70 years may continue beyond that age if both the minister and the consistory agree. Such a mutual arrangement is to be reviewed each year.

Grounds:

1. Since the Pension Plan is no longer a mere sustentation Fund but a contractual arrangement between the minister and the denomination he serves, which means that it is denominational in scope, it should be uniform in its administration.

2. It is realized that the strain of serving a congregation is often telling, and the minister should not be expected to give the last ounce of strength in the service of a congregation.

3. The age of 65 is still above the average retirement age of 63.25 years.

4. This is in line with the rule of the Christian Reformed Boards, and also the rule of other denominations.

Humbly Submitted,

REV. J. O. BOUWSMA, *President* REV. F. HANDLOGTEN, *Secretary*

REV. J. BEEBE, *Vice President* MR. LOUIS HEERES, *Treasurer*

MR. JERRY JONKER, *Vice Secy-Treas.*

REPORT NO. 12

SEMINARY FACULTY AND STRICT EXECUTIVE SESSIONS

To the Synod of 1956:

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

THE Seminary Faculty requests Synod's consideration of the following matter: The Synod of 1954 adopted a decision barring the members of the Seminary Faculty from strict executive sessions of Synod. This rule was so applied in 1955 as to exclude all the members, and even the president of the Seminary Faculty, from the sessions at which appointments to the Seminary Faculty were discussed. We believe that this rule, as applied, is a bad rule and ought to be amended.

The rule under discussion was not occasioned by anything relating to or stemming from the Faculty, but by a request of the editors of our church papers. In response to this request, the Synod of 1954 addressed itself to the general question of the nature of executive sessions. Synod adopted a position by which the advisory members of Synod were excluded from strict executive sessions (Acts 1954, p. 14).

We refrained from commenting on this rule at the time of its passage, particularly since it was stated that the advisory members of Synod should be excluded only "when very unusual situations are present, and when personal honor or the welfare of the church dictates such a radical step". But subsequent events have not substantiated the position that these qualifications would safeguard the rule from abuse. In 1955 the rule was applied in such a manner as to exclude these advisory members of Synod precisely when their advice was most needed and to the point. We are therefore constrained at this time to convey our reactions to Synod of 1956.

The ruling of 1954, to the effect that the Seminary professors shall absent themselves whenever Synod decided to go into strict executive session is, *in the first place* contrary to the position and duties which our churches have always attributed and assigned to our Seminary professors, as incorporated in our new "Rules for Synodical Procedure," in the year 1952 (cf. Acts 1952, pp. 46, 47 and 488-96.) *Secondly*, we feel that the ruling of 1954 is unwise. And *in the third place* we hold that it is unnecessary.

In the first place, we call Synod's attention to the fact that the ruling

is contrary to the position and duties which our churches have always attributed and assigned to our Seminary professors.

Historically, and according to our Rules for Synodical Procedure, the Professors of our Theological Seminary are members of Synod, although advisory members. As such they, as well as the regular members of Synod, are required to declare their agreement with the Public Declaration, (see p. 5 of the Rules, or Acts 1952, p. 489). Further, the Rules, under III, A, describe the duties and prerogatives of the Seminary professors under the heading: *Advisory Members of Synod* (see p. 8 of the Rules or Acts 1952, p. 490). They are, moreover, required to serve as Advisors on our Advisory Committees. We merely mention these facts to show that our Theological Professors are members of Synod. And we would contend that it is irregular to exclude those who are members of Synod, and who have special responsibilities at Synod, from any of the sessions of Synod.

Secondly, we contend that it is unwise to exclude our Seminary professors from the sessions of Synod which are held in Strict Executive Session.

The Seminary professors are required to be present at Synod as its Advisory Members because they are expected to be experts in their fields, and because it is their duty to advise Synod especially when crucial and difficult questions arise. To exclude these advisors just when important issues arise is unwise.

In the third place, it is needless to maintain a ruling which excludes our Theological Professors from certain sessions of Synod.

The special committee which advised Synod of 1954 to adopt the ruling under discussion, supported its advice by a reference to a very delicate situation with which a recent Synod had to cope; a situation, namely, which involved five of our Seminary faculty members. But, surely, if ever again a like delicate situation should arise, the men involved will voluntarily absent themselves at the proper time. And if at any time one who ought to absent himself voluntarily should fail to do so, a decision of Synod requesting him to absent himself temporarily will accomplish this purpose readily.

For the foregoing reasons, and in the interest of the welfare of the churches and Seminary, we suggest that Synod of 1956 revise this rule in such a manner as to remove those features which are objectionable and capable of being used to the detriment of the churches.

Respectfully submitted,
For the Faculty
HENRY STOB, *Secretary*

REPORT NO. 13

THE CANADIAN RELIEF FUND

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

Through the help received from various churches and societies, we were able to assist various churches where diaconal help was necessary, during the year 1955. We are grateful for the gifts which were sent, to make our work possible. Inasmuch as the immigration continues, we expect that there will continue to be need for help in various churches across Canada. We therefore kindly request that Synod again place this cause in the recommended list for diaconal support.

A total of \$4,061.50 was received from all sources, while the disbursements during the year 1955 amounted to \$5,820.54. Because we had a substantial balance in our treasury on January 1, 1955, we were able to send help to all who requested it. May the blessing of God continue to rest on this work of mercy, and on every other work of mercy engaged in by our churches.

Respectfully submitted,
The Canadian Relief Fund
MR. A. BISSCHOP, SR., *Treas.*
R. R. 4, Thamesville, Ont.

P.S. A detailed statement of receipts and disbursements is on file with the Stated Clerk.

The new treasurer of the Canadian Relief Fund is

Mr. Stanley Mol
R. R. 3
Chatham, Ontario, Can.
Signed, A. Bisschop

CHURCH ORDER REVISION

DEAR BRETHREN:

THE Committee on the Revision of the Church Order herewith submits a brief report on its progress to date and its expectations for the near future.

The Synod of 1953 gave its approval to the following proposals regarding procedure:

- 1) That while the Gereformeerde Kerken in the Netherlands proceed with drafting and adopting their own revision, our committee shall keep in touch with their committee, informing them of our reactions to various proposed changes and additions, in so far as the committee in the Netherlands requests such consultation.
- 2) That our committee shall in due season advise one of our future synods as to possible and advisable revisions in our Christian Reformed Church Order, profiting by the findings and decisions of the Churches in the Netherlands.

The Synod of the Gereformeerde Kerken has had the report of its Church Order Revision Committee under consideration for some time. At the time of this writing there is no definite word of final action on that proposed revision. It seems highly probable, however, that the published proposals will be adopted with only relatively minor changes. The various drafts of these proposals have been closely studied and carefully considered by your committee. The revision we are preparing to submit is, however, our own, adapted to the specific needs of our church.

Your committee hopes to have a draft of a revised Church Order ready by the end of the forthcoming summer. We propose then to seek to have this draft published in the *Banner*, presumably in or about the month of September, so that we may enjoy the profit accruing from any discussion which will be elicited. We expect thereupon to submit this draft to the 1957 Synod, by way of the *Agenda*, for whatever action that Synod may see fit to take.

Respectfully submitted,

RALPH J. BOS
RALPH J. DANHOF
J. H. KROMMINGA, *Sec'y*
MARTIN MONSMA, *Pres.*
I. VAN DELLEN

BRITISH AND FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

YOU will recall that this organization came into being in 1804. Consequently it became 150 years old in 1954. In connection with that birthday extra gifts were asked toward the Third Jubilee Fund. Canada over-subscribed its goal by \$75,000 when it was discovered last year that this Fund reached the total of \$443,539. The regular contributions appear to be increasing right along, in consequence of which the Canadian branch was able to carry on its work satisfactorily.

Over 15,000,000 Bibles, Testaments and Scripture portions have been distributed in this country during the past fifty years by the British and Foreign Bible Society in Canada. Nearly five million volumes were circulated by the various Auxiliaries and the Parent Societies prior to the federation in 1904, which resulted in the formation of the Canadian Society. Scriptures have been distributed in over 110 languages. In addition to this, Canada has sent annual grants overseas and has had a worthwhile share in the British and Foreign Bible Society's world circulation of 615 million volumes in the last 150 years.

Immigrants coming to our ports of entry receive a copy of the Gospels, generally printed in their own language and English in parallel columns. Since the beginning of World War I Bibles or portions thereof have been presented to servicemen, amounting to 1,316,422 volumes. Some 16,000 special Bibles were given to school children in connection with the above mentioned celebration.

The blind are not forgotten. Braille Scriptures are supplied to them at one-tenth of the cost of production, which is \$2.50. The blind person, consequently, pays only twenty-five cents.

The complete Bible is now available in 206 languages and at least one book of the Bible has been published in 1084 languages. From this it is clear that there is still much to be done, for there are at least as many languages and dialects into which the Bible has not been translated to any extent.

Without doubt this work continues to merit our support. It may be said that, if the report in the Year Book is complete, our Canadian

churches contributed only \$257.70 for this cause in 1955. This is rather peculiar since \$373.00 was produced the year before, and \$600.00 in 1953. Apparently our interest is waning while our financial strength is on the increase.

Respectfully submitted
CORNELIUS WITT

SUNDAY SCHOOL COMMITTEE

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

YOUR Sunday School Committee herewith submits its report of the work carried on during this past year.

The committee met once a month, except during the summer.

The following work was accomplished by the committee:

1. Beginning with the July 1 issue of the Sunday School papers, the former type of large picture-roll was replaced by enlarged copies of Mr. Brouwer's pictures, which were printed on 16"x20", heavy card-board.

2. The special edition of The Key, which was to be used by the older classes in the Sunday School, did not meet with much interest on the part of the teachers. It was, therefore, not published.

3. Since most of the criticisms we received were concerning the Bible Truth, seeing this paper covered too large an age group, it was decided to begin work on the fifth paper. The following decisions have already been made concerning this paper:

a). It will be written for the Upper High School and Young Adult Group — ages 15-18.

b). It will be called Bible Study.

c). It will be a Quarterly, which can be carried in a pocket, rather than a weekly.

d). The general topics will follow the general topics of the 5-year lesson series, but each individual lesson will not have to conform too closely.

4. All the writers, including the art editor, were reappointed for a two-year period. The Reverend Alexander De Jong replaced the Reverend Bernard Pekelder.

5. On special invitation, our secretary met with the National Union's committee on the Bible Course of Study for our Christian Schools. The purpose of the meeting was to obtain information concerning what is being taught in the Sunday School and in the Catechism.

6. The new Sunday School papers were met with much enthusiasm

at the Sunday School Convention last fall. At that time the Editor made a survey showing that

In 1945 we published	In 1955 we published
26,000 Instructors	27,000 Bible Truths
13,000 Comrades	14,000 Bible Guides
1,700 Goods News	15,500 Bible Lights
5,000 Keys	16,500 Bible Stories
	8,200 Keys
<hr/> 45,700 total	<hr/> 81,200 total

7. The Sunday School Committee will be given a room in the new Denominational Building, where they will be able to file their materials and hold their meetings.

8. The Publication Committee provided a dinner for all the writers, the art editor, the business manager, and the Sunday School Committee. It was a very enjoyable and profitable evening.

9. The Sunday School Committee has agreed to give three Sundays, March 24, March 31, and April 7, 1957, to the Centennial Committee. They will provide the materials for the papers for those Sundays. They also agreed to allow the Centennial Committee to place a single sheet insert in all the Sunday School papers for the other ten weeks of the thirteen-week quarter.

10. The five-year lesson series, from January 1955 through December 1959, has been completed and put in booklet form. These booklets will be distributed at the Synod meetings.

11. Your committee wishes to be represented at the Synod of 1956 by its chairman, the Reverend William Van Peurseem.

12. Your committee would like to have its editor, the Reverend John Schaal, speak on the floor of Synod, on the matters of the Sunday School.

13. Since the term of office of the Reverend Van Peurseem and of Dena Korfker expires this year, we should like to submit nominations when Synod convenes.

Respectfully submitted,
WILLIAM VAN PEURSEM, *Chairman*
DENA KORFKER, *Secretary*
WILLIAM VAN REES
RHINE PETTINGA
JOHN L. DE BEER
ANDREW VANDER VEER

ECUMENICITY AND INTERCHURCH CORRESPONDENCE

*Synod of the Christian Reformed Church,
Required to convene June 13, 1956
Grand Rapids, Michigan*

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

YOUR COMMITTEE on Ecumenicity and Interchurch Correspondence submits the following report on ecumenical and interchurch correspondence mandated to it by the Synod of 1955: I. Domestic; II. Foreign.

I. ECUMENICITY AND INTERCHURCH CORRESPONDENCE

A. ORTHODOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

1. *Orientation* (Art. 98 D 20—"That Synod accept the overture of Classis Pacific and instruct its committee on Ecumenicity and Interchurch Correspondence to investigate the possibilities for closer correspondence and fellowship with the O.P.C." (*Acts*, 1955, p. 59). The grounds are stated on page sixty: 1. Scripture; 2. Previous decisions of Synod; 3. Recognition of the O.P.C. church as a sister church by our sister church in the Netherlands. Number three constituted a ground for recognition of the Indonesian Church, and logically, therefore, should also constitute a ground in this case. Thus Synod of 1955.

2. *Analysis*—The mandate requires just one thing: "instruct its committee on Ecumenicity and Interchurch Correspondence to investigate the possibility for closer cooperation and fellowship with the O.P.C."

In passing it may be noted that both Scripture and the report referred to (Supplement 21, *Acts* of Synod, 1944, p. 330ff.) imply that believers who are spiritually one should, if at all possible, be organically one. This is an ideal. At best we can move in the direction toward that ideal. The first logical approach to that ideal is the mandate: "To investigate the possibilities for closer cooperation and fellowship with the O. P. C."

It would be ostrich-wise to assume that this ideal is already almost attainable. There are differences between the O.P.C. and the Christian Reformed Church. Two have been frequently mentioned:

1. The relation of lodge members to the church; and 2. Dual basis for divorce (adultery and wilful dissention) in distinction from the single basis of adultery maintained by our denomination. A consistory

has corresponded with your committee on this matter and has urged slow action and much caution.

These are not the only differences. Without pronouncement of judgment, we simply note some of these differences: 1. Church polity—the ministerial status of a pastor resides with the presbytery and not with the local consistory; 2. Possibly the traditional Presbyterian requirements for membership in distinction from that of our Reformed practice.

3. The Orthodox Presbyterian Church adheres to the Westminster Confession and the Westminster Catechisms. We adhere to the Heidelberg Catechism. Our spiritual life is steeped in the Heidelberg Catechism for centuries. Possible future union may even change preaching according to the exposition of the Heidelberg Catechism. Let it be clearly understood. We are not making any judgments. It is even possible that our church life in the future can be mutually enriched. We could also add to the analysis of the situation such questions as the relationship of Westminster Seminary (not officially a denominational seminary) and Calvin Seminary, and also intangible differences as difference of temperament and emphasis because of different histories.

The analysis then is that there are differences, and in the light of these differences can we move a step forward in realizing the ideal of Scripture and of our own commitments?

The report of 1944 avers that ecumenicity according to the Reformed genius is axiomatic. The question is: What is the best method of procedure? 1. Negative — We simply state these differences are too deeply rooted to warrant any efforts to move ahead. This negative approach lacks courage and faith to face a Scriptural ideal in a concrete situation. 2. We could discuss these differences openly and frankly in our religious press, and especially in inter-communications between the assemblies involved. This possibility lacks feasibility. This would be a long, tedious, hazardous road. Experts and non-experts would soon be enmeshed in details and side-issues. Smoky controversies would becloud the skies that would estrange rather than approach each other. 3. Synod should invite the General Assembly of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church to appoint a committee to sit at the same table with a committee appointed by this Synod to engage in ecumenical and closer fellowship conversations. This would make it possible for the OPC to express its differences with our denomination also for mutual correction. The feasibility of this mode of action is that it is more efficient, non-controversial in the bad sense of the word, mutually instructive, brotherly, and confidential. This mode of procedure is common in ecumenical efforts today, and even though we may not

applaud the results as in the W.C.C., we can adopt this procedure as an effective ecumenical instrument.

3. *Recommendation: Synod invite the General Assembly of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church to appoint a committee for the purpose of carrying on ecumenical and closer fellowship conversations with a committee appointed by the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church. Said committees shall then be authorized to arrange for time and place of meeting, and shall inform their respective assemblies from time to time of the progress made.*

B. REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF NORTH AMERICA.

1. *Orientation* — "The 1954 Synod of this church (Reformed Presbyterian) decided to make a beginning of practical efforts toward church union on a Scriptural basis" (*Acts of Synod, 1955, p. 69f.*)

This church is definitely Calvinistic of Scotch origin. It counts within its ranks stalwart men of Reformed persuasion. It is small but active. It has sent invitations to several churches of Reformed origin true to the Reformed faith, although manifesting different histories and, therefore, divergencies.

Its committee on Church Union has sent to us its Constitution and the *Acts of Synod of 1955.*

2. *Analysis* — We deeply appreciate that forward steps are being taken to realize a scriptural ideal. Likewise, as in the case of the OPC, we note differences between their denomination and ours. This church agrees with us in our stand on the lodge. There are liturgical differences, no use of instrumental music in divine worship. A condition of membership is the refraining from voting until the name of Christ is in an amendment of the Constitution of the United States. Upon confession of faith a member makes a covenant with God in Christ Jesus. This covenant should not be confused with their teachings of the covenant of grace. These are differences which we simply note, but we do not pass judgment upon them.

The request of said Church is that a committee of each church "examine the constitution with regard to doctrine, worship, government, and discipline, and express in writing its opinion as to the Scriptural or unscriptural character thereof." Their committee will begin to examine ours.

Our committee has examined their Constitution which consists of the regular Presbyterian Standards and their own Explanations or "Statements of Faith" which also serve as a correction of the Westminster Confession of faith on a few points. Your committee could not reasonably be expected to make a thorough study of these matters within such a limited space of time.

Your committee did judge, however, that the conversational rather than the correspondence mode of procedure would be more feasible. The situation in some ways is analogous to that of our proposed approach to the Orthodox Presbyterian Church.

3. *Recommendations* —

a. *Synod appoint a committee or the same committee mandated to meet with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church to carry on ecumenical conversations with a committee to be appointed by the Reformed Presbyterian Church.*

b. *Synod inform the Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church that it has appointed a committee and invites the Reformed Presbyterian Church to do likewise to carry on ecumenical conversations. These committees are authorized to make the necessary arrangements.*

c. *The committee of Synod will report progress of such conversations from time to time to subsequent Synods.*

C. REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH—RE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST IN THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES.

1. *Orientation* — The Reformed Presbyterian Church in America is convinced that the name of Jesus Christ, Savior and Ruler of Nations, must be inserted in the Constitution. It is one of its tenets that no member of this church may vote until the name of Jesus Christ is included. At first it was judged best that the name of our Lord appear in the "Preamble" of the Constitution, but this was abandoned because it was impossible to do so according to legal experts. An attempt is now made to add an amendment. This church is seeking our endorsement and cooperation.

This petition has been before Synod several times (cf. Supplement 21, 1955; p. 263). Synod of 1955 designated our committee to constitute a special study committee to advise Synod on this matter. Synod did so over against the expressed wishes of our committee not to be responsible for this study since the nature of our committee is more in the line of administrative matters than educational matters.

The proposed amendment reads as follows:

"Section 1. This nation devoutly recognizes the authority and law of Jesus Christ, Saviour and Ruler of Nations, through Whom are bestowed the blessing of Almighty God.

"Section 2. This amendment shall not be interpreted so as to result in the establishment of any particular ecclesiastical organization, or in the abridgment of the rights of religious freedom, or freedom of speech and press or of peaceful assemblage.

"Section 3. Congress shall have power, in such cases as it may deem proper to provide a suitable oath or affirmation for citizens whose religious scruples prevent them from giving unqualified allegiance to the Constitution as herein amended."

2. *Analysis*: — We commend our brethren for their zeal and passion for the name of our Lord, his law and authority, in our private and public life. By implication it sets forth the forgotten truth that Christianity is not only a private matter. We on our part also inherit a glorious tradition in which the ideal of *Pro Rege*, for the King, of Dr. A. Kuyper, has gone into the very texture of our social and political vision. Our tradition immediately creates sympathy for this proposal.

We believe that Christ must be recognized in our political as well as in our educational, industrial and cultural life (II Cor. X:5).

We do recognize in this connection a mooted problem. According to our Reformed convictions our rulers reign by the will of God, the Creator. God has given the sword to rulers. Christ recognized the fact that Pilate had received power from on high. Nebuchednezzar extols and honors the King of heaven. John and Peter tell the Sanhedrin that they must obey God rather than man. On the other hand there are references in the New Testament that clearly indicate that all power has been given to the risen Lord. He is King of Kings and Lord of Lords. The Father hath put all things in subjection under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church (Ephesians 1:22). How these two are related in the exaltation of Christ—the power of God as Creator, and the honor and supremacy of the Risen Lord—is a study worthy of independent pursuit. But the point is this that we concur with the Reformed Presbyterian Church that our exalted Lord must be recognized in our political life as well as in our homes, education, and industry. But the question is, without getting into this facet of the problem: How?

To approach an answer we must first ask the question: What is the Constitution? The purpose of the Constitution is expressed in its "Preamble" — "We, the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect Union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defence, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America." *The Constitution is in its very nature a compact of all citizens indiscriminately, a common ground of good government, mutual recognition of common rights, a mode of operation agreed upon equitable to all its citizens. That is all it ever was intended to be.*

We are not concerned first of all with pragmatic questions: "If the name of Christ were in the Constitution what would happen?" It must be an unequivocal tenet of our faith that our Lord will never accept silence on our part because of difficulties. Difficulties may never deter us of inserting the name of our Lord. What should guide us is principle. From a principal point of view we believe that the name of Christ should not be in the Constitution, a document of all citizens for their mutual rights.

Such an insertion in the Constitution, a mutual compact, would border on the invasion of the government in the rights of the individual. It would be tantamount to saying, as an American citizen you must believe that our Lord is Savior and King. There must be the *legal* right to be a non-christian in order that the acceptance of Christ be one of choice and not of compulsion. If it is in the Constitution there is a compulsion about it, contrary to the teaching of the New Testament that this must be an individual choice. God's people are a willing people.

Section three of the proposed amendment confesses the weakness of the proposal rather than a solution of a difficulty. It avers that Congress can pass the necessary legislature to grant citizens the right to take an oath or affirmation without prejudicing their religious convictions. This borders on an inner contradiction. If the name of Christ must be in the Constitution, if it is principally demanded, then what Congress would have the right to make exceptions? What Congress, human organization, can rule Christ out of an oath? If this exception is not made, then a man must be a Christian to take the oath of captain, soldier, president, etc. The difficulty stems from this that we are putting the name of Christ in a political document in which it does not belong.

Before endorsing this amendment we should also seek an elucidation of the appositive description: "Savior and King of Nations."

Must the Constitution confess this as the spokesman of all citizens? In what sense is Christ the Savior of nations? Can the none saved confess that Christ is the Savior? This term in the New Testament is redemptive, and should a "redemptive" concept be in our Constitution?

There is also the danger of moralism. By that we mean that citizens are called upon to recognize the laws of Christ, the authority of Christ indiscriminately. The New Testament teaches us that the only way we can recognize Christ and his law is through regeneration. We could create the convictions that by doing some law of Christ we recognize Christ. To try to do the laws of Christ without regeneration and faith is moralism, a situation that did prevail in the New England colonies.

The foregoing should suggest to us another approach. This approach should include four elements. 1. Honest attempt at evangelism; 2. Insistence in our preaching that we can obey Christ acceptably only when we are born again. 3. Recognizing Christ in public places as a personal witness and testimony.

Men, born again men, must recognize Christ in public places. An amendment in our complexed pagan-Christian land will not be effective, and in a short time will be mere formalism. We think of the Christians at Rome defying emperor worship; Christians in our day defying Shintoism as in Korea; or Christians in Nazi or Communistic controlled lands. We think of hymn writers who taught us "in the beauty of the lilies Christ was born across the sea!" Living personalities witness to

Christ's kingship. 4. We must prosecute Christian education to untold limits to train a Christian citizenry for Christian leadership. And we must show that we take *Pro-Rege* seriously. A nation never rises higher in its recognition of Christ than the spiritual level of its Christian leaders. These leaders may never be neutral.

Our committee wishes to underscore that the above are thoughts we wish to suggest for consideration only, and not for adoption.

3. *Recommendations*: Synod declare:

a. *The Synod of the Christian Reformed Church shares with the Reformed Presbyterian Church the conviction that Christ must be recognized as King, and His will must be obeyed.*

b. *Synod further declares that it is not convinced that the addition of an amendment to that effect is proper in the Constitution. Such an amendment can lead further to all kinds of difficulties of our own making.*

c. *Synod calls upon the entire church to be faithful constantly in living Christ in their private and public lives, and to promote the cause of Christian education also with the view of training for Christian leadership.*

d. *Should Synod act favorably upon our recommendation to appoint a committee for ecumenical conversations with the Reformed Presbyterian Church that Synod submit this question to the committee on ecumenical conversations for further discussion, with a committee of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in America.*

II. ECUMENICITY AND INTERCHURCH CORRESPONDENCE—FOREIGN

A. CORRESPONDENCE FROM THE REFORMED CHURCHES OF NEW ZEALAND

1. *Letter addressed to all the members of the Reformed Ecumenical Synod*

a. *Orientation*—According to Article 64 A, pp. 29-32, *Acts of Synod, 1955*, The Reformed Churches of New Zealand addressed a letter to our Synod expressing great apprehension "that some of the member churches of the Edinburgh Synod almost immediately after its meeting joined the World Council of Churches. We feel it to be a most disturbing situation within our reformed fellowship that the advices of the Edinburgh Synod are so manifestly neglected and the affiliation with the W.C.C. so unwisely accepted."

The recommendation that was adopted by the Synod of 1955 is that "this letter be referred to the standing committee on Ecumenicity for study and advice." The grounds for that decision are: this matter should be discussed in our churches; and that this matter should be studied

by the standing committee on ecumenicity before the denomination takes any action.

b. *Analysis* — The Ecumenical Synod of Edinburgh advised the member churches of this synod not to join the WCC as now constituted. According to the Reformed Churches of New Zealand certain churches immediately after this advice was given did join the WCC. Unfortunately no church is mentioned by name.

From the Acts of Synod we learn that the entire letter is referred to our committee. This letter has definite judgments upon the WCC and the Synod of 1955 seems to have sensed this also as is evident by the inclusion of the decisions of Edinburgh anent this matter.

Hence such problems as these face our committee: 1. What should and what can we do about churches who have joined the WCC and remain members of the Reformed Ecumenical Synods? 2. Is it compatible to be a member of the WCC and of Reformed Ecumenical synods?

This opens wide the entire question of our relationship as Reformed churches to the WCC. Our sister church in the Netherlands has appointed a special committee to study this question. If we interpret our mandate correctly then our committee will likewise serve our church in that capacity. This would be a splendid and necessary pursuit. Your committee could make contacts with the committee in the Netherlands. This could serve as a forward step in becoming ecumenically conscious according to Reformed principles.

c. *Recommendation* — It was impossible for your committee to begin, much less to complete, such a study. We therefore recommend to Synod that *Synod continue its committee to study the questions involved in the letter of the Reformed Churches of New Zealand and to submit a report to the Synod of 1957 so that possible recommendations may be sent to the Ecumenical Synod of 1958.*

2. *Westminster Confession and the Reformed Churches of New Zealand*

a. *Orientation* — Synod of 1955 (*Acts*, p. 32), committed to our committee the "Communication of the Reformed Church in New Zealand in which the question is asked concerning fellowship with churches holding the Westminster Confession." "Synod decides to refer this matter to the Committee on Ecumenicity and Interchurch Correspondence for a reply."

b. *Analysis* — Your committee in reviewing this matter discovered from correspondence at hand that the question was not one basically of fellowship with churches holding the Westminster Confession. The answer to that question is very simple since the Ecumenical Synod has included also the Westminster Confession as a classical symbol of the Reformed faith, and such it always has been considered in the Reformed world.

The question seems to lie in another direction. We quote from their communication:

"We are very much interested in the question, if the Christian Reformed Churches never were faced with the question of accepting the Westminster Confession of Faith and what the result was. Your churches face the same difficulty in connecting with the English speaking Calvinistic world. You too cooperate with churches, who uphold the Westminster Confession of Faith. *But as far as we know, your churches never accepted the Westminster Confession of Faith next to the Three Forms.* (Italics, J. T. H.) We are very interested in the motives, which guided your churches in not doing it. It might influence the decision, which we will make, may be on our next Synod in June."

The one question is: What has the Christian Reformed Church done in similar circumstances, and why?

We are not in similar circumstances since the Presbyterian Church is not the dominant church in the United States as it seems to be in New Zealand. We have, however, replied to our brethren that we did not encounter this problem as yet, but may do soon if Synod acts favorably upon our recommendation to encourage ecumenical conversations. We called their attention to the fact that the Westminster symbol has always constituted a basis of Reformed fellowship. Addressing ourselves specifically to the problem of including the Westminster Confession with the Three Forms of Unity we replied that we do not see any objection to doing so. This, of course, is rather unique, but understandable in a Presbyterian country. The Reformed Churches of New Zealand display a missionary spirit, and we can commend them for doing so, and they believe this will be a great help to them by including this symbol with the three others. We also called their attention to the reformulation of Article 23 of the Westminster Confession in the American editions of the Confession pertaining to the relationship of the government to the church.

c. *Recommendation: We recommend Synod to accept this as information.*

2. *Communication from the Reformed Churches in Indonesia*

a. *Orientation* — Our Synod of 1954 had declined the invitation to begin mission work in Indonesia. In reply to this declination the Synod of the Reformed Churches in Indonesia state: "In spite of the unfavorable decision of the Synod of the Christian Reformed Churches, 1954, at the request of our Synod asking for their joining the Mission work among the Javanese on Sumatra, the past Synod of the "Gereformeerde Kerken in Indonesië" held 4th—7th July 1955 in Djakarta has resolved to ask the Chr. Ref. Churches again for help. The audacity of this resolution is caused by the emergency of our need. Dr. Bergsma

who visited the Chr. Ref. Churches very recently also urged the Synod to continue asking for cooperation on the mission field of Sumatra."

This letter also contains two remarks worthy of note. It informs us that the Reformed Churches of Indonesia do not belong to the W.C.C. In another document they inform us to the effect that although they feel we should be a witness, we should do so as an entire Reformed family, if we are to do it, or remain isolated as a body. This letter also informs us that the "National Council is not influenced by modernism." This first item will correct a wrong impression that this church is a constituent member of the WCC.

b. *Recommendations* This letter is addressed to the Christian Reformed Synod, in care of our Christian Reformed Board of Missions. We recommend that *Synod refer this matter to the Christian Reformed Board of Missions for advice*. Our task is simply to bring these matters to the attention of Synod.

3. *The Christian Church in Sudan (Ekkliziyar Kristi A Sudan)*

a. *Orientation* — The Synod of 1955 was filled with gratitude toward God when it learned of the founding of the Christian Church in the Sudan, fruit also of the labors of our denomination. Our church was further pleased that the church in Nigeria desired to establish fellowship and interchange of correspondence. This matter was referred to our committee to advise Synod of 1956.

We express our appreciation to the Rev. Edgar Smith who submitted to each member of our committee a translated copy of the history and the constitution of the new church. Besides both he and the Rev. Mr. Robert Recker, both missionaries from that area, joined in our conversations and favored us with sharing their knowledge of the problems of that field.

b. *Analysis*. According to Art. VIII 3, Page 28, *Acts*, 1955: "Synod refer the *request of this new church for fellowship and interchange of correspondence*" to our committee. (Italics-JTH). Our ecumenicity operates in two areas: 1. sister church; 2. corresponding church. The request can so be construed as a request to be a corresponding church. The question we faced was this: Shall we recommend this church to be a corresponding church, or a sister church? She is a self-dependent daughter, and shall we only be a corresponding church?

If we could recommend this church as a sister church we felt that a closer bond would be established, and a greater encouragement would be given to our brethren in the Lord there.

With that in mind we asked for a copy of the Constitution of this Church. We perused it. A copy of this will be submitted to the Advisory committee of Synod should it desire to study it. At any rate a copy should be in our archives with the history of this church for our records.

We must bear in mind two things: 1. This Church has recently emerged from heathendom. We are thankful for God's manifest grace that it has become a light in a dark area of sin. 2. This Church does not have the history of a Western Church. It is a Church of Africa, and it must travel its own African road. We cannot expect that Church to repeat our history.

In the Constitution of that Church we note that the Heidelberg Catechism shall be taught. The teachers are trained in that Catechism. We also note that other accepted Reformed symbols are also taught, although none is mentioned by name. It further states that the creed of this church is the Apostles Creed. We do not find the Belgic Confession mentioned, nor the Canons of Dort. But the situation is this: there is no occasion there as yet to insert them in a standard of a church. They could be put in the Constitution of the Church but it would be meaningless to the Church at this stage of its history. And should the question of Arminianism ever arise in this Church, it should have the right to write its own creed, couched in the African language, reflecting the tenor of its soul, and adopted to the situation which would then exist. In the not too distant future we can expect "Younger Churches" to write creeds in their own language and for their own people.

Considering therefore that this church is recently won to Christianity, and that the African Church must develop as an African Reformed Church according to the needs of said church, we, knowing this is a bit of an exception, *recommend to Synod to invite this Church to become a sister church, and that it join the Reformed fellowship in its ecumenical aspirations. We also recommend that Synod invite this Church to become a constituent member of the Reformed Ecumenical Synod, and that Synod take the appropriate steps in recommending our sister church to our Ecumenical fellowship.*

May our Lord send His Holy Spirit to strengthen and to guide you during your busy labors at Synod.

Committee on Ecumenicity and Interchurch Correspondence

WM. RUTGERS, *Chairman*
J. T. HOOGSTRA, *Secretary*
R. J. DANHOF
M. MONSMA

REPORT NO. 18

PUBLICATION COMMITTEE

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

THE Publication Committee of the Christian Reformed Church herewith presents the report of its activities during the past year, and desires to bring the following to the attention of Synod.

I. COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP.

The Publication Committee is divided into two sub-committees, known as the Editorial and Business Committees respectively. The Editorial Committee is composed of the following members: the Revs: C. Boomsma, W. Van Peurse, N. Veltman, and J. A. Mulder. The Messrs. A. Hulst, G. Hertel, J. Peterson, A. Vanden Bout, and C. Van Valkenburg comprise the Business Committee. These sub-committees meet as the business requires, while the whole Committee meets on the first Thursday of the month. During the past year the Rev. C. Boomsma functioned as chairman, J. A. Mulder as secretary, and A. Vanden Bout as treasurer.

On the Editorial Committee the terms of the brethren C. Boomsma and J. A. Mulder expire at this time. Since the Rev. Boomsma has filled the six-year period permitted by Synodical ruling, his retirement is compulsory. The Committee desires herewith to thank him for his years of valuable service, and expresses its regret to see him retire. To fill this vacancy we submit the following nomination:

Dr. George Goris,
Rev. Gysbert Rozenboom.

Since Rev. Mulder has completed a three-year term, he is eligible for re-election, and we present the following nomination:

Rev. John A. Mulder,
Rev. John F. Schuurmann.

One member of the Business Committee, Mr. J. Peterson, has also fulfilled a three-year term, and is thus eligible for re-election. Therefore we submit the nomination of

Mr. J. Peterson,
Mr. A. Hoogewind.

II. THE PLANT.

Although at this writing the business of the Publishing House is still carried on at its location on 47 Jefferson Ave. SE., the time for moving to our new quarters is imminent. The present property has been sold to the Westminster Presbyterian Church for the sum of \$120,000. We are eagerly awaiting the transfer to the new building, and hope to occupy it by the first of April.

Dedication ceremonies have been arranged for the Thursday afternoon of the first week of Synodical session, at 1:30 P.M. We hereby petition Synod to arrange to meet for a brief service on the premises of the Denominational Building at that time, in order that the new edifice may be duly dedicated to God by our highest ecclesiastical assembly. Open house for the general public will be held on Thursday and Friday evenings of this same week. We trust our new facilities will greatly increase the effectiveness of the Publishing House in the discharge of the duties assigned it.

III. EDITORS AND PERSONNEL.

The three editors engaged in the publication of our church periodicals have labored faithfully and diligently throughout the past year. We are convinced that our reading public is not aware of all the time and energy expended in the publication of our papers.

Particularly do we wish to single out the activities of the Rev. H. J. Kuiper, Editor of *The Banner*, who, according to Synodical decision, retires Sept. 1 of the present year. During the 28 years of his tenure of office, he has effected great improvements in *The Banner*, both in format and contents. His vision has kept *The Banner* progressing in the best traditions of church publications. The present attractive format indicates how Editor Kuiper has sought to incorporate the best in new developments in the publication of our official English-language periodical. As to the content of *The Banner*, we feel only eternity will reveal the true measure of impact Rev. Kuiper's work has made upon the life of the Church and her individual members. In recognition of his 28 years of service, we feel Synod may well honor him with a testimonial dinner some convenient evening during the Synodical session, and request Synod to make this arrangement. The Publication Committee hereby expresses its thanks to Rev. Kuiper, and wishes him the Lord's continued blessing in the years of his retirement.

Rev. J. Vander Ploeg, Editor-elect, began his work for the Publication Committee at the first of the year. Having obtained a home in Cutlerville, the brother moved from Kalamazoo the last week of 1955, and was ready to begin the task of orientation at once. Plans made in consultation with Rev. Kuiper and the Publication Committee included attending a School of Journalism for one quarter, and gaining first-hand knowledge of the responsibilities devolving upon him next Fall by working in the editorial offices during the remainder of the period ending Sept. 1, when he will assume full responsibility. During Rev. Kuiper's annual vacation Rev. Vander Ploeg took over the task of writing the guest-editorials and performing the other labors belonging to the task of the editor. We pray Rev. Vander Ploeg will be richly used by our covenant God in the office to which he has been elected by Synod.

Rev. E. Van Halsema, Editor of De Wachter, is now also part-time instructor at Calvin College. He is discharging his editorial duties in a manner deserving commendation. Through no fault of his, De Wachter must be subsidized from other sources, since the number of subscribers is not adequate to cover the cost of production. The deficit for the last fiscal year was \$10,905.52 for 5,975 subscriptions. Yet we feel De Wachter is serving a real and important role in our denominational life, and we strive to maintain as high a degree of excellence as possible. Rev. Van Halsema's continued enthusiasm under the attendant difficulties does much to insure the success of De Wachter with the blessing of God.

Rev. J. Schaal continues as Editor of the Sunday School papers. Although the publication of these papers is directly under the jurisdiction of the Synodical Sunday School Committee, the work is closely related to that of the Publication Committee, and harmonious relationships have always marked the mutual areas of endeavor. The papers enjoy wide circulation and are received with approbation.

Although we have no editor for The Yearbook, the 1956 issue made its appearance on schedule, due to the efforts of our Business Manager, Mr. Buiten. A new feature was the "Index to Churches by Provinces and States," for the convenience of our members who desire to attend one of our churches during their travels. We express our thanks to Dr. John Kromminga for his willingness to write "Our Family Circle." Plans are being made to put out an issue in 1957 which will reflect something of our centennial anniversary.

In August Mr. J. J. Buiten, Business Manager since Jan. 1, 1917, is due to retire. He has been very busy in the expanding activities of The Christian Reformed Publishing House, and a multitude of details demanded his constant attention. The Publication Committee hereby recognizes with thanks the many years of fine service rendered the denomination and the sense of loyalty revealed throughout this period. As he retires from our employ, we wish him the blessing of the Lord in the years remaining for him. We petition Synod to take official recognition of the brother's labors for the denomination, and to include him as the second guest of honor at the testimonial dinner which we are asking Synod to arrange.

Efforts have been put forth to secure a successor for Mr. Buiten, and we are happy to report that Mr. Peter Meeuwsen has received and accepted this appointment. Mr. Meeuwsen comes well recommended for his task, and we pray he will be richly used by God in his new work. Due to expanding business and increasing responsibilities, a plan is being studied to relieve the new Business Manager of part of the burden through the appointment of a shop foreman. We believe this step will be in the interest of increased efficiency because of the multiplication

of duties that rested on Mr. Buiten in recent years. May the Lord continue to bless all the activities of The Christian Reformed Publishing House in the years to come.

IV. SUMMARY.

The matters requiring Synodical attention and action are the following:

A. Appointment of committee members:

- For a three year term: Dr. George Goris
 Rev. Gysbert Rozenboom
 For a three year term: Rev. John A. Mulder *
 Rev. John F. Schuurmann
 For a three year term: Mr. John Peterson *
 Mr. Anton J. Hoogewind

* Indicates those now serving, eligible for reelection.

B. We request Synod to make arrangements whereby the delegates attend *dedication ceremonies at the Denominational Building* at 1:30 P.M. on Thursday of the first week of session.

C. We request Synod to arrange a *testimonial dinner in honor of the Rev. H. J. Kuiper, retiring Editor of The Banner, and Mr. J. J. Buiten, retiring Business Manager of The Christian Reformed Publishing House*, in view of the many years of service these brethren have given to the denomination, thus taking official recognition of the labors they have faithfully performed.

Humbly submitted,
 The Publication Committee,
 REV. JOHN A. MULDER, Sec'y.

FINANCIAL REPORT

CONSOLIDATED OPERATING STATEMENT FOR YEAR 1955

I-N-C-O-M-E

Banner Subscriptions	\$135,965.03	
Banner Advertising	31,253.13	
Wachter Total Income	15,967.58	
Sunday School Papers	103,568.55	
Psalter Hymnals	22,280.03	
Year Books	8,267.96	
Books & Other Works	16,968.82	
Total		\$334,271.10
OTHER INCOME:		
Interest Earned less Paid	1,677.36	
Rent Parking Lot	790.62	
Loss on Tracts, etc.	143.91-	
Waste Paper & Lumber	110.00	
Total Other Income		2,434.07
TOTAL INCOME:		\$336,705.17

O-P-E-R-A-T-I-N-G C-O-S-T

MECHANICAL & DISTRIBUTING:

Paper & Supplies	\$ 66,290.51	
Cost of Year Books	7,379.41	
Cost of Psalter Hymnals	15,738.43	
Printing Ink	3,958.44	
Cost of Books & Other Works	15,628.72	
Shop Wages	67,073.86	
Shop Expenses	780.99	
Heat, Light & Power	1,905.01	
Engraving & Photos	11,076.39	
Rollers & Repairs	864.04	
Wrapping Wire	1,770.92	
Depreciation — Building & Machinery	5,375.07	
Delivery & Postage	13,610.48	
Insurance	408.13	
Total		211,860.40

EDITORIAL & CIRCULATION:

Editors & Contributors	21,179.10	
Committee Fees & Expenses	927.35	
Agents Salary & Expenses	5,800.00	
Other Agents Commissions	8,872.38	
Total		36,778.83

ADMINISTRATIVE COST:

Office Salaries	29,335.70	
Postage	452.03	
Supplies	1,551.65	
Stencils & Rolls	343.74	
Telephone	208.89	
Bank Charges & Can. Exchange	412.23	
Real & Personal Tax	1,696.09	
Cleaning & Miscellaneous	1,568.00	
Employers Pension & Social Security Tax	2,659.94	
Total		38,228.27

Total Operating Cost	\$286,867.50
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OPERATING PROFIT FOR 1955	\$ 49,837.67
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II. SALE OF BUILDING

Land and Building—47 Jefferson Ave. Sales Price.....	\$120,000.00	
Title, recording fees & taxes	160.50	
Net Proceeds		\$119,839.50
Land Cost	22,000.00	
Building Cost	33,423.78	
Total Cost	55,423.78	

Less: Reserve for Depreciation	12,032.64	
Book Value		43,391.14
Profit on Sale of 47 Jefferson Ave., S.E.		\$ 76,448.36

III. BALANCE SHEET

as at
DECEMBER 31, 1955

A-S-S-E-T-S

CURRENT:

Cash in Bank and on Hand	\$ 38,950.48	
Accounts Receivable	35,827.38	
Inventory, Paper, Supplies & Type	38,075.03	
Accounts Receivable - Westm. Presb. Church (1)....	50,000.00	
Note Receivable - Westminster Presb. Church (2)....	50,000.00	
Total Current Assets		207,852.89

FIXED ASSETS:	COST	DEPR'TION	BOOK VALUE	
Bldg. & Lot -				
2850 Kalamazoo Ave.....	\$351,741.88		351,741.88	
Property on 28th St.	13,372.08		13,372.08	
Machinery & Equipment	105,508.86	57,718.96	47,789.90	
Office Equipment	7,167.97	4,225.95	2,942.02	
Totals	\$477,790.29	\$ 61,944.91	\$415,845.38	\$415,845.38
Prepaid Hospital Insurance				60.38

Total Assets: \$623,758.65

L-I-A-B-I-L-I-T-I-E-S

CURRENT:

Accrued Soc. Sec. & Withholding Tax	\$ 2,614.49	
Contract on Building - 28th St.	5,814.97	
Notes Payable - Peoples National Bank	45,000.00	
Total Current Liabilities		52,929.46

E-Q-U-I-T-I-E-S

Investment, January 1, 1955	\$317,770.66	
Operating Profit for 1955	49,837.67	
Profit on Sales of Building	76,448.36	
	444,056.69	
Loss on Sold U. S. Bonds	3,227.50	
	440,829.19	
Contributed by Denom. Bldg. Com. (unconditional)	130,000.00	
Investment, December 31, 1955		\$570,829.19

TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITIES: \$623,758.65

- (1) Payment of \$50,000.00 received February 3, 1956.
- (2) Promissory Note, Dated December 15, 1955 - due one year after date 4% interest will start at date of possession of the building.

IV. BRIEF ANALYSIS OF PROFIT & LOSS

Banner Profit	\$27,107.54
Sunday School Papers Profit	22,431.33
Psalter Hymnals Profit	6,541.60
Books, etc. Profit	2,228.65
Other Income	2,434.07
Total	60,743.19
De Wachter Loss	10,905.52
Total Profit	\$49,837.67

V. BUILDING PROJECT DETAIL OF EXPENDITURES DECEMBER 31, 1955

LOTS AND IMPROVEMENTS:

To Agnes Baarle:

Down Payment on Lot	\$ 100.00	
1st Payment on Note	14,158.00	
2nd and 3rd Payments	28,500.00	
Final Payment on Lot	14,457.81	57,215.81
Survey of Lot		229.00
Grading & Leveling Lot		7,095.50
Clearing Lot		10.00
Seeding Lot		125.42
Attorney Fee		41.35
Taxes - 1953		98.06
Taxes - 1954		397.94
Taxes - 1955		565.45
Interest on Notes		121.92
Cost of Lot with Improvements		65,900.45

OSTERINK CONSTRUCTION COMPANY:

May 13, 1955 — Cert. #1-Payment on Contract.....	40,770.00	
June 6, 1955 — Cert. #2-Payment on Contract.....	40,500.00	
July 11, 1955 — Cert. #3-Payment on Contract.....	46,350.00	
Aug. 4, 1955 — Cert. #4-Payment on Contract.....	34,569.00	
Sept. 12, 1955 — Cert. #5-Payment on Contract.....	30,572.44	
Oct. 11, 1955 — Cert. #6-Payment on Contract.....	25,875.00	
Nov. 10, 1955 — Cert. #7-Payment on Contract.....	20,448.00	
Nov. 10, 1955 — Cert. #8-Payment on Contract.....	1,811.62	
Nov. 10, 1955 — Cert. #9-Payment on Contract.....	17,754.30	
Total Payments to Osterink Construction Co.		258,650.36
Dec. 22, 1955 Payment - Leitelt Elevator Co.		5,390.00

ROCKWOOD SPRINKLER COMPANY:

Sept. 6, 1955 — Payment	2,314.72	
Oct. 5, 1955 — Payment	1,157.36	
Nov. 10, 1955 — Payment	2,256.85	
Total Payments to Rockwood Sprinkler Co.		5,728.93

ARCHITECTS' FEES - JAMES K. HAVEMAN:

Payment on Plans	2,500.00
Apr. 21, 1955 — Payment	7,104.50

Total Payments to Architect	9,604.50
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Dec. 22, 1955 — Payment — Hertel Electric Co.....	167.48
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ENGINEER'S FEES - SNYDER & MC LEAN:

Apr. 21, 1955 — Payment	4,244.93
Nov. 14, 1955 — Payment	894.26

Total Payments to Engineers' Fees	5,139.19
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BUILDING PERMIT:	240.00
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PARIS TOWNSHIP WATER WORKS:	145.00
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INSURANCE

June 3, 1955 — Grand Rapids Ins. Agency	165.50
June 3, 1955 — Grand Rapids, Ins. Agency	274.75
June 3, 1955 — Tony Noordewier & Son	137.38
June 3, 1955 — Herman N. Dosker & Co.	137.38

Total Insurance Paid	715.01
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OTHER EXPENSES:	60.46
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Total Expenditures to date of Dec. 31, 1955	\$351,741.38
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Complete financial picture will be available by time Synod meets in June.

VI. PUBLICATIONS PRINTED

Average circulation for 1955

The Banner	38,000
De Wachter	5,975
Bible Truth	26,000
Bible Guide	13,700
Bible Light	14,500
Bible Stories	15,000
The Key	7,800

Respectfully submitted

CORNELIUS VAN VALKENBURG

Secretary of Business Committee

REPORT NO. 19

SYNODICAL TRACT COMMITTEE

To the Synod of 1956:

ESTEEMED BRETHREN :

AT THE CLOSE of the eleventh year of its existence, your committee is pleased to present the following report for the year March 15, 1955 to March 15, 1956.

PERSONNEL

The members that served on the committee were:

Rev. N. L. Veltman - Chairman
Mr. G. Dykman
Rev. H. J. Teitsma - Secretary
Rev. G. Vande Riet
Mr. C. Dykhouse - Treasurer
Rev. Wm. Vander Hoven - Vice-Pres.
Mr. J. De Jager
Mr. R. Weidenaar
Mr. L. Vander Till
Rev. E. Jabaay

During the course of the year, we had to bid farewell to four of our members. Rev. E. Jabaay accepted a call out to the East. Mr. G. Dykman resigned because of change of church affiliation. He became a missionary of the Reformed Church of America. Rev. G. Vande Riet accepted a call to the Northwest to Edmonton. And Mr. L. Vander Till resigned because the time of meeting conflicted with his work and he was not able to come to the meetings. Appointments have been made to take the places of each. Our committee was hampered somewhat by this but we look forward to the new personnel with great expectations.

ACTIVITIES

In addition to attending the regular meetings held the third week of the month, the members of this Committee also served on the sub-committees relating to the producing of our tracts. They are as follows:

Editorial — Rev. Wm. Vander Hoven, Mr. L. Vander Till

Title — Rev. H. Teitsma, Rev. G. Vande Riet

Assignment — Rev. N. L. Veltman

Art and Printing — J. De Jager, R. Weidenaar

Promotion — C. Dykhouse

Though there were many pressing duties calling for the time of the committee members, opportunity was found for this very important work. The work merits much more than any of us are able to give to it. Nevertheless, the work progressed satisfactorily. New titles were approved and assigned to various writers. Some of these and others

previously assigned, were written and accepted and are either in the process of receiving appropriate formats, are at the printer, or are on the market. By the time a tract reaches the state of completion it represents a good deal of work and management.

It is worthy of attention to note that there has been a trend in our tracts toward doctrinal subjects. We have a series being produced on Roman Catholicism, The Last Things, one on the reality of God, etc. Besides this, we are developing a group of tracts appropriate for sick visiting. Serious consideration is also being given to the development of more of the booklet type tracts. Different size tracts have been suggested. The committee is aware of untold possibilities of spreading the Word and witness through this agency. It seems that so much more could and should be done.

In seeking to promote the use of tracts, we have been using magazine advertisements with a measure of success. Other promotional schemes are under consideration. We are at present investigating the production of a movie for use in the churches that would encourage tract distribution. We need the help of all in bringing this to the attention of our people that they might make more use of this type of witness. There are so many possibilities.

The Christian Reformed Publishing House again served as distribution center. There has been some difficulty in keeping up with the printing of the tracts due to their limited quarters. This day is past, however, and we look forward to a better day when they can handle all that we can give them. During the past year some 500,000 tracts were distributed to them. Mr. J. Buiten and his staff are to be commended for the way that they handled the work. They have been laboring under difficulty due to their small capacity quarters, but still were able to give friendly and excellent cooperation in this matter.

All in all, this report only briefly touches on the problems and possibilities of tract production and promotion. One thing is certain — this is a growing field of witness and labor and not a dead or dying one. It has the love of our people who also feel the great challenge presented in this ministry. We request the prayers and cooperation of all that this work may go on.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Your Committee requests Synod to recommend this cause to the churches for moral and financial support.
2. Your Committee requests the approval of Synod on the action in interim appointments.
3. Your Committee recommends that Synod elect three men from the following list of nominations. This will meet the need and requirements of the Committee. The three retiring members are Rev. N. L.

Veltman, Mr. R. Weidenaar and Mr. J. De Jager. They are all subject to re-election. Thus our nominations.

Elect one from each group: Rev. N. L. Veltman
 Rev. H. Guikema
 Mr. J. De Jager (engraver)
 Mr. Richard Hoekstra (printer)
 Mr. R. Weidenaar (artist) — your committee recommend in his case that Synod re-appoint him due to the fact that his work is of a highly specialized nature and we know of none that would be able to do what he is doing for the Committee.

Respectfully submitted,

REV. N. L. VELTMAN, *Chairman*
 REV. H. J. TEITSMA, *Secretary*

BACK TO GOD TRACT COMMITTEE
STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS & DISBURSEMENTS
 April 1, 1955 to December 31, 1955

April 1, 1955 Balance in Bank		\$17,873.61
RECEIPTS FOR PERIOD:		
Church and Individual Contributions	\$ 1,183.98	
Sale of Tracts, Inc. Postage & Packing	1,162.08	2,346.06
		<hr/>
		20,219.67
DISBURSEMENTS FOR PERIOD:		
Printing of Tracts	2,091.79	
Advertising	1,562.00	
Art Work	110.68	
Travelling Expenses	278.76	
Postage & Supplies, Sec'y and Treas.	64.86	
Free Distribution	3.45	
Writing Tract	5.00	
Auditing Fees	25.00	
Secretarial Services	52.00	
Miscellaneous Expenses	24.11	
Treasurer's Bond Premium	25.00	4,242.65
		<hr/>

12-31-55 Balance in Peoples Saving Bank,
 Grand Haven, Michigan \$15,977.02

To WHOM IT MAY CONCERN: February 11, 1956

I have audited the Books of the Treasurer of the BACK TO GOD TRACT COMMITTEE, Rev. Herman Teitsma, for the period from April 1, 1955 to December 31, 1955 and prepared the above statement of RECEIPTS and DISBURSEMENTS.

The balance as shown agrees with that shown on the reconciled Bank Statement for December 31, 1955.

George F. Wieland, Accountant

REPORT NO. 20

UNITED YOUTH COMMITTEE

ESTEEMED BRETHREN :

THE United Youth Committee is very happy to report that the American Federation of Reformed Young Women's Societies and the Young Calvinist Federation have cast their vote on the matter of amalgamation during the course of the past year, and have decided by a 94% favorable vote to unite their activities under a single organization. The proposed constitution submitted to the Federations has been adopted, and though a certain amount of work yet remains before the dissolution of the existing organizations takes place, the decision which this committee has been seeking for almost a decade now is an accomplished fact. The vote was taken by ballot throughout all of the member societies, rather than at the national conventions, in order to secure the decision which most completely represents the will of all of the members.

The Constitutional Committee which has worked faithfully in setting up the organizational plan and establishing the necessary by-laws has been discharged upon completion of its work, and at present an Interim Committee which is composed of members from the Young Calvinist Federation, the American Federation of Reformed Young Women's Societies, and the Calvinist Cadet Corps, is carrying on the work of arranging the final details, such as transfer of property and personnel, setting up districts from which Board Members will be elected, etc. It is the desire of this committee to complete its work before the end of 1956, in order that the new board of the combined federation, which will be known as the Young Calvinist Federation of North America, may begin with the new year. It has already been decided that the present personnel of the existing federations shall be retired, and that those programs and projects which are being carried on at present shall be brought to completion, in order that with the advent of a united organization, there shall be no loss sustained in activities on the part of any group.

The Calvinist Cadet Corps continues to make excellent progress. Already approximately one hundred churches have Cadet Clubs. The Corps has not yet decided whether or not it will become a part of the United Youth Federation. A decision by that organization is expected between the date of this report and the time of the Synodical sessions. Your Committee, in cooperation with the Interim Committee, has presented the program, and sought to make all necessary adjustments, in order that this group will cooperate in the larger movement. It is the intent of the Combined Federation to give definite attention in the

near future to the organization of a program for our girls similar to the Calvinist Cadet Corps.

We would also call the attention of Synod to a study committee of the Young Calvinist Federation which is considering the problem of a lack of interest on the part of many of our young people in society activities. The chairman and secretary of the Synodical Committee are also members of this study committee. The problem which is being faced is not a new one, but the Federation felt that it merited serious consideration, and has urged the committee to bring specific recommendations to the next convention as to how this situation can be remedied. It is of interest to note that the Young Calvinist Convention this summer will be held in Hamilton, Ontario: the first time in the history of the Federation that the Canadian Leagues will be host to the young men.

Your Committee recommends that the Young Calvinist Federation, the American Federation of Reformed Young Women's Societies, and the Calvinist Cadet Corps be commended to the churches for their moral support.

Respectfully submitted,
MR. RICHARD POSTMA, *Chairman*
MRS. CORNELIUS JAARMA
MISS CATHERINE VAN OPYNEN
MISS ANNE WEESIES
DR. CLARENCE DE GRAAF
REV. LOUIS DYKSTRA, *Secretary*

REPORT NO. 21

SPONSORSHIP OF FOREIGN STUDENTS

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

THE Committee on Sponsorship of Foreign Students herewith presents its report for the year ended March 15, 1956.

The personnel of the Committee consists of:

Prof. H. G. Dekker, *Chairman*
Mr. Henry De Wit, *Sec'y-Treas.*
Rev. Harry Blystra
Mr. Gordon Buter
Dr. J. T. Hoogstra
Mr. William Huibregtse
Dr. John Kromminga
Dean Henry Ryskamp

Synod of 1955 recommended that one or more offerings be taken by each church to support this program of assistance for foreign students. To date \$85.00 has been received and nothing disbursed. All gifts should be forwarded to the Treasurer, Henry De Wit, c/o Calvin College,

The Committee is preparing a digest of the regulations governing the operation of this fund that can be used in correspondence with persons requesting information about the sponsorship of foreign students.

In accordance with the recommendation made to the Synod of 1955, the Committee expects to make six grants for the school year 1956-57. The Committee is processing the many applications on file.

Respectfully submitted,
H. G. DEKKER, *Chairman*
H. DE WIT, *Sec'y-Treas.*

**INCORPORATION OF OUR CHURCHES IN CANADA
ON A DOMINION WIDE BASIS.**

ESTEEMED BRETHREN :

OUR MANDATE :

WE were appointed to study the matter of the incorporation of our Churches in Canada on a Dominion wide basis, and, obviously, try to bring "this objective to a successful culmination".

The grounds that were added were these :

- 1- It is not an easy matter . . . requires passage of legislation by the Government of Ottawa.
- 2- Precedents have been set by other Denominations in Canada.
- 3- It involves all our Canadian Churches. (See further Acts of Synod of '55, p. 15, II.)

SURVEY of the work and findings of the Committee :

Permit us to say first of all that we have used our own interpretation of Synod's not too clear mandate. It speaks of studying, and also of bringing the matter to a successful culmination. We have already found that this matter does not permit itself to be completed quickly. So we have only a study of the case to report.

From correspondence with ministers of Ontario, notably with Rev. G. Andre of Montreal, we learned that back of this Ontario-overture is the reluctance and/or refusal of the Gov't of Quebec (headed by Catholic Premier Du Plessis, and a government largely if not entirely made up of adherents to the Catholic church) to recognize newly starting non-catholic churches. Ministers of these non-incorporated churches may not perform marriages, nor keep registers of vital statistics (births, baptisms, deaths, etc.,) of civil status.

It must be presumed to have been the unexpressed opinion of Classis Eastern Ont. that by obtaining Dominion wide incorporation we would more or less automatically enjoy this incorporation status also in Quebec.

To obtain such incorporation status — whether Dominion wide or provincial in Quebec — requires a Private Bill to be passed either by Parliament in Ottawa or by the Provincial Legislature of Quebec. These Bills must be drawn up, published and advertized for a number of weeks, and presented, pleaded, made acceptable to legislative committees and eventually acted on by the Legislative Body in session. The success of such a Private Bill depends — apart from the prior data

of the Denomination seeking its passage — mainly upon the skill, personal contacts and appeals of legal counselors with the leading and influential members of government.

It goes without saying that to seek Dominion wide status at Ottawa will require a larger lay-out of money than to seek it only in the Province of Quebec.

When your committee learned that the problem was local and provincial due to the difficulties we meet in the Prov. of Quebec, we have tracked this matter and have gathered information on the matter of obtaining incorporation in the Prov. of Quebec.

Your committee has consulted expert legal counsel. We have asked advice of a former president of the Canadian Bar Association, a man of international legal stature, an elder of the Canadian Presbyterian Church, known favorably and respected in all Canadian legal circles, and most understanding of and sympathetic to our Chr. Ref. Church. Through him we have had contacts with the oldest law-firm of Montreal on our problem.

This information we here submit, most of it in direct quotations.

1- "The Private Bill for such legislation should normally be introduced at or before the beginning of a Session."

Our comment: next fall would be the earliest next opportunity to present such a Bill.

2- "The disbursements, generally speaking, run to around \$1400. However, about \$400. can be remitted by the House if it wishes to do so as the Bill would be classed as one of a charitable or religious nature."

Our comment: This given amount does not, of course, include the fees for legal counsel.

3- "The granting of such a Bill is purely discretionary and although formerly here were never any difficulties made about church bills of whatever denominations, the present attitude in Quebec is much less tolerant."

Our comment: this less tolerant attitude is to be blamed in a large measure to the strong R. C. dislike of Jehovah Witnesses.

4- "In our experience it is not even worth while applying in Quebec unless the group in Montreal of adherents to the Chr. Ref. Church adds up to at least 200 heads of families. In fact we understand that the Jewish lawyers do not apply until they have groups of up to four thousand."

Our comment: According to this statement by a legal firm it seems that we at present have very small, or no chance whatsoever to get passage of a Bill for incorporation in Quebec.

In view of this rather (for the present) hopelessness of the situation would it not be advisable to seek Dominion wide incorporation in order thereby to circumvent the refusal of Quebec?

Our counselors advise against this. Their reasons: Quebec is a very individualistic and separatistic Province and Government. This Province with its government quite frequently is at odds with the Dominion Gov't. Quebec has a strong streak of independentism. Quebec is very jealous of its own provincial rights and authority. Quebec, it may be presumed would not without more recognize nor honor Dominion wide incorporation.

In view of this your committee is of the opinion that we should drop the idea of seeking for Dominion wide incorporation and try only to get incorporation in Quebec, when this may become possible. The other Provinces do not refuse to grant our Church incorporation rights and privilege.

From our Report so far it might well be concluded that the matter should be dropped for the time being. But it might also be said that our committee was too far (2000 miles) from the scene of action and that a committee in or near Montreal would be able to reach the objective. Anyway the problem is purely local and provincial. In passing we may add that Rev. G. Andre in Montreal has done considerable exploratory work in this. He has contacted a Jewish lawyer whom he rates very highly. Presumably, they would like to work out this problem from close-in.

However, our Committee is of the opinion that a Denominational Committee with Synodical mandate, a bit remote from Quebec, would have more weight with governmental personalities, and would serve the objective much better than a local committee. A local committee would in the estimation of the Quebec Legislature be nothing but a group of local representatives of one or two small churches in or near Montreal. They might easily be given the run-around or the brush-off. And let it be well noted, once a Bill fails to pass, not only are the expenses wasted, but chances for passage of a similar future Bill are greatly reduced. Unless one is reasonable sure of success, the matter should not be started at this time. For that reason your committee is strongly of the opinion that a more remote and denominational committee working with and through the best possible legal connections are our only hope of success. Your Committee therefore comes with the following

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1- That the matter of *Dominion Wide* incorporation be dropped. Grounds; Incorporation in Canada, although sometimes done on a National scale, just as in the U. S., is first of all a Provincial (States) matter.

Incorporation of our Churches in other Provinces is no problem as far as we know. It is only in Quebec. The refusal of Quebec cannot be overcome by Dominion wide incorporation.

2- That the matter of seeking incorporation in Quebec be held in abeyance until such a time (when) our churches in Quebec will be numerically strong enough (a minimum of 200 heads of families, or perhaps 200-300 confessing members) to risk the venture.

Our Grounds: The legal advice incorporated in the report above.

3- If Synod, however, should want to press the matter of incorporation in Quebec in the immediate future, we recommend that the present committee be continued and given the mandate to secure the passage of a Bill of Incorporation of the Christian Reformed Church in the Legislature of the Province of Quebec.

Finally, that Synod assume the payment of all expenses incidental to this project.

Reasons: The expenses involved are too large to be saddled on only the Quebec Churches. And this is a matter involving our whole denomination.

Wishing Synod and its Committees God's choicest blessings,

We remain respectfully yours,

J. GORT

GEORGE MONSMA

REV. J. HANENBURG

REPORT NO. 23

CHURCH HELP COMMITTEE

ESTEEMED BRETHREN :

AT the end of another busy year for the Church Help Committee we submit the following as a statement of our activities for the year of 1955.

Total receipts for the year are \$359,575.41. New loans issued total \$252,250.00. To date 199 churches hold loans from this fund. The four churches that are in arrears with their repayments have been written in accordance with Synodical ruling. Quotas have been paid in full by the large majority of the Church. As of Feb. 6, 1956 cash on hand amounted to \$158,438.99. Unpaid promised loans at this date amounted to \$66,000.00. These "unpaid promised loans" will be paid out as soon as the churches receiving these loans are ready to begin building operations. Mr. Marion Wiersma, our newly-appointed treasurer, has been initiated into his work. With the aid of our former treasurer, Mr. Chas. R. Mulder, this change-over has been accomplished efficiently. We wish at this time once more to express a word of hearty appreciation to Mr. Mulder for his many years of excellent service as the treasurer of this committee.

Mr. Wiersma has been bonded as Synod requires. Mr. Albert Engbers, also a new member of our committee, has likewise begun his work. It is already evident that both of these brethren are vitally interested in this branch of Kingdom service.

We are thankful to report that we have been able to carry on without the extra funds that were in the past provided by the Canadian Emergency Building Fund. New loans written in 1955 amount to about \$50,000 less than those written in 1954. This accounts in part for the larger balance on hand. (See above) Lest, however, we over-estimate the size of this balance it is well to keep in mind that it is exactly at this time of the year that our treasury is the most flush. This is due to the fact that many of the churches pay the largest installments of their quotas at the turning of the year.

RECOMMENDATION : In view of the good condition of our treasury we recommend that Synod request a quota of \$5.00 instead of the \$5.50 that was requested in 1955.

Below we present a complete financial report of the Church Help Fund.

Humbly submitted,
 Church Help Committee, Inc.
 Rev. D. D. Bonnema, Pres.
 REV. LOUIS BOUMA, *Sec'y*
 REV. ANDREW BAKER
 MARION WIERSMA, *Treas.*
 ALBERT ENGBERS

BANK RECONCILIATION
 Orange City, Iowa

SCHEDULE "A"

Northwestern State Bank, Orange City, Iowa:

Bank Balance as per Statement, January 31, 1955.....	\$ 63,621.45
1954 Deposits Late	9,496.42
Total	\$ 73,117.87
Less: Checks Outstanding	19,024.52
Our Ledger Balance	\$ 54,093.35
1955 Receipts	359,575.41
Total	\$413,668.76
Less: 1955 Disbursements	255,229.77
On Hand	\$158,438.99
<i>Summary</i>	
Bank Balance as per Statement	\$163,438.99
Less: Checks Outstanding	5,000.00
Balance	\$158,438.99

I HEREBY CERTIFY, that, I have examined the books and records of the Christian Reformed Church, Church Help Fund, Orange City, Iowa, and that the attached is a true statement of the receipts and disbursements for the year ended December 31, 1955, insofar as disclosed by the records.

Respectfully submitted,
 CORA M. HILGER
 Public Accountant

SCHEDULE "B"
ANALYSIS — LOANS OUTSTANDING

Orange City, Iowa

No.	Church at	Outstanding Jan. 1, 1955	New Loans	Payments	Outstanding Dec. 31, 1955
1.	Abbotsford, B. C.....	\$12,125.00			\$12,125.00
2.	Ackley, Iowa	150.00		\$ 150.00	
3.	Acton, Ont.	4,375.00		125.00	4,250.00
4.	Alameda, Calif.	7,200.00		400.00	6,800.00
5.	Alamosa, Colo.	5,950.00		350.00	5,600.00
6.	Albarni, B. C.....	2,325.00	\$ 5,000.00	300.00	7,025.00
7.	Allendale Second, Mich.	9,500.00		500.00	9,000.00

No.	Church at	Outstanding Jan. 1, 1955	New Loans	Payments	Outstanding Dec. 31, 1955
8.	Arcadia, Calif.	9,580.00		620.00	8,960.00
9.	Athens, Ont.	8,750.00		250.00	8,500.00
10.	Aylmer, Ont.	6,250.00		375.00	5,875.00
11.	Barrhead, Alta.	4,500.00			4,500.00
12.	Barrhead-Westlock, Alta.		3,000.00		3,000.00
13.	Barrie, Ont.	8,500.00	5,000.00	250.00	13,250.00
14.	Battle Creek, Mich.	7,250.00		500.00	6,750.00
15.	Bauer, Mich.	1,000.00		1,000.00	
16.	Bejou, Minn.	1,625.00		125.00	1,500.00
17.	Belleville, Ont.		15,000.00		15,000.00
18.	Bellflower Bethany, Calif.	3,000.00			3,000.00
19.	Bellflower Third, Calif.	4,250.00		500.00	3,750.00
20.	Bellwood, Ill.	8,500.00		500.00	8,000.00
21.	Bemis, So. Dak.	5,200.00		500.00	4,700.00
22.	Beverly, Alta.	12,500.00		250.00	12,250.00
23.	Blenheim, Ont.		5,000.00		5,000.00
24.	Bloomfield, Ont.		10,000.00		10,000.00
25.	Bowmanville, Ont.	9,000.00			9,000.00
26.	Bozeman, Mont.	9,800.00		650.00	9,150.00
27.	Brampton, Ont.	13,600.00		800.00	12,800.00
28.	Brandon, Man.	5,950.00	8,000.00		13,950.00
29.	Brantford, Ont.	13,125.00		250.00	12,875.00
30.	Brockville, Bethel, Ont.	7,500.00			7,500.00
31.	Brooks, Alta.	2,250.00	5,000.00	150.00	7,100.00
32.	Cadillac, Mich.	7,000.00		500.00	6,500.00
33.	Calgary, Alta.	12,000.00			12,000.00
34.	Cascade, Mich.	9,250.00		500.00	8,750.00
35.	Cedar, Iowa	5,000.00		250.00	4,750.00
36.	Chatham, Ont.	17,875.00		2,000.00	15,875.00
37.	Chicago — Auburn Park, Ill.	4,875.00		375.00	4,500.00
38.	Chilliwack, B. C.	9,100.00		150.00	8,950.00
39.	Cincinnati, Ohio	6,000.00		400.00	5,600.00
40.	Clara City, Minn.	9,700.00		525.00	9,175.00
41.	Clarkson, Ont.	12,975.00		375.00	12,600.00
42.	Clinton, Ont.	10,475.00			10,475.00
43.	Cobden-Pembroke, Ont.	8,500.00		250.00	8,250.00
44.	Cochrane, Ont.	5,625.00			5,625.00
45.	Conrad, Mont.	9,500.00		550.00	8,950.00
46.	Cornwall, Ont.	12,250.00		250.00	12,000.00
47.	Crookston, Minn.	1,882.90		700.00	1,182.90
48.	Cutlerville East, Mich.		10,000.00		10,000.00
49.	Dearborn, Mich.	9,450.00		650.00	8,800.00
50.	Decatur, Mich.	1,851.49		247.25	1,604.24
51.	Delavan, Wis.	5,950.00		350.00	5,600.00
52.	Denver Second, Colo.	1,750.00		375.00	1,375.00
53.	Denver Third, Colo.	10,000.00		1,000.00	9,000.00
54.	Des Plaines, Ill.	6,000.00		375.00	5,625.00

No.	Church at	Outstanding Jan. 1, 1955	New Loans	Payments	Outstanding Dec. 31, 1955
55.	Dorr, Mich.	1,862.50		325.00	1,537.50
56.	Drayton, Ont.	12,000.00			12,000.00
57.	Dresden, Ont.	12,000.00			12,000.00
58.	Duncan, B. C.	7,706.25	2,000.00		9,706.25
59.	East Palmyra, N. Y. ..	2,975.00		175.00	2,800.00
60.	Edmonton First, Alta.	3,475.00		500.00	2,975.00
61.	Edmonton Second, Alta.	12,000.00			12,000.00
62.	Edmonton Third, Alta.	12,000.00			12,000.00
63.	Emo, Ont.	1,875.00	8,500.00		10,375.00
64.	Escalon, Calif.	7,625.00		500.00	7,125.00
65.	Escondido, Calif.	10,000.00		500.00	9,500.00
66.	Essex, Ont.	9,125.00		510.00	8,615.00
67.	Everson, Wash.	5,716.92		500.00	5,216.92
68.	Exeter, Ont.		10,000.00		10,000.00
69.	Ferrysburg, Mich.	4,000.00		200.00	3,800.00
70.	Flint, Mich.	4,400.00		750.00	3,650.00
71.	Forest, Ont.	3,375.00			3,375.00
72.	Ft. William, Ont.	13,000.00			13,000.00
73.	Fremont Trinity, Mich.		10,000.00		10,000.00
74.	Fruitland, Ont.	10,125.00			10,125.00
75.	Fruitport, Mich.		10,000.00		10,000.00

ANALYSIS — LOANS OUTSTANDING

Orange City, Iowa

No.	Church at	Outstanding Jan. 1, 1955	New Loans	Payments	Outstanding Dec. 31, 1955
76.	Glendale, Calif.	10,000.00		500.00	9,500.00
77.	Goshen, N. Y.	8,000.00		500.00	7,500.00
78.	Grand Rapids Alger Park, Mich.	9,500.00		500.00	9,000.00
79.	Grand Rapids, Boston Square, Mich.	2,000.00		2,000.00	.....
80.	Grand Rapids, Highland Hills, Mich.	6,000.00		6,000.00	.....
81.	Grand Rapids, Im- manuel, Mich.	3,500.00		250.00	3,250.00
83.	Grand Rapids, Mill- brook, Mich.	10,000.00			10,000.00
83.	Grand Rapids, Plymouth Heights, Mich.	6,750.00		375.00	6,375.00
84.	Grand Rapids, River- side, Mich.		4,000.00		4,000.00
85.	Grand Rapids, Thirty- Sixth St., Mich.	10,000.00		500.00	9,500.00
86.	Grandville — South, Mich.		10,000.00		10,000.00
87.	Granum, Alta.	8,650.00			8,650.00
88.	Guelph, Ont.		15,000.00		15,000.00
89.	Hamilton, Mich.	6,800.00		400.00	6,400.00
90.	Hamilton, Ont.	6,550.00		375.00	6,175.00
91.	Haney, B. C.	11,850.00			11,850.00

No.	Church at	Outstanding Jan. 1, 1955	New Loans	Payments	Outstanding Dec. 31, 1955
92.	Hartley, Iowa	4,500.00			4,500.00
93.	Hawarden, Iowa	3,794.07		500.00	3,294.07
94.	Hoboken, N. J.	5,400.00		100.00	5,300.00
95.	Holland Bethany, Mich.	4,500.00		750.00	3,750.00
96.	Holland Heights, Holland, Mich.	6,375.00		375.00	6,000.00
97.	Holland, Minn.	2,400.00		150.00	2,250.00
98.	Holland Marsh, Ont.	2,760.00	10,000.00	400.00	12,360.00
99.	Holland Park Church, Holland, Mich.	10,000.00			10,000.00
100.	Houston, B. C.	3,250.00		250.00	3,000.00
101.	Ingersoll, Ont.		10,000.00		10,000.00
102.	Iowa Falls, Iowa	3,614.00		375.00	3,239.00
103.	Iorn Springs, Alta.	9,125.00		1,000.00	8,125.00
104.	Jarvis, Ont.	10,500.00			10,500.00
105.	Jasper Place, Alta.	14,375.00		125.00	14,250.00
106.	Kalamazoo-Knollwood, Mich.		4,000.00		4,000.00
107.	Kalamazoo-Westwood, Mich.	9,500.00		500.00	9,000.00
108.	Kingston, Ont.	12,500.00		500.00	12,000.00
109.	Kitchener, Ont.	12,875.00		375.00	12,500.00
110.	Lacombe First, Alta.	9,275.00		1,000.00	8,275.00
111.	Lacombe-Bethel, Alta.		10,000.00		10,000.00
112.	Lacner, B. C.	6,000.00	1,500.00		7,500.00
113.	Langley, B. C.	7,610.00		400.00	7,210.00
114.	Lansing Oak Glen, Ill. ...	9,000.00		500.00	8,500.00
115.	Lansing, Mich.	3,000.00		375.00	2,625.00
116.	Leamington Ont.	5,100.00		150.00	4,950.00
117.	Le Mars, Iowa	10,000.00		500.00	9,500.00
118.	Lethbridge, Alta.	13,600.00		400.00	13,200.00
119.	Lindsay, Ont.	5,100.00		150.00	4,950.00
120.	Lodi, N. J.	2,000.00		125.00	1,875.00
121.	London, Ont.	7,750.00			7,750.00
122.	Luverne, Minn.	9,000.00		500.00	8,500.00
123.	Lynden Bethel, Wash. ...	9,500.00		500.00	9,000.00
124.	Medicine Hat, Alta.	10,000.00			10,000.00
125.	Milwaukee, Wisc.	5,850.00		450.00	5,400.00
126.	Minneapolis, Minn.	4,900.00		350.00	4,550.00
127.	Modesta, Calif.	4,800.00		300.00	4,500.00
128.	Monroe, Wash.	8,100.00		450.00	7,650.00
129.	Morrison, Ill.	4,000.00		250.00	3,750.00
130.	Mt. Hamilton, Ont.	11,850.00		250.00	11,600.00
131.	Muskegon, Grace, Mich.		10,000.00		10,000.00
132.	Neerlandia, Alta.	7,600.00			7,600.00
133.	Newton, Iowa	111.00		111.00	
134.	Newton, N. J.	9,250.00		625.00	8,625.00
135.	Niagara, Falls-Stamford, Ont.		5,000.00		5,000.00
136.	New Westminster	11,850.00		150.00	11,700.00
137.	Nobleford, Alta.	3,100.00		400.00	2,700.00
138.	Oaklawn, Ill.	3,500.00		250.00	3,250.00

No.	Church at	Outstanding Jan. 1, 1955	New Loans	Payments	Outstanding Dec. 31, 1955
139.	Ogilvie, Minn.	4,150.00	15,000.00	250.00	18,900.00
140.	Ontario, Calif.	10,000.00		500.00	9,500.00
141.	Orangeville, Ont.	4,250.00		125.00	4,125.00
142.	Oshawa, Ont.		3,750.00		3,750.00
143.	Oskaloosa, Bethel, Iowa	4,800.00		300.00	4,500.00
144.	Ottawa, Ont.	7,500.00			7,500.00
145.	Owen Sound, Ont.	11,450.00		525.00	10,925.00
146.	Palos Heights, Ill.		10,000.00		10,000.00
147.	Parchment, Mich.	500.00		150.00	350.00
148.	Peers, Alta.	11,250.00			11,250.00
149.	Peterborough, Ont.	7,000.00			7,000.00
150.	Phoenix, Arizona	9,200.00		500.00	8,700.00
151.	Picton, Ont.	200.00		200.00	
152.	Pine Creek, Mich.	5,100.00		300.00	4,800.00
153.	Pipestone, Minn.	10,000.00		500.00	9,500.00
154.	Plainfield, Mich.	775.00		775.00	
155.	Randolph Second, Wisc.	6,000.00		375.00	5,625.00
156.	Raymond, Minn.	4,620.00		375.00	4,245.00
157.	Red Deer, Alta.	11,250.00			11,250.00
158.	Redlands First, Calif. ..	4,000.00		250.00	3,750.00
159.	Redlands Second, Calif.	6,900.00		425.00	6,475.00
160.	Renfrew, Ont.		10,000.00		10,000.00
161.	Ridgewood, N. J.	7,000.00		500.00	6,500.00
162.	Ripon, Immanuel, Calif.	7,625.00		625.00	7,000.00
163.	Rock Rapids, Iowa	3,695.00		300.00	3,395.00
164.	Rock Valley, Calvin, Ia.	8,500.00		500.00	8,000.00
165.	Rocky Mountain House, Alta.	12,750.00		300.00	12,450.00
166.	Saginaw, Mich.	14,400.00		500.00	13,900.00
167.	San Diego, Calif.	7,200.00		550.00	6,650.00
168.	San Jose, Calif.	5,000.00			5,000.00
169.	Sarnia First, Ont.	16,100.00		850.00	15,250.00
170.	Sarnia Second, Ont.	12,800.00		200.00	12,600.00
171.	Saskatoon, Sask.	10,000.00			10,000.00
172.	Seattle, Wash.	6,000.00			6,000.00
173.	Sibley, Iowa	221.05		221.05	
174.	Sioux City, Iowa	10,000.00		500.00	9,500.00
175.	Sioux Falls, So. Dakota	7,000.00		1,000.00	6,000.00
176.	Smithers, B. C.	2,900.00			2,900.00
177.	Smithers-Telkwa, B. C.	5,000.00			5,000.00
178.	Springdale, Ont.	20,126.56		150.00	19,976.56
179.	St. Catharines, Ont.	12,375.00		375.00	12,000.00
180.	Strathroy, Ont.	12,250.00			12,250.00
181.	St. Thomas, Ont.	5,100.00	10,000.00	150.00	14,950.00
182.	Sussex, N. J.	2,550.00	7,500.00	150.00	9,900.00
183.	Taber, Alta.	12,175.00		137.50	12,037.50
184.	Telkwa, B. C.	7,500.00			7,500.00
185.	Terrace, B. C.	7,500.00			7,500.00
186.	Terra Ceia, B. C.	9,650.00		595.00	9,055.00
187.	Toronto First, Ont.	8,750.00		450.00	8,300.00
188.	Toronto Second, Ont. ..	5,250.00		300.00	4,950.00
189.	Tracy, Iowa	791.10		231.00	560.10

No.	Church at	Outstanding Jan. 1, 1955	New Loans	Payments	Outstanding Dec. 31, 1955
190.	Trancona, Man.		5,000.00		5,000.00
191.	Trenton, Ont.	12,000.00		450.00	11,550.00
192.	Tyler, Minn.	810.00		90.00	720.00
193.	Vancouver, B. C. Bethel	11,250.00			11,250.00
194.	Vancouver, B. C. First	12,748.00		1,750.00	10,998.00
195.	Vauxhall, Alta.	4,125.00			4,125.00
196.	Wallaceburg, Ont.	4,725.00		262.50	4,462.50
197.	Washington, D. C.	2,050.00		200.00	1,850.00
198.	Wellandport, Ont.	12,250.00			12,250.00
199.	Westlock, Alta.	4,500.00			4,500.00
200.	Wheaton, Ill.	8,500.00		500.00	8,000.00
201.	Williamsburg, Ont.	7,500.00	5,000.00		12,500.00
202.	Winnipeg, Man.	10,050.00		150.00	9,900.00
203.	Woodstock, Ont.	12,000.00			12,000.00
204.	Wykhoff, N. J.	9,000.00		500.00	8,500.00
205.	Wyoming, Ont.	13,000.00			13,000.00
206.	Zeeland-Bethel, Mich. ..	8,000.00		500.00	7,500.00
207.	Zillah, Wash.	4,275.00		225.00	4,050.00

Total \$1,386,875.84 \$252,250.00 \$66,075.30 \$1,573,050.54

Carried over from 1954 and eligible for the 25% discount:

Oshawa, Ont. Paid \$5,000.00, Discount \$1,250.00, New Loan \$3,750.00.

Denominational Quotas by Classes and other Receipts

Orange City, Iowa

SCHEDULE "C"

CLASSES	1954	1955
Alberta	\$ 1,926.25	\$ 4,405.71
Cadillac		1,085.64
California	5,049.84	9,957.75
Chatham	844.47	2,112.20
Chicago North	5,904.45	11,642.25
Chicago South	7,395.00	14,296.18
Eastern Ontario	1,767.37	2,445.63
Grand Rapids East	9,682.00	18,154.50
Grand Rapids South	11,357.50	21,098.02
Grand Rapids West	5,797.00	10,725.00
Hackensack	2,778.34	5,209.28
Hamilton	1,700.07	3,076.00
Holland	8,102.50	14,461.94
Hudson	5,717.95	10,445.88
Kalamazoo	4,623.75	8,673.36
Minnesota North	2,328.35	4,984.03
Minnesota South	2,737.73	5,057.48
Muskegon	7,808.00	11,515.01
Orange City	3,648.00	6,652.00
Ostfriesland	2,304.00	4,038.00
Pacific	5,748.66	10,499.20
Pella	5,582.75	10,436.50
Sioux Center	4,910.92	8,760.34
Wisconsin	3,250.75	5,979.43
Zeeland	6,609.00	12,424.62

CLASSES	1954	1955
Miscellaneous	890.95	1,355.38
Canadian Emergency Building Fund		6,008.78
Canadian Flood Relief		68,000.00
Total	\$118,465.60	\$293,500.11

Miscellaneous includes \$1,150.00 received as an individual gift. Canadian Emergency Building Fund includes \$32.83 as cash on hand at the beginning of the year. Also \$557.22 sent in error and returned to Classis Cadillac.

SUMMARY

Balance on Hand January 1, 1955\$ 54,093.35

RECEIPTS:

Repayments	"B"	\$ 66,075.30	
Quotas, etc.	"C"	298,500.11	359,575.41
Total			\$413,668.76

DISBURSEMENTS:

New Loans — Notes	\$252,250.00	
Discount paid to Oshawa, Ont. CRC	1,250.00	
Total cash paid out to loans	\$253,500.00	
Refund to Classis Cadillac	557.22	
Administrative Expenses	1,172.55	255,229.77
Balance		\$158,438.99

THE CANADIAN EMERGENCY BUILDING FUND

From November 3, 1949 to January 31, 1956

Orange City, Iowa

SUMMARY

First Drive	\$189,626.82
Second Drive	156,715.24
Third Drive	106,883.22
Final Drive	257,190.26
Recorded during 1955	5,418.73
Total	\$715,834.27

REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON FULL-TIME STATED CLERK

ESTEEMED BRETHREN :

BACKGROUND :

The Synod of 1955 received a communication from the consistory of the Neland Avenue Christian Reformed Church of Grand Rapids regarding the office of the Stated Clerk of Synod. It felt that in view of the rapid growth of our denomination during the past ten years and the consequent increase in the duties of the Stated Clerk, the time had come to consider seriously the appointment of a full-time Stated Clerk.

Synod, upon a consideration of this communication, adopted a resolution to appoint a committee to study this matter in consultation with the Neland Ave. consistory and the Stated Clerk who is also pastor of the Neland Avenue Church, Dr. R. J. Danhof, and then to serve the 1956 Synod with advice.

ACTION :

The committee was appointed consisting of the following personnel: Rev. William VanRees, Chairman; Rev. J. D. Eppinga, Reporter; Prof. E. Strikwerda. This group met, as directed, with the Stated Clerk, Dr. R. J. Danhof. It also met, on another occasion, with two representatives from the Neland Avenue Consistory. It then held further meetings to digest and analyze the information gained.

RECOMMENDATION :

The committee, impressed with the problem it has been asked to study, recommends that Synod appoint a full-time Stated Clerk.

GROUNDS :

The present arrangement is not fair to the church whose pastor must serve as Stated Clerk. Being a minister in a congregation is a full-time task in itself. And, although each minister should give time and service to the denomination-at-large when called upon, — and although each consistory must permit its minister to perform such extra service when it is placed before him, the duties of the Stated Clerk are such as encroach too much upon the work to which the local church has called and which must take precedence.

2. *The present arrangement is not fair to the denomination.* It is the committee's desire in no way to reflect upon the services rendered to the denomination by its present Stated Clerk. They have been exceptional. However, there are many tasks and duties involving contacts, committees, records, etc. which under the present arrangement

cannot be given the attention which they should have. Necessary work is left undone because of insufficient time in which to do it.

3. *The present arrangement is not fair to the person holding the office of Stated Clerk.* There is imposed, under the present set-up, a schedule that is too heavy for any one pastor busy in a congregation. In pursuing the work of the Kingdom we may not lose sight of the welfare of the individual. The committee feels that because of the importance of the work of the church — an overload on any servant, when unavoidable, is legitimate. However, when this is unnecessary it must be prevented.

The committee notes that the Synod of 1955 — in requesting the Consistory of the Neland Avenue Church to release its pastor from ten weeks of preaching has engaged in an action designed to relieve such overload. However, it is obvious that such a plan was only presented and adopted as something provisional and temporary.

Humbly Submitted,

WILLIAM VAN REES, *Chairman*
J. D. EPPINGA, *Reporter*
EARL STRIKWERDA

PARTIAL BREAKDOWN OF CURRENT DUTIES OF THE STATED CLERK

A. Ex-officio member of the Committee on Ecumenicity and Church Correspondence.

- mounting correspondence with sister churches
- increasing correspondence relating to work of and relationships to ecumenical synods
- increasing numbers of requests for information concerning decisions of our synods on such matters as divorce, liturgy, hymnology, approved Bible version, stand on lodge membership, doctrinal stand of our Church.

B. Secretary of the Synodical Committee

- the character and scope of this work is partially apparent in the reports in the *Agenda*
- emergency and miscellaneous duties

C. "Denominational" correspondence (1200 to 1400 pieces of correspondence (between our synods)

- relating to immigrant affairs
 - re location of established churches
 - with sponsors
 - with the Alg. bureau of the Geref. Kerken
- Statements of Consent
 - required by the Canadian government for incorporation of our churches and for the right to use our denominational name
- correspondence with Canadian railways re reduced fares and passes
- Correspondence with our ministers who seek government permission to solemnize marriages in Canada
- correspondence following Synods
 - with members appointed to committees
 - re mandates and study materials

D. Duties relating to the publication of the *Agenda* and the *Acts*

- classification of materials and overtures
- preparation of manuscripts
- proof readings
- supervision of mailing to all delegates
- same procedure for the authorized supplementary reports published after the *Agenda*

E. Miscellaneous duties requiring more attention

- requests from organizations for an official representative or observer from our denomination, e.g.,
 - Interchurch Transportation Committee
 - Association of Statisticians of American Religious Bodies
 - Council Meetings of the American Bible Society
 - Immigration and Naturalization Service
- more careful scrutiny of synodical acts of sister and correspondence churches.
- Proper filing and cross-filing of synodical materials for ready access.

DIVORCE AND RE-MARRIAGE

DEAR BRETHREN:

I. MANDATE

The Synodical study committee appointed at the Synod of 1952 submitted a report to the Synod of 1954. The Synod of 1954 held the report in abeyance and gave the committee a new mandate, which is as follows (Acts, 1954, p. 93):

"C. Recommendations:

1. That Synod continue the present committee instructing them to review their report in the light of the material re this matter referred to us by the Ecumenical Synod of 1953, to see whether they wish to alter their report in any way.

2. That this committee and the committee appointed to study the material of the Ecumenical Synod on Marital Problems shall confer with each other before they report to the Synod of 1955.

Grounds:

a. In this matter the two committees will have the benefit of one another's findings.

b. It may be possible that in this manner Synod of 1955 will be in a position to present an official declaration re marriage and divorce to the constituent churches of the Ecumenical Synod, and the Ecumenical Synod of 1958. Adopted."

II. *Consideration of the Ecumenical Synod Report*

In keeping with the spirit of our mandate, we will make no comment on the general aspects of the Ecumenical Synod Report, but confine ourselves to that part which bears directly on our problem. This is found on pages 93 and 94 of the Acts of the Reformed Ecumenical Synod of 1953. We will distinguish various elements of that report and comment upon them.

A. On page 93 the present stand of the Christian Reformed Church is contrasted with that which has been held since 1923 by the Gereformeerde Kerken in the Netherlands. There is no argumentation presented at this point; this element of the report is a mere statement of fact, on which we have no comment.

B. An argument which calls for comment is presented in the concluding paragraphs of page 93, which read as follows:

The present committee is of the opinion that one very important fact is that the Lord, Matthew 19:9, doesn't make use of the well-known expression "to be of one flesh." He does not say: "Whosoever becomes one flesh with another," or: "as long as they live together as husband and wife," or: "as long as he is married to another," but He says: "Whosoever . . . shall marry another."

This points out that the Lord indicates the entering of a new marriage, the actual ceremony of that marriage. It is clear that the Lord is not considering some sort of "free love" or concubinage, but the solemnizing of a new marriage, according to civil law, in which husband and wife are bound together in mutual loyalty according to the law of God.

The *vitium originis* of the deed of fornication or adultery, which characterizes this wedding ceremony, remains. But the result of all this is a marriage in which husband and wife must treat each other as such and must undergo physical union without continual continence.

Prof. Dr. Grosheide, in his Commentary on Matthew, remarks: "Jesus adds very definitely: and *marries another*; for then only can be said that the dismissal of the first wife has become a fact — the first marriage is now irrevocably broken." A new marriage has begun with all rights and duties which, according to divine and civil law, apply to the married state.

In the above paragraphs, the committee argues that Jesus' use of the word GAMEO limits His reference to the entering of a new marriage; i.e., to the marriage ceremony.

Further, they argue that some value attaches to such a marriage; by contrast with free love or concubinage or any such thing, it conforms to civil and divine law and employs the bonds of loyalty.

But it is further stated that "The *vitium originis* of the deed of fornication or adultery, which characterizes this wedding ceremony, remains."

Granting momentarily that GAMEO definitely limits the reference to the wedding ceremony, the Ecumenical Synod Committee may justly be held to say (a) that the *vitium originis* makes the wedding ceremony sinful, and (b) that Jesus honors this ceremony with the honorable name, "marriage." They therefore represent Jesus as applying an honorable name to a sinful deed. No grounds whatsoever are put forward for the contention that the marriage can be both sinful in itself and yet an honorable contract which supersedes all previous unions.

We believe that in the light of this consideration, the contention that Jesus is not referring to the continuing marriage relationship, but only to the initial ceremony, cannot be maintained. Further, we would point out that the argument that Jesus recognizes this as a valid marriage simply by reason of the fact that He uses the term GAMEO, falls away when we note that the same term is used of Herod's marriage, which is then described as unlawful (Mark 6:17, 18).

C. A new argument is introduced on page 94, as follows:

Those who in the above-mentioned cases advocate a certain bond with the first marriage partner, and plead for sexual continence in the second marriage, refer to certain Bible texts.

The most important of these are: —

“For the woman which hath a husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man” (Rom. 7:2, 3).

“The wife is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth; but if her husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will; only in the Lord” (I Cor. 7:39).

Your committee is convinced that neither in these texts nor in the context can anything be found to indicate continence is (in?) a second marriage, begun after a forbidden divorce. On the contrary! We only want to make clear that Paul does not say: “so then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man” . . . she is still bound to her first husband as long as he lives, but: “. . . she shall be called an adulteress.”

The first bond is *broken*, in a very sinful manner, by the second marriage, which continues as the genuine marriage. When Paul speaks of a man who dies or is dead, he obviously does not mean the case of a man, who had the experience that his wife took another husband, but he is thinking of the normal case in which death brings about the termination of the marriage. Otherwise there would be contradiction between I Cor. 7:39 and I Cor. 7:15.

The argument here hinges on the question whether the bond with the first husband is broken or continues in force. The argument is that Paul does not say that the woman is bound to her husband as long as he lives, but says rather that she shall be called an adulteress.

To this we respond:

1. Why is she called an adulteress if she is *not* bound?
2. In Romans 7:2, Paul says that the woman is bound by the law to her husband as long as he lives. If he had meant to change that statement in Romans 7:3, one might reasonably demand of him that he say so plainly, but he does nothing of the kind. The evident meaning of the verse is that the woman is called an adulteress precisely *because* she is still bound to her husband. The report under consideration jumps from the fact that Paul does not say she is still bound to the contention that Paul implies that she is not bound; but these are two quite different ideas, and the transition from the one to the other is not warranted.

3. If Paul says, “but if her husband be dead she is free from the law,” is it not justified to conclude that if he is *not* dead she is *not* free from the law (Rom. 7:3)? And is not this exactly what is im-

plied also in I Corinthians 7:39, "The wife is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth; but if her husband be dead, she is at liberty. . .?"

4. The main contention, that the first bond is broken and the second is the valid marriage, is not supported with one word of argumentation or grammatical evidence. It is simply stated. Yet this is one aspect of the very point at issue.

5. It may be in point to remark that the Christian Reformed committee's argument in 1954 did not rest principally on these texts. They were used to confirm and support the argument rather than as the foundation for it. But it remains true that no argument against our position can be drawn from these texts; at least we consider it quite evident that the Ecumenical Synod committee has not succeeded in doing so.

6. Actually there is here an additional argument against the contention reflected under "B" above, that everything that is spoken of as a marriage is *ipso facto* legal and binding, superseding all previous ties. At the same time some light is shed on the question of single adultery or continued adultery. Lenski says, concerning Romans 7:2, 3, that the law will call the woman an adulteress in the sense of a bigamist. This certainly seems to indicate a continued state of adultery. Where the term "marriage" and the legal designation of an adulteress are thus used side by side, it can no longer be argued with any show of reason that the mere use of the term "marriage" makes everything so designated legal and binding.

D. It might be required of us also that we comment on the paragraphs at the bottom of page 94 of the Ecumenical Synod Report. We note that here the Ecumenical Synod Committee indirectly recognizes the very difficulty with which the Christian Reformed Committee struggled. They say in effect that those unbiblically divorced and remarried must be received into the Church, but that their problem remains. A perusal of these paragraphs leads one to ask whether the Church may say to these people that their sins are forgiven. If so, one would expect them to know the joy of forgiveness. If not, one wonders about the justification of admitting them as members. We recognize from our own experience that this is a complicated problem; but we feel that it is fair to ask whether a solution which labors under such burdens as these is a solution at all.

III. *Consultation with the Committee on the Ecumenical Synod's Report on Marital Problems*

In keeping with point 2 of its mandate, the committee held a joint meeting with the committee appointed in 1954 to study the report of the Ecumenical Synod of 1953 on Marital Problems. Although no complete agreement was reached, and no joint report is forthcoming, your com-

mittee did feel moved to make some revisions in the report which it herewith presents to the Synod of 1955. It became evident that some of the language of the report submitted in 1954 was open to misinterpretations or gave rise to confusion.

We shall proceed, therefore, to submit to this Synod a report which is the same in almost every respect as the one submitted in 1954. But for the sake of clarity some changes have been made in the language. Because this is essentially the same report as that submitted last year, the original outline and numbering system have been retained. The report which appears on the following pages is the report of the Divorce Study Committee as we wish to submit it to the Synod of 1955.

DIVORCE AND REMARRIAGE

DEAR BRETHREN:

I. OUR MANDATE

The mandate of the committee is found on page 23 of the *Acts of Synod, 1952*. In its narrower compass, it reads as follows:

a. To examine the exegetical foundation for the thesis that the marriage of any person who has obtained an unbiblical divorce (or who was divorced as a result of his own adultery) is a living in continual adultery.

b. If the committee's findings conclusively substantiate the position that a second marriage after unbiblical divorce is a living in continual adultery, the committee shall study this further question — Are there possible ethical involvements or circumstances which may demand that an unbiblically divorced and remarried person shall continue in the second marriage? If so, the committee shall draft a revision of Point 2 which recognizes such involvements and gives guidance to our Consistories that they may deal wisely with the specific cases.

c. If the committee is unable on the basis of Scripture to substantiate the contention that a second marriage after unbiblical divorce is a living in continual adultery, the committee shall draft an appropriate resolution to replace Point 2.

The grounds appended to this threefold mandate point to the lack of unanimity on this question, and the fact that the Synods of 1890, 1908, and 1947 all failed to give adequate Scriptural support for the contention that unbiblical divorce and remarriage constitutes continual adultery.

This entire mandate, in turn, must be read against the background of the majority and minority reports presented to the Synod of 1952 on the question of divorce. The questions with which these reports concerned themselves and the positions they adopted are briefly summarized on pp. 20-21 of the *Acts of Synod, 1952*, while the complete reports are to be found on pages 123-152 of that volume. The basic matter involved in the present difficulty is the contention that persons unbiblically divorced and remarried are living in continual adultery. Other serious matters involved are the questions what evidences of

repentance to require from persons guilty of unbiblical remarriage and how to deal with the ethical involvements arising out of the negotiations concerning such a marriage.

Seen against that background, the mandate is perfectly clear. The committee agrees that its primary task concerns point "a" of the mandate. Only after it has attacked the problem of exegetical grounds for the contention concerning continual adultery can it proceed to make recommendations concerning the further treatment of persons unbiblically remarried. Further, the committee concludes that when it has reached a decision in point "a", it has the remaining task of making recommendations with respect to either point "b" or point "c", but not both. That is, if our findings substantiate the contention concerning continual adultery, we have to deal with point "b"; if not, we must deal with point "c".

II. SCRIPTURAL EVIDENCE FOR THE THESIS CONCERNING "CONTINUAL ADULTERY"

A. *Preliminary Considerations*

Certain facts of a general and historical nature are worthy of preliminary consideration, since they bear upon the Scriptural argumentation which will be advanced.

1. It should be evident to all that no text or texts can be found which directly and clearly support or refute the statement in question; i.e., that unbiblical divorce and remarriage constitute a living in continual adultery. All the reams of material which have been written for, against, or about this thesis have failed to turn up one such text. It should therefore be granted by all that it is asking too much to demand that such a text or texts be presented for either position.

This is not exactly an isolated situation. In many other problems besides this, the Church is left to draw conclusions and make inferences on the basis of incomplete Scriptural evidence for or against a specific point. Anyone who insists at all times on iron-clad and direct Scriptural evidence for every detail of the Church's position is bound to be frequently disappointed. Referring again to the case before us, it is simply a fact that Scripture does not clearly mention "living in adultery" or "not living in adultery." Some other evidence than this will have to be sought, and when found, will have to be sufficient.

2. We call the attention of Synod to the fact that this is not the first time that an attempt has been made to settle this question on Scriptural grounds. A report to the Synod of 1936 (cf. *Agenda, 1936*, Part I, pp. 71-73) addressed itself directly to this question. The section here referred to is entitled, "If a Marriage is Begun in Adultery, is it also Continued in Adultery?" We quote the concluding paragraph

of this section, not as if we were adopting this as our own, but to indicate the lines of argument used there.

Hence, before being able to accept the position that a marriage begun in adultery is not continued in adultery, adequate grounds must be given to prove that the initial act of adultery cancels the adultery; that the marriage of Herod to which John refers was *not* adulterous; that Rom. 7:2 does *not* teach that a woman is bound by law to her husband as long as he lives; that the verb "is involving himself in adultery" found in Matt. 5:32b has no continuative strength; and that the almost unanimous testimony of the church throughout the ages, including the testimony of our own previous Synods, is wrong!

The Synod of 1936, facing a very confused situation, did not finally pronounce on the correctness or incorrectness of this position. This particular argumentation has never been either approved or repudiated.

We would insist, therefore, that the absence of a list of proof-texts behind a statement of position does not necessarily indicate that the position is wrong, or that it has been reached on some other basis than Scripture. In so speaking, we are not yet arguing for one position or the other, but simply seeking to give some indication of the kind of evidence we expect to present, and how we expect it to be received by the Church.

3. In the absence of one single conclusive text, our proof will therefore be cumulative. In the absence of direct statements, it will of necessity be somewhat inferential. It will seek to establish the grammatical possibility that this thesis is correct; to indicate how the *analogia fidei* agrees with that interpretation; and to place the burden of proof in this question where it properly belongs.

B. *The Evidence from Scripture*

1. We take as our starting point what we will call our key-text. The text so selected is Matt. 19:3-9, as follows:

And there came unto him Pharisees, trying him, and saying, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause? And he answered and said, Have ye not read, that he who made them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave unto his wife; and the two shall become one flesh? So that they are no more two, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. They say unto him, Why then did Moses command to give a bill of divorcement, and to put her away? He saith unto them, Moses for your hardness of heart suffered you to put away your wives; but from the beginning it hath not been so. And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery; and he that marrieth her when she is put away committeth adultery.

Our attention will be centered upon the concluding verse of this passage. But the following remarks about the passage in general are significant. It is a New Testament passage, and therefore free from

any suggestion that it is of limited application, as was the Old Testament civil and ceremonial legislation. It does, however, relate itself directly to questions based upon an interpretation of the Old Testament, thereby clearly taking the Old Testament legislation into view. Further, Jesus adds weight to this passage by referring directly to the creation ordinance concerning marriage, thus indicating clearly that He is speaking of that which abides, by contrast with that which is merely passing; and of that which ought to be, by contrast with that which has been permitted by way of concession to human obstinacy. Beyond this, it ought also to be remarked concerning this passage that Jesus here speaks directly to the point of marriage and divorce; that is, He does not adduce this material by way of illustration of anything else. We feel, therefore, that this passage is able to bear the weight we intend to place upon it.

Turning more specifically to the last verse of the passage cited, we point first to the fact that the verb translated "committeth adultery" leaves room for the construction that the adultery is continued or repeated. This verb is MOICHATAI, which is the present middle and passive form of MOICHEUOO. In Greek, "The present often expresses customary or repeated action in the present time" (Goodwin, *Greek Grammar*, p. 269). For further discussion of the durative present (present of linear action) see A. T. Robertson, *Word Studies in the New Testament*, p. 879. It is not our purpose in saying this to indicate that continued action must be the case; but simply that there is nothing in the grammar of this text (or of Matthew 5:32, Mark 10:11, 12, or Luke 16:18) to prohibit this possibility.

On that basis, we proceed to face the question, what does this text say? The words themselves are as follows: "And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery; and he that marrieth her when she is put away committeth adultery." Just what does Jesus say about those who are thus illegitimately joined?

In this text, as well as in the three others cited above, it is the marriage which is the committing of adultery. The inference is warranted that this is an adulterous marriage; not just an adulterous act, but an adulterous relationship. It is a union which has not been made in obedience to God's will, but in direct disobedience of it. It is forbidden territory—not just the threshold of the marriage, but the whole of it.

The crux of the difficulty involves the question whether the sinfulness of this marriage continues after the initial act of cohabitation. In the absence of any Scriptural indication that a change comes about in this sinful marriage after that act, the burden of proof rests upon those who say that such a change does come. The argumentation usually

advanced is that the adultery of the remarried person makes the previous divorce valid; but this is based upon the erroneous assumption that the Bible teaches that adultery automatically breaks a marriage. This is not quite the case; adultery rather opens the door to a legitimate dissolution of the marriage tie on the part of the innocent party. But it can hardly be used to make valid that which is not valid in itself.

Our contention, therefore, is that: (1) the grammar of the text allows for the possibility that the adultery is continuous; (2) Jesus, in speaking of "him that marrieth" makes the marriage itself an adulterous relationship; (3) the burden of proof rests on those who would say that at some stage the sinfulness of this relationship terminates and it becomes legitimate.

To use language previously presented to Synod, "What is evil on the first day remains evil on the second day. The burden of proof rests on those who would deny this."

2. Second, we face the question, Does the testimony of Scripture in general support this contention?

We refer first to Matthew 14:4 and Mark 6:18 where it is reported that John the Baptist told Herod concerning his brother's wife, "It is not lawful for thee to have her." This passage has been much discussed, with the argument centering on the question whether Herod's marriage was condemned because it was incestuous or because it was adulterous. We are not going to try to answer that question, but simply to point out that, on either basis, John does not speak as if the fact of marriage obviates the sinfulness of the relationship. That is to say, Herod's relation to his wife is spoken of as if it continues to be sinful; the sinfulness did not end with the commission of the first act of adultery between two persons who were not permitted to marry each other. We cite this in support of the contention that what is sinful on the first day remains sinful on the second. Whether the sin involved was incest or adultery or both has no direct bearing on this point.

Other passages frequently discussed in this connection are Romans 7:2, 3 and I Corinthians 7:10-15. These passages read as follows:

For the woman that hath a husband is bound by law to the husband while he liveth; but if the husband die, she is discharged from the law of the husband. So then if, while the husband liveth, she be joined to another man, she shall be called an adulteress; but if the husband die, she is free from the law, so that she is no adulteress, though she be joined to another man (Romans 7:2, 3).

But unto the married I give charge, yea not I, but the Lord, that the wife depart not from her husband (but should she depart, let her remain unmarried, or else be reconciled to her husband); and that the husband leave not his wife. But to the rest say I, not the Lord: If any brother hath an unbelieving wife, and she is content to dwell with him let him not leave her.

And the woman that hath an unbelieving husband, and he is content to dwell with her, let her not leave her husband. For the unbelieving husband is sanctified in the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified in the brother; else were your children unclean; but now are they holy. Yet if the unbelieving departeth, let him depart; the brother or the sister is not under bondage in such cases; but God hath called us in peace (I Corinthians 7: 10-15).

We will not contend that these passages give a direct and clearcut answer to the present question (concerning the continuing nature of the adultery in an unbiblical marriage). The passage in Romans, as has frequently been pointed out, is not directly a discussion of marriage, but an illustration of man's relation to the law. The passage in I Corinthians relates to a special case, which may or may not be limited to situations in which the individuals previously married are confronted for the first time with the Gospel and turn from darkness to light. And yet these passages are not entirely without significance in respect to our central question. They amply illustrate the high esteem in which the Word of God holds marriage. The Romans passage makes this esteem so high and considers it to be so universally recognized that it serves as an admirable illustration for the binding power of the law. The Corinthians passage indicates that the married state is to be so highly valued that any breach in it is to be made only reluctantly and by way of exception. Even when an exception is made it is carefully circumscribed. The wife is not to depart from her husband; if she insists on doing so anyway, she is not to marry again, and if possible is to be induced to return to her husband. The point we are seeking to establish is this; that marriage is so holy that no departures from the creation ordinance (one man for one woman) ought to be permitted unless they are clearly and specifically allowed in Scripture.

The Old Testament, like the New, fails to mention specifically the question of living or not living in adultery. It remains a fact, however, that in the Old Testament as well as the New, marriage is considered holy and binding. According to the creation ordinance, the man and his wife become one flesh, and man must not sever what God has joined. According to the Mosaic legislation (and also Roman law) adultery was considered so serious a sin that the adulterer was liable to the death penalty. Jesus in Matthew 19 distinctly repudiates the Mosaic concession with respect to allowing divorce; He reveals therefore in that connection what is abiding and what is passing in the Old Testament situation. The concession to human obstinacy passes; the inviolability of marriage remains. And if He seems to imply that the death penalty for adultery no longer prevails, at least He in no way indicates that it is a sin to be lightly regarded, or an evil out of which good may come.

Against this Scriptural background we may also raise the question, "What is this marriage which is regarded so highly in Scripture?" Is it the ceremony? The consummation? The honeymoon? The birth of the first child? Is it not a life-long relationship, from which one may be freed—basically—only by death? And if the remarriage ceremony is not holy wedlock, but sin, when does the sin cease and the wedlock begin?

3. In the third place, we point to the lack of contrary evidence. We do not claim to have established a position so strong that a clear-cut text to the contrary would not necessitate some re-examination of it. But what we have already said more than once now obtains; the burden of proof rests on those who would contest this position. We have sought to indicate the Scriptural teaching on the holiness and inviolability of the marriage bond. This primary fact does allow for an exception (adultery may break a marriage), but we have tried to indicate the limitations of that exception. The primary fact remains primary. The holiness of the marriage bond is the starting point. Then the question follows, "What exceptions to this inviolability does Scripture allow?" And the more specific further question, "Does Scripture anywhere permit *this* exception, that the act of entering upon an adulterous remarriage sets one free from the requirements of marriage, so that the remarriage, through the very adultery, ceases to be adulterous?" Such an exception to the established Scriptural principle of the inviolability of marriage, is, we say, completely absent from Scripture.

It is sometimes argued from the fact that all sins (with the exception of the sin against the Holy Spirit) can be forgiven, that some room must also be made for the forgiveness of those who have been guilty of unbiblical divorce and remarriage. But this argumentation begs the point on this particular question. One of the evidences of repentance, on which forgiveness is predicated, is the forsaking of the sin involved. This is of the very essence of the question before us; does the sin of adultery cease when it has been performed once, or is a relationship which is adulterous in the beginning adulterous from that time on? Our concrete question can be approached from that very angle. Has the sin been forsaken or has it not? Has satisfactory evidence of repentance therefore been given or has it not? Is forgiveness possible without some further alteration in the relationship, or is it not? The universality of forgiveness for sins which are repented of does not therefore touch on this question, but in a sense takes up where the question before us leaves off.

With this we have completed the consideration of the first part of our mandate. We have examined "the exegetical foundation for the thesis that the marriage of any person who has obtained an unbiblical

divorce (or who was divorced as a result of his own adultery) is a living in continual adultery." We have taken our stand in the basic attitude of Scripture to marriage and reasoned from that point. We have established that Matthew 19:3-9 supports the above-mentioned thesis; that this passage in all probability speaks of a relationship which is sinful in the beginning and remains so; that the general testimony of both Old and New Testaments agrees with this attitude toward marriage; and that no clear Scriptural evidence can be adduced which overthrows this position.

Let us be very clear as to what we do not claim for this argumentation. We do not claim that any passage has been discovered which finally and independently establishes the thesis concerning continual adultery. On the contrary, our argumentation is cumulative and inferential. We do not claim to have said everything which can be said about any one of the points which we have raised. On the contrary, we have been satisfied in each case with suggesting what we consider to be the proper approach, rather than to belabor the various points. We do not claim that Scripture anywhere says, in so many words, "The adultery arising from an illegitimate remarriage remains adultery as long as the remarriage continues in effect." On the contrary, we have limited our argumentation to this point; the thesis concerning continual adultery is in harmony with the spirit of Scripture, and any weakening of that thesis is out of harmony with that spirit.

Let us summarize our argument in the following propositions:

1. The thesis "that the marriage of any person who has obtained an unbiblical divorce (or who was divorced as a result of his own adultery) is a living in continual adultery" is an inference drawn from the fact that such a person enters an adulterous relationship: Matthew 5:32; 19:3-9; Mark 10:11, 12; Luke 16:18.

2. This inference is permitted by Greek grammar, in that verbs in the present tense may have a continuative force; cf. MOICHATAI and MOICHEUEI in the passages cited above.

3. This inference receives strong support from the general Scriptural teaching regarding the holiness and inviolability of marriage, the seriousness of the sin of adultery, and the strict limitations placed on exceptions to this general Scriptural rule; cf. Genesis 1:27; 2:24; 5:2; Romans 7:2, 3; I Corinthians 7:10-15. It receives support also from the analogous situation reflected in Matthew 14:4 and Mark 6:18.

4. There is no clear indication in Scripture that this inference is not valid. There is no indication given of any time (during the lifetime of the original marriage partner) at which the adulterous relationship ceases to be adulterous.

We submit that the above cumulative and inferential argumentation establishes the thesis in question.

III. THE PROBLEM OF ETHICAL INVOLVEMENTS

A. *The Requirement of the Mandate*

The second part of your committee's mandate reads as follows:

If the committee's finding conclusively substantiate the position that a second marriage after unbiblical divorce is a living in continual adultery, the committee shall study this further question — Are there possible ethical involvements or circumstances which may demand that an unbiblically divorced and remarried person shall continue in the second marriage? If so, the committee shall draft a revision of point 2 which recognizes such involvements and gives guidance to our Consistories that they may deal wisely with the specific cases.

The present reading of point 2 of the stand on divorce is as follows (*Acts of Synod, 1952, p. 22*):

With respect to any person who has obtained an unbiblical divorce or who was divorced as a result of his adultery, and who being guilty of either sin, subsequently remarried, Synod declares that he cannot during the lifetime of his former wife (or she cannot during the lifetime of her former husband) be a member of the church, unless in addition to confessing his guilt before the consistory, he manifests his genuine repentance not only by means of a godly conduct in general, but also and specifically by means of ceasing to live (in the ordinary marriage relationship) with his present spouse.

This, then, is the matter which we must consider. Do the findings under Part II of the present report necessitate any change in the church's present stand, as quoted immediately above?

B. *Guiding Considerations*

1. It is to be clearly recognized that Scripture does not have definitive instructions as to just how the Church is to deal with every case which comes before it. If the basic attitude toward remarriage is arrived at only on the basis of indirect Scriptural evidence, one could hardly expect that clear-cut directives would be found for such things as "ethical involvements" arising out of remarriage. Not only in this, but in practically every other stand the Church may take, it is possible for the critic to point to some detail or implication which has not been documented by some text or other. The Church must deal as far as possible with the specific instructions and general spirit of Scripture; but beyond that will sometimes have to make formulations and prescriptions which will remain open to some criticism. A recognition of this fact is the product of the honest acknowledgment of the limitations of our understanding, the imperfections of our present society, and the alterations of details of various problems between the time of the New Testament and our own days.

2. It is beyond dispute that there are ethical involvements or circumstances arising out of unbiblical divorce and remarriage which may in some cases be serious indeed. The committee is in hearty agreement on the existence of these involvements and their difficult character. Very many of our consistories have wrestled at first hand with the problems arising out of these involvements. In some cases, particularly where the physical and spiritual nurture of dependent children is involved, these complications may be so weighty as to lead the parties involved to judge that they cannot agree to the demand for separation. It is, in fact, the very existence of these involvements and the appeal which they make to the consciences of our consistories, which has brought and kept this problem before the Church in a realistic manner. The question which faces us is how—if at all—people involved in such seemingly impossible situations are to be restored to membership in the Church.

3. The appeal of such cases has a point of reference in the consistories themselves. They have the duty of proclaiming and manifesting the mercy of God toward repentant sinners, and, within that context, of encouraging the penitent. There is no denying that there are requirements of patience and mercy incumbent upon the Church.

But there is also a limitation upon those requirements. They may go up to the point where the revealed will of God comes into conflict with them; but not beyond that point. It is a recognition of that limitation which has prompted the inclusion of the following requirement in Point 2 of our present stand on divorce; “. . . unless in addition to confessing his guilt before the consistory, he manifests his genuine repentance not only by means of a godly conduct in general, but also and specifically by means of *ceasing to live . . . with his present spouse.*”

4. But what, once again, of those for whom such separation seems to be “ethically impossible”? This is the very crux of the problem. If, as seems to be the case, there is no perfect solution to this problem, is there anything we can say about the general lines which its treatment ought to follow?

We would remark first of all that it is to be borne in mind that the responsibility of dealing with social obligations or ethical involvements lies squarely with those who have involved themselves in the sinful relationship and difficult position. It is not out of keeping with the character of the Church of Christ to declare this fact. On the contrary, it is a necessary declaration in view of the concessions which some demand of the Church; and this necessity is certainly not less in our day than in past ages.

Our second remark is that even within the situation in which the parties involved deem separation impossible, there are wide divergencies of background and attitude on the part of the aspirants to church mem-

bership. Some were better acquainted than others with the Scriptural requirements which they were transgressing; some show a greater zeal than others in seeking the fellowship of the Church. These variations make it impossible to legislate, in a casuistic manner, for every last possibility.

The person who is troubled in his conscience will continue to seek the preaching of the Word and the religious education of his children, even if he is not granted the full rights of membership in the Church. The committee believes that he should be encouraged to do so. It would seem that while on the one hand it cannot be said that a person who has not forsaken an adulterous marriage is fully repentant, it cannot on the other hand be maintained that one who continues to seek the preaching of the Word is not giving some evidence of a willingness to listen to the admonitions of the Church.

5. What is the duty of the Church toward these people? It is the duty of the Church to deal with them as inquirers. The Church is given a point of contact with these people, and should use the means available to warn them of the consequences of their sin and to give to them and to their children the testimony and instruction of the Word of God. The fruits of such activity, whether in the first or second generation, may well prove worth all the activity expended and the patience exercised in this unusual kind of ministry.

C. *Related Questions*

1. *Divorce and the mission subject.*

We may touch on two questions which are related to this general problem. One of them concerns the admission into the Church, through its mission program, of those who lives are burdened by the difficulty of an unbiblical remarriage. It is admitted that this is a weighty problem. The solution which has been suggested, that those be admitted who sinned in complete ignorance of the Scriptural teaching, has been found unsatisfactory by the Christian Reformed Church and been repudiated. Yet the Church is eager to present a vital message to the unchurched in its environment, and this is an attitude which every member of the Church should share.

And yet this admittedly weighty question is counterbalanced by another consideration. What is the Church's testimony concerning the evil of divorce? This is a question of first-rank importance. The very persistence and urgency of the divorce question among us is evidence of the dimensions of this evil in our environment, and even in our midst. Our day and our situation demand a clear-cut and unmistakable testimony, which is practically impossible to obtain or maintain with a compromising stand. Your committee has no solution to this difficulty which will satisfy all parties and all demands; but is of the firm opinion

that nothing must be introduced which will compromise the Church's witness on this point.

2. *Divorce and the State.*

A comparable question, and one which has received some attention in our synods, is the question of the relation between the attitude of the Church and that of the State toward divorce. It appears that at least part of the difference between the stand of our church and the advice of our sister-church in the Netherlands is due to the different situations with respect to the grounds on which divorce is permitted in the respective countries. A further difference complicates the relations of our church to the laws of the State here. When one asks how the stand of the Church relates to that of the State, one must ask, further, what the stand of the State is. But then, in a sense, the answer must be given that there is no attitude of "the State," but only various attitudes of various states, some of which do not recognize the validity of divorces granted by others. It is the task of the Church to indicate clearly what her own attitude is, over against the attitudes of the states in general, and the extreme laxity of some states in particular.

D. *Conclusion*

It is the opinion of your committee, in the light of the foregoing considerations, that point 2 of our present position on divorce, as revised in 1952, *should be allowed to stand as it is*. There are no ethical involvements of sufficient weight to warrant a perpetuation of the sin of living in a marriage which is illegitimate in its very nature. Separation remains the solution. Where separation is considered impossible, by the parties involved, it is impossible also to grant the full privileges of church membership.

IV. FURTHER REFLECTIONS ON THE CHRISTIAN REFORMED POSITION ON DIVORCE

It might be argued that the formal requirements of our mandate have now been met. The committee does not feel that there is any need for revising Point 2 of the present stand on divorce. The question remains, however, whether it is not required of the committee to formulate its advice with respect to those who will not meet the requirements laid down in Point 2. The opinion of your committee is that this could better be done by adding a third point than by revising Point 2.

In that connection, it is wise to examine our whole stand on divorce as it now exists. In 1947 a five-point stand was adopted. The first of these five points has stood without argument to the present. The second was revised in 1952. The third was rescinded in 1952. The fourth and fifth points, dealing with the manner of readmission of those who qualify for readmission, still stand. The fourth point speaks of

the period of probation to which such people shall submit, and the fifth, of the necessity of gaining the approval of Classis for such readmission. (These decisions may be found on pp. 66-69 of the *Acts of Synod, 1947.*) Your committee now addresses itself to the question what it expects the stand of the Church on divorce to be if the present recommendations are approved.

The first point, concerning the duty of consistories and ministers to explain the principles governing marriage and to warn against the evils of divorce, should stand, and should be faithfully observed in our churches.

The second point, as revised (see *Acts, 1952*, page 22), should stand, but some revision is necessary in the grounds for this point. Some of the grounds adopted in 1947 refer directly to elements of the declaration which have now been dropped. Those grounds should be deleted. In their place should come some reflection of the findings of the present committee with respect to "continual adultery."

The third point has already been rescinded. It may well be replaced at this time with a statement concerning the proper handling of those cases in which separation of those unbiblically remarried is thought to be ethically impossible.

The fourth point of the 1947 decisions needs at least some revision. It reads as follows:

Persons who have made themselves guilty of the sin of remarriage after a divorce in which they were the guilty parties, and who can be admitted or readmitted in harmony with 2 and 3 above, should not be accepted into the church unless there has been an adequate period of probation during which they have given ample evidence of the genuine character of their sorrow. This period of probation should not be too short, in order that the holy things of God be not given to those who are not entitled to them, Matt. 7:6. Neither should it be too long lest the truly penitent be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow, II Cor. 2:5-7. The length and acceptable evidence of repentance in each concrete case should be determined by the consistory, in harmony with the conditions stipulated in points (2) and (3) above.

At least the words, "and 3" in the first sentence should be deleted, and the concluding words should be altered to read, "the condition stipulated in point 2 above." It is a question in the minds of your committee whether articles 4 and 5 are really designed for a situation in which separation is required in all cases for the readmission of those guilty of adulterous remarriage. Perhaps all such cases may be treated according to the general rules of the Church on discipline, without special regulation. If so, these two articles also might be rescinded. But formally, articles 4 and 5 do not contradict the divorce stand of the Christian Reformed Church as it now exists or as we visualize it, if only the minor revisions proposed in this paragraph are carried out. The committee is not therefore prepared to recommend rescinding these points at this time.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That Synod adopt the following as the first ground for Point 2 of its present position on divorce: "Those who have been divorced and remarried contrary to Scriptural requirements have entered an adulterous relationship which is sinful in its continuation as well as its inception. This interpretation is not only allowed, but clearly implied in Matthew 5:32; 19:3-9; Mark 10:11, 12; Luke 16:18. It receives further support from the *analogia fidei*, as reflected in such passages as Genesis 1:27; 2:24; 5:2; Matthew 14:4; Mark 6:18; Romans 7:2, 3; I Corinthians 7:10-15."

2. That Synod delete, from its present ground "a" for Point 2, the opening words, "With respect to those who have sinned against better knowledge."

Ground: The reference to those who have sinned against better knowledge is no longer to the point, since Point 3 of the 1947 decisions was rescinded by the 1952 Synod. The Scriptural evidence cited in this ground, however, is still to the point, and therefore the ground itself should be retained.

3. That Synod adopt the following as Point 3 of its stand on divorce: "In dealing with those who will not agree to the demand for separation, consistories shall reckon with the above considerations as well as with the demands of love and mercy. Although such people must be excluded from church membership, as much spiritual care as possible ought to be offered to those who show some signs of repentance and who seek the ministrations of the Church of Christ."

Grounds:

a. Professions and signs of repentance may not be utterly disregarded by the Church and considered worthless.

b. The general demands of mercy, on the other hand, may not obviate the continuing sinfulness of an unbiblical remarriage.

4. That Synod make the necessary deletions and alterations in Point 4 of its present stand on divorce, so that it shall read as follows:

"Persons who have made themselves guilty of the sin of remarriage after a divorce in which they were the guilty parties, and who can be admitted or readmitted in harmony with Point 2 above, should not be accepted into the church unless there has been an adequate period of probation during which they have given ample evidence of the genuine character of their sorrow. This period of probation should not be too short, in order that the holy things of God be not given to those who are not entitled to them, Matt. 7:6. Neither should it be too long lest the truly penitent be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow, II Cor. 2:5-7. The length and acceptable evidence of repentance in each concrete case

should be determined by the consistory, in harmony with the conditions stipulated in Point 2.”

Ground: The references to Point 3 which are hereby deleted are no longer relevant, since the Point 3 to which they referred has been rescinded.

VI. THE CHRISTIAN REFORMED POSITION ON DIVORCE

In conclusion, the committee wishes to add a section in which the present position of the Christian Reformed Church on divorce is clearly set forth. Contrary to opinions which are occasionally expressed, the Christian Reformed Church is not waiting to have a position on divorce, but has such a position which is now in effect. To avoid all misunderstanding as to the present position or the changes proposed by the present committee, we present first a summary of the present position, and then, in full, the position as it will be if our recommendations are adopted.

A. *The Present Position Summarized*

1. Consistories and ministers are urged to do all in their power to instruct those entrusted to their spiritual care in the Scriptural principles pertaining to marriage—see Matt. 5:32; 19:3-9; Rom. 7:2, 3; Eph. 5:31, 32; Heb. 13:4—and to warn unceasingly against every violation of the marriage-bond through unbiblical divorce or through adultery.

Ground: The rising tide of evil in divorce and adultery demands such a warning.

2. Synod declares that those unbiblically divorced and remarried cannot be members of the church without manifesting the genuineness of their repentance by ceasing to live (in the ordinary marriage relationship) with the present spouse.

Grounds “a” to “d”, cf. *Acts, 1947*, pp. 66, 67.

3. (Rescinded, 1952)

4. The readmission of people who can be readmitted on this basis must be preceded by a period of probation which is neither too short nor too long.

5. The admission or re-admission of such individuals to the Church by the Consistory is subject to the approval of Classis.

B. *The Proposed Positions in Full*

1. Consistories and ministers are urged to do all in their power to instruct those entrusted to their spiritual care in the Scriptural principles pertaining to marriage—see Matt. 5:32; 19:3-9; Rom. 7:2, 3; Eph. 5:31; Heb. 13:4—and to warn unceasingly against every violation of the marriage bond through unbiblical divorce or through adultery.

Ground: The evils of adultery and unbiblical divorce are increasing on every side. The danger for our own denomination is growing by the day. Therefore a synodical resolution to urge consistories and ministers to exercise renewed vigilance in the work of instructing, exhorting, and warning our people, especially the younger generation, far from being superfluous, is highly necessary.

2. With respect to any person who has obtained an unbiblical divorce or who was divorced as a result of his own adultery, and who being guilty of either sin, subsequently remarried, Synod declares that he cannot, during the lifetime of his former wife (or she cannot during the lifetime of her former husband) be a member of the church, unless in addition to confessing his guilt before the consistory, he manifests his genuine repentance not only by means of a godly conduct in general, but also and specifically by means of ceasing to live (in the ordinary marriage relationship) with his present spouse.

Grounds:

a. Those who have been divorced and remarried contrary to Scriptural requirements have entered an adulterous relationship which is sinful in its continuation as well as its inception. This interpretation is not only allowed, but clearly implied in Matthew 5:32; 19:3-9; Mark 10:11, 12; Luke 16:18. It receives further support from the *analogia fidei*, as reflected in such passages as Genesis 1:27; 2:24; 5:2; Matthew 14:4; Mark 6:18; Romans 7:2, 3; I Corinthians 7:10-15.

b. Scripture declares in Rom. 7:1-3: "The woman that hath a husband is bound by law to the husband while he liveth; but if the husband die, she is discharged from the law of her husband. So then, if, while the husband liveth, she be joined to another man, she shall be called an adulteress. . . ."

From this passage it is clear that if, at any time while her husband is still alive, this woman be living with another man, she is living in adultery even though she has become legally married to this second husband. Only the *death* of her (first) husband makes her free to marry another. Surely, if she commit adultery by *entering* a new marriage relationship, she also commits adultery by *remaining* in that relationship.

c. In I Cor. 7:39 we read: "A wife is bound for so long a time as her husband liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is free to be married to whom she will; only, in the Lord." While it is sometimes erroneously argued that Rom. 7:1-3 has no value as proof inasmuch as the apostle uses it as an illustration, the present passage, I Cor. 7:39, is not an illustration, but pure, didactic revelation with respect to marriage. The passage reemphasizes the truth expressed in Romans 7.

d. Prov. 28:13 does not leave open to doubt the fact that those who have wilfully transgressed should not only confess but also *forsake* their sin. The passage reads as follows: "He that covereth his transgression shall not prosper; but whoso confesseth and *forsaketh* them shall obtain mercy."

e. This position is in accordance with the official pronouncements of every orthodox denomination in our country which has drawn up resolutions anent this question. Unless, by solid arguments, those who disagree with it can prove that it is incorrect, the church should cling to it both in theory and in practice.

3. In dealing with those who will not agree to the demand for separation, consistories shall reckon with the above considerations as well as with the demands of love and mercy. Although such people must be excluded from church membership, as much spiritual care as possible ought to be offered to those who show some signs of repentance and who seek the ministrations of the Church of Christ.

Grounds:

a. Professions and signs of repentance may not be utterly disregarded by the Church and considered as worthless.

b. The general demands of mercy, on the other hand, may not obviate the continuing sinfulness of an unbiblical remarriage.

4. Persons who have made themselves guilty of the sin of remarriage after a divorce in which they were the guilty parties, and who can be admitted or readmitted in harmony with "2" above, should not be accepted into the church unless there has been an adequate period of probation during which they have given ample evidence of the genuine character of their sorrow. This period of probation should not be too short, in order that the holy things of God be not given to those who are not entitled to them, Matt. 7:6. Neither should it be too long lest the truly penitent be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow, II Cor. 2:5-7. The length and acceptable evidence of repentance in each concrete case should be determined by the consistory, in harmony with the conditions stipulated in point 2 above.

Grounds:

a. Scripture everywhere teaches that true repentance and genuine faith are evidenced by godly conduct as their fruit, Prov. 28:13; Matt. 7:18-20; Phil. 1:27; Jas. 3:13; I John 2:29; 3:6. Hence, after the sins have been confessed and this confession has been announced to the congregation, time must be given during which this godly conduct can be made manifest to all. Readmission should never become a rash or hurried affair.

b. The guilty persons should become deeply impressed with the heinous character of their sins, Num. 12:13-15.

c. This measure is in harmony with the spirit and letter of Article 78 of the Church Order.

5. The admission or readmission of such individuals to the Church by the Consistory is subject to the approval of Classis.

Grounds:

a. This decision is of great significance to the church at large.

b. Whereas in the matter of excommunication Classical approval is required, Synod deems this also desirable when divorced persons are admitted or readmitted in accord with the aforesaid resolutions.

Respectfully submitted,

W. KOK

J. H. KROMMINGA

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MARITAL PROBLEMS — ECUMENICAL SYNOD REPORT

THE Committee on "Marital Problems — Ecumenical Synod Report" herewith reports to your honorable body.

Introduction

Synod 1954 received the report of the delegates of our church to the Ecumenical Synod, 1953. They reported, among other things, that the proposals (of a committee, though not otherwise acted on by the Ecumenical Synod) re marital problems "have been referred to the constituent churches for study."

Synod 1954 then adopted the following proposals that constitute our mandate.

I. OUR MANDATE.

A. "That Synod appoint a committee to study and evaluate the proposals re marital problems, this committee to report to the Synod of 1955." (Acts 1954, p. 83, C, 1.)

B. "That this committee (on divorce and remarriage) and the committee appointed to study the material of the Ecumenical Synod on marital problems shall confer with each other before they report to the Synod of 1955." (Acts 1954, p. 93, C, 2.)

Another decision that possibly sheds some light on the task of our committee, though only indirectly, is the following:

"That Synod continue the present committee (committee on divorce and remarriage) instructing them to review their report in the light of the material re this matter referred to us by the Ecumenical Synod of 1953, to see whether they wish to alter their own report in any way."

Grounds (for the above, and for B above).

1. In this manner the two committees will have the benefit of one another's findings.

2. It may be possible that in this manner Synod of 1955 will be in a position to present an official declaration re marriage and divorce to the constituent churches of the Ecumenical Synod of 1958. (Acts 1954, p. 93, C,)

The mandate implied in these Synodical resolutions has undergone a slight change from a formal viewpoint; for

(a) We informed Synod 1955 that we were not prepared to report, but would report to Synod 1956.

(b) We held a conference with the committee on divorce and remarriage, as Synod requested, and we have already reported to Synod 1955 that the two committees could not agree in their fundamental approach to the problem of illegitimate divorce and remarriage. We shall therefore have to present to your honorable body only *our* committee's recommendations in re a declaration to the Ecumenical Synod on marriage and divorce.

Note: In the statement given above of our mandate, three different committees are referred to. To avoid confusion, these committees will henceforth in this report be referred to briefly as follows:

(a) The E. C. (The Committee of the Ecumenical Synod whose report we were asked to analyze and evaluate.)

(b) The Divorce Committee. (The Committee on Divorce and Remarriage that reported to Synod 1955.)

(c) The Marital Problems Committee. (The Committee now reporting on the Report of the Ecumenical Committee.)

II. ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION OF E. C. REPORT ON "MARITAL PROBLEMS."

A. ANALYSIS OF E. C. REPORT

1. Marriage is A *DIVINELY ORDAINED* RELATIONSHIP WHICH GOD INTENDS TO BE AN *EXCLUSIVE* (monogamous), *PERMANENT* (life-long) AND *CO-HABITIVE* (sexual) FELLOWSHIP OF *LOVE*.

(a) *Divinely ordained.* Marriage is not a mere contract based on erotic feelings, but is a divinely established Institution or Structure by the Law or Constitution of which those who freely enter it are united and bound to each other by God Himself.

"According to God's revelation in the Holy Scriptures, what constitutes marriage is: the work of God, who unites husband and wife in matrimony in an alliance which is essentially a life-long bond of fidelity. This is the meaning of Christ's words in Matthew 19:6: 'What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.'" Acts of the Reformed Ecumenical Synod, Edinburgh 1953, pp. 85-86)

That God joins two people together does not mean that He "selects" a man's partner and "approves" of every marriage that is made, but rather this: that when two people freely enter into the divinely established structure of marriage they subject themselves to the binding pressures of God's ordinance and are thereby committed by God to fidelity.

"It must be noted that the text does not read 'who,' but 'what.' It is not emphasized that *these* particular persons are joined together, but that *marriage*, as *marriage*, means being 'joined together' by God." (Ibid, p. 86)

(b) *Exclusive* (monogamous). Marriage is by God's design a union of one man with one woman; bigamy and polygamy (polyandry) exist in violation of the Divine ordinance.

“. . . there (can) be no room for polygamous marriage in a Christian congregation.” (Ibid, p. 95)

(c) *Permanent* (life-long). The marriage relation is in its nature permanent.

“Marriage . . . is according to the order of God a life-long fellowship . . . The marriage bond in its essence is unbreakable.” (p. 87)

(d) *Co-habitive* (sexual). “. . . a true marriage (is not) possible where ‘they twain’ shall not be ‘one flesh.’ Sexual intercourse is an essential element of marriage.” (p. 86)

“Yet we must object to the idea that . . . one cannot speak of a real marriage until connubial intercourse has taken place.” (p. 85)

(e) *Fellowship of Love*. “Marriage is essentially a relationship of love. A true marriage is inconceivable without that attachment which draws husband and wife together and makes them give their mutual consent.” (p. 86)

2. *Because the marriage bond is in its essence unbreakable DIVORCE is against the will and ordinance of God.*

“In Christ's preaching . . . He deals with the fulfilling of the law, which is inconsistent with divorce as breach of the bond of marriage.” (p. 86)

“God maintains . . . His divine demand and divine command. Also the commandment that in marriage husband and wife shall both unconditionally remain faithful.” (p.86)

3. *Although the marriage bond is in its essence unbreakable and divorce is against the Divine ordinance of creation; yet in a world rent by SIN God does not unconditionally forbid DIVORCE.*

(a) *God permitted* Moses, His servant, out of socio-political considerations, to allow an Israelite to put away his wife and take another, on almost any ground, provided only he wrote her a bill of divorcement (Deut. 24:2). Similar, though not identical, permission is presumably granted to contemporary Christian statesmen.

“. . . there may be cases in which because of ‘the hardness of hearts,’ as Christ calls it, . . . one must resort to an emergency solution in civil life; just as Moses did in his office as maintainer of civil order in the Old Testament dispensation.” (p. 87)

“It must not be taken for granted that (the) rule, as it is recognized in the Church of Christ, is also valid according to the civil authorities in their marriage laws. In a civilization where perhaps the majority does not believe in Christ . . . far more allowance must be made for the fact that so many people lack the faith . . . Thus certain divorce

cases must be accepted, which the Church of Christ definitely cannot approve . . . Even so (the Church) must warn against all arbitrary and false regulation of the grounds for divorce." (p. 92)

(b) *God permits the Christian*, a member of Christ's Church, to 'put away' (*apoluoon*) his wife if she commits 'fornication' (*Porneia*). Matthew 5:32, Matthew 19:9

(1) The meaning of *Porneia* (Fornication)

One member of the E. C. understands *porneia* to mean: ("Immoral intercourse *within* marriage," and as referring to the unbearable situation which arises in a marriage, when the sexual intercourse from the side of one of the partners takes place in a spirit or in a manner, which virtually comes to 'ontucht,' fornication, prostitution." (pp. 88-89)

The other members of the E. C. understand *porneia* to mean: "illegitimate sexual intercourse of a married woman with a *third* party," i.e. *adultery*. (p. 89)

(2) The meaning of *Apoluoon* ("put away")

The one member of the committee who interprets *porneia* to mean "immoral intercourse within marriage" maintains that Jesus in this passage does *not* sanction Divorce, "but only a *Separation* of bed and board, whereby the marriage is maintained as an indissoluble bond." (p. 89)

The other members of the committee, who interpret *porneia* to mean "illegitimate sexual intercourse of a married woman with a third party," maintain that Jesus in this passage *does* sanction Divorce. Jesus, they maintain, *justifies* a husband who *divorces* a wife guilty of fornication.

They point out, however, that Jesus, while sanctioning divorce in the case of adultery, nevertheless "maintains . . . absolutely the demand for fidelity in marriage." (p. 89) They argue that the divorce is not a breaking of the marriage bond, but is simply the active recognition of the fact that the marriage bond has already been (sinfully) broken by the adulterous wife. They say ". . . where the wife herself has broken the marriage bond, it cannot be said that by putting her away, her husband exposes her to adultery. She herself has already committed adultery." (p. 89)

They nevertheless recognize that even in the case of the wife's adultery the man is not *compelled* by Jesus' teaching to divorce her. *Reconciliation* remains in most instances the prescribed solution. "The true solution of difficulties in marriage is in general a mutual return to the order of God, namely through repentance and conversion, and to seek each other anew in love. Even in the case of adultery the answer must be sought in prayer, as to whether continuation of the marriage might not still be the way of the Lord." (p. 87) "Even where adultery has taken place there remains the duty to forgive, and one

must always deliberate most earnestly if this can include such a reconciliation that married life can be continued." (p. 92)

The "duty" to maintain the marriage by way of loving reconciliation is present especially then when the adultery of the wife is only "incidental." (p. 90) ". . . Christ does not say that in every case where adultery has been committed just once, the other party always has the right to consider the marriage as ended, so that in our time in all such cases official divorce proceedings can be taken straightway. In this respect a Christian must always be ready for a reconciliation." (p. 90)

Porneia (adultery) does *not*, therefore, automatically, completely, and finally *break the marriage bond*. A wife guilty of porneia is still a wife, and prior to divorce and remarriage reconciliation is always a possibility.

Of course, "when a wife has deserted her husband and is living with another man, then, according to Christ, the situation is totally different. Then the marriage is at an end." (p. 90) In other words, there are cases where "the actual breach of marriage must be accepted and official divorce proceedings begun." (p. 90)

(c) *Does God permit the Christian to divorce his wife for any reason except (parektos) adultery?*

(1) The majority of the E. C. takes *parektos* in Matthew 5:32 in the limitative sense, and not as *exempli gratia*. They understand Jesus to teach that there is *only one* exception, adultery, to the rule that marriage is unbreakable.

". . . these members . . . are of the opinion that the words 'save in the case of porneia' cannot be considered as offering an example. They . . . contain the *one* exception where the rule of Christ naturally does not apply." (p. 89)

(2) The committee denies that the Scriptures provide, in I Corinthians 7, another ground for divorce. — "If the Church of Christ grants her members the right of divorce in the case of what is at present known as '*desertion*', that is certainly not justifiable with reference to I Cor. 7, as though this chapter provided a 'Biblical ground for divorce.'" (p. 91)

The committee, nevertheless, is not apodictic in the matter of Divorce and a specific kind of desertion: "In the case of I Cor. 7:15 (desertion because of religious hatred), it can be a matter of opinion if divorce with the right to remarry should be granted or only separation of bed and board." (p. 91)

4. *A man who divorces his wife on unbiblical grounds AND MARRIES ANOTHER commits ADULTERY (Matthew 19:9)*

"He who divorces his marriage partner and marries another party,

wilfully transgresses the holy commandment: thou shalt not commit adultery." (E. C. Report, p. 92)

5. *A man who divorces his wife on unbiblical grounds and marries another, thus making himself guilty of the sin of adultery, MUST BE DISCIPLINED.*

(a) "If this sin is committed by a communicant member of the Church . . . church discipline must be charitably enforced and this member be excluded from the fellowship of the holy sacraments. He or she must certainly be duly admonished to come to heartfelt repentance and confession of guilt before the Lord and the consistory (or even a gathering of the congregation)." (Ibid, p. 93)

(b) "If after repeated admonishment there is no sign of due repentance, and if confession of guilt has been refused, then the discipline will have to be continued, until excommunication, if necessary." (Ibid, p. 93)

6. *A man guilty of unbiblical divorce and remarriage, and thus of adultery, may upon sincere repentance be restored into the full fellowship of the church without abandoning his second wife or ceasing to cohabit with her.*

THE ECUMENICAL COMMITTEE

(a) Quotes with evident approval the following decisions of *The Gereformeerde Kerken of the Netherlands*, Synod 1923.

" . . . the command that the newly married couple should abstain from any matrimonial intercourse has not sufficient foundation in the Scriptures, would be too heavy a burden, and would open the way for other and worse sins." (E. C. Report, p. 93)

" . . . if, after the sin has been committed the sinners repent and want to return to the community of the Church, the Church can only ask that the sin should be confessed and repentance of this sinful act be shown." (Ibid, p. 93)

" . . . the only reason for the Church to doubt the sincerity of such repentance would be if the same sin of an arbitrary and rash divorce and remarriage was committed again afterwards." (Ibid, p. 93)

(b) Declares *The Christian Reformed Church of America*, Synod 1952, asserts without sufficient warrant that "a sinner in the above-mentioned sense cannot be a member of the Church unless in addition to confessing his guilt before the consistory he manifests his genuine repentance not only by means of a godly conduct in general, but also and specifically by means of ceasing to live (in the ordinary marriage relationship) with his present spouse." (Ibid, p. 93)

The E. C. "is convinced that neither in (the) texts nor in the context can anything be found to indicate continence in a second marriage, begun after a forbidden divorce." (Ibid, p. 94)

(c) Declares that "*Scriptural Exegesis* discloses that with the words 'and shall marry another,' Matthew 19:9, the Lord 'indicates the entering of a new marriage, the actual ceremony of that marriage . . . the solemnizing of a new marriage, according to civil law, in which husband and wife are bound together in mutual loyalty according to the law of God.'" (Ibid, p. 93)

It is thus clear that the sin of adultery of which Matthew 19:9 speaks *consists* in the "combined deed" of illegitimate divorce and remarriage. By remarriage is meant the solemnizing of a new marriage according to civil law, i.e., the wedding ceremony. (Ibid, pp. 92, 93)

It is equally clear that *no* act of cohabitation which occurs *after* the wedding ceremony is to be regarded as adulterous, since *all* such acts (including the *first*) takes place *within* the new, bona fide, although sinfully contracted marriage.

" . . . the result . . . is a marriage in which husband and wife must treat each other as such and must undergo physical union without continual continence." (Ibid, p. 93)

"A new marriage has begun with all the rights and duties which, according to divine and civil law, apply to the married state." (Ibid, pp. 93, 94)

It is evident from all this that a man who is unbiblically divorced and remarried may *not* be regarded as living in *continuous adultery*.

(d) Maintains that a man who is guilty of unbiblical divorce and remarriage, may be restored into the full fellowship of the Church upon the single condition of *sincere repentance*.

"In accordance with the Holy Scriptures, no more may be required of the Church member who has committed the afore-mentioned sin in order to repeal the disciplinary measures. *Mutatis mutandis* the same applies to a person who is not, or is no longer, a member, and who wishes to join the Church." (p. 95)

In judging whether the repentance is sincere the Church does well to ascertain whether in the guilty party there is "a godly conduct in general" (p. 94), and whether "in the second, unpermissible marriage the guilty party appears to live 'in the holy bonds of marriage according to God's ordinance, in constant faithfulness and love.'" (p. 95)

7. *The Ecumenical Committee finally gives a brief statement on the problem of "Polygamy in the Mission Field."*

The committee advises "the utmost caution" in abolishing polygamy where it "is still considered quite a normal custom." "The conscience of the young Christians must first be trained in compliance with the Word of God." On the mission fields of the Gereformeerde Kerken a convert "was not bound to send all his wives away except one" in view of the resulting "greatest social and moral misery" for the dismissed

wives. It was customary, however, that such a man could not be chosen to fill any office in the church. (Titus 1:6)

However, those already members of the church who wanted to take a second wife were "earnestly admonished and also often excluded from Communion." "But every case must be treated on its own merits."

* * * * *

A FEW REMARKS ARE IN ORDER AT THIS POINT

1. The foregoing is not merely an *analysis*, as the word will often be understood. It does not follow the Ecumenical Committee report page by page. It aims to give an elucidation or reconstruction of the report that will help our people and especially the delegates to Synod to see clearly its salient points.

2. In the evaluation that follows, your committee does not take up two points in the Ecumenical Committee Report, namely the question of other possible Scriptural grounds for divorce, and the question of polygamy on the mission fields. Frankly we lacked the time. Moreover we felt it might unduly complicate the task of Synod to attempt to cover such a wide field at one Synodical session. However, the question of other grounds cannot be avoided, since it is part of the E. C. Report, even though it involves a reconsideration of the position of our church. And the question of polygamy on the mission fields also presses for an answer. We request Synod to continue the committee for this two-fold task, with instructions to report to Synod 1957, or, if it so desires, to appoint a new committee for this work. We also advise that this committee now reporting or a new committee, be specifically charged with the task of preparing a statement to be sent, after approval by our Synod, to the next Ecumenical Synod, as the position of our church, and as its contribution to the discussion of the problems of marriage and divorce.

* * * * *

B. OUR EVALUATION OF THE ECUMENICAL COMMITTEE REPORT

1. This report contains much valuable material that can be of rich benefit to the constituent churches.

2. In general, we believe the views presented in re the sacred character of marriage and the evil of divorce are soundly Biblical, and historically Reformed, as also our analysis, we trust, clearly indicates.

3. In some instances, clearer distinctions and more precise language would be desirable. For instance, on page 85, we are told that the committee objects to the idea that "one cannot speak of a real marriage until connubial intercourse has taken place." And then on page 86 we read "Neither is a true marriage possible when 'they twain' shall not be 'one flesh.' Sexual intercourse is an essential element of marriage."

4. The exegetical proofs adduced are in one or two cases not completely adequate. For instance, on page 93, much is made of the fact that our Lord in Matthew 19:9 does not say "Whosoever becomes one flesh with another . . . but He says, Whosoever shall *marry* another . . ." The E. C. evidently holds that the use of the term marriage establishes the fact that the Lord is not considering some sort of "free love" or concubinage, but the *solemnizing* of a *new marriage*, according to civil law, in which husband and wife are bound together in mutual loyalty *according to the law of God.*" (last italics ours)

Your committee agrees with the position that the second marriage (after illegitimate divorce) is a real marriage. But we do not believe that can be proved merely from the Lord's use of the word *marries*. For we read of Herod that "he had married her" (Herodias). Yet John the Baptist says, "It is not lawful for thee to have her." In other words, Scripture in at least one case uses the word "marries" when it at the same time stigmatizes the union referred to, as an unlawful sexual fellowship.

5. Your committee is in full agreement with the position taken by the E. C. on the question that has so long agitated our church.

The E. C. correctly states the question as follows: "Now the question arises whether, and if so, under what conditions persons who are divorced and remarried on grounds which are not recognized by the church, can remain or become members of the church as long as their original marriage partner is still alive.

The committee then makes three points in answering this question. First, "church discipline must be charitably enforced and this member "(must) be excluded from the fellowship of the holy sacraments."

Second, quoting the 1923 Synod of the Gereformeerde Kerken in the Netherlands, "the command that the newly married couple should abstain from any matrimonial intercourse has no sufficient foundation in the Scriptures, would be a too heavy burden, and would open the way for other and worse sins."

Third, quoting the same Synod, "The church can only ask that the sin should be confessed and repentance of this sinful act be shown." (p. 93, E. C. Report)

III. THE PROBLEM WE FACE

The stand taken by your Marital Problems Committee, in approving the position taken by the E. C. (that the continuous adultery theory is not supported by Scripture) means that conflicting reports are presented to Synod. The report of the Divorce Committee adheres to the position that parties illegitimately divorced and remarried are in their sexual relations living in continuous adultery, and therefore they could be

admitted to the full fellowship of the church (or re-admitted) only if they abstain from marital relations. This is also the present stand of our church, and has been for some years.

Our committee rejects this stand and in this report rejects the "continuous adultery" theory as not proved and not capable of proof from Scripture. And we hold that such parties can be admitted or re-admitted if they sincerely repent of the sin of illegitimate divorce and of the sinful act of contracting a second marriage, if the consistory is convinced of the sincerity of their repentance. This is also the stand of the Reformed Churches of the Netherlands and of the Ecumenical Committee.

Since Synod 1956 will therefore have to choose between, on the one hand, the present stand of the church and the advice of the Divorce Committee, and on the other hand, the stand of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands, of the E. C., and of the committee now reporting, we feel it our right and indeed our duty to refer briefly and in a critical fashion to the report of the Divorce Committee.

IV. CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE REPORTS (1954 and 1955) OF THE DIVORCE COMMITTEE

A. MANDATE OF THE COMMITTEE ON DIVORCE

In acting upon a committee report that gave advice to Synod on a protest of Mr. P. Van Dyken against the 1947 decision on our problem, Synod charged the Divorce Committee with the task (a) "to examine the exegetical foundations" of the continuous adultery theory (Van Dyken had charged that such was completely lacking), (b) to so report to Synod, if its findings "conclusively substantiate" the position, (c) if not, to draft a resolution to replace point (2) of the decision of 1947. See Acts 1952, p. 23, for fuller statement of mandate.

The language of this mandate is very strong and definite. But the language of the committee is very weak, almost hesitant.

The Divorce Committee admits "the absence of one single conclusive text." (Agenda 1955, p. 119) And referring to Matthew 19:9, the Divorce Committee states, "The grammar in the text allows for the possibility that the adultery is continuous." (p. 121) Again, referring to Romans 7:2 and 3, and I Corinthians 7:10 to 15, "We will not contend that these passages give a direct and clear-cut answer to the present question." (p. 122)

Surely all this hardly amounts to or claims a conclusive substantiation. "It should be evident to all that no text or texts can be found which directly and clearly support or refute the statement in question; i.e., that unbiblical divorce and remarriage constitute a living in continuous adultery." (Agenda 1955, p. 118)

And when the committee says (p. 123), "the burden of proof rests on those who would contest this position," it is reversing the charge given it by Synod 1952. There is not a single word in that charge to the effect that *others* must furnish the proof. No, the committee must present findings that "conclusively substantiate the position" of continuous adultery. This it has not done.

B. Although the Committee on Divorce admits that no single text can conclusively prove the thesis of continuous adultery, it does call attention to two particular passages as "evidence from Scripture" for its position.

1. The Divorce Committee confuses the meaning of Matthew 19:9. It argues that *the adultery of which Christ spoke is the marriage*. Thus it is stated that "it is the marriage which is the committing of adultery," and "this is an adulterous marriage." (Agenda 1955, p. 120)

We call the attention of Synod to the fact that this statement is not quite correct. The text states that two combined deeds -- "putting away" and "marrying another", i.e., divorce and remarriage, constitute adultery. That both elements are involved is evident from the fact that Jesus calls the adultery here described, a sin against the first wife (Mark 10:11), indicating that by the two acts a man completely breaches his first marriage.

Strangely, the Divorce Committee shifts its ground when it argues and virtually claims that the adultery of which Christ spoke is the act of cohabitation. The Divorce Committee states: "The crux of the question involves the question whether the sinfulness of the marriage continues *after the initial act of cohabitation*." (Italics ours) The argument which the Divorce Committee adduces to prove the thesis of continual adultery is that the *initial sex act* of the new marriage is adultery and therefore succeeding *sex acts are adultery*. In this manner a conclusion is reached to uphold the present position of our denomination: namely, that the sin to be repented of is the sin of the sex act within the second marriage. Thus, the penitent must manifest "his genuine repentance . . . specifically by means of ceasing to live (in the ordinary marriage relationship) with his present spouse." (Acts 1952, Art. 84, p. 22) This position of Synod and of the Divorce Committee rests upon the assumption that the sin of adultery in Matthew 19:9 consists only in the act or successive acts of cohabitation. *If the entire marriage is adulterous* as the Divorce Committee first argues, then the conclusion follows that the *sin to be confessed and forsaken is their married state*. Then the Church must declare that penitents must manifest genuine repentance by completely forsaking not only the ordinary marriage relationship but the entire marriage, in other words by obtaining another divorce.

From the above, it appears the Divorce Committee is confused about what constitutes the adultery in Matthew 19:9. We believe that the E.C. far more consistently interprets Jesus' statement in Matthew 19:9 — "He who divorces his marriage partner and marries another party, wilfully transgresses the holy commandment: thou shalt not commit adultery." (Acts of the Reformed Ecumenical Synod 1953, p. 92) In other words, in Matthew 19:9 Jesus describes a particular type of transgression of the seventh commandment — "a combined deed of complete breach of marriage." (Ibid, p. 92)

It is of the greatest importance to observe, moreover, that what Jesus condemns as adultery in Matthew 19:9 is not a *state* (of marriage) but an *Act* (of marrying). The point action connoted by the Greek form *gamese* is evident, and is clearly revealed in the English rendering of the biblical text — "shall *marry* another". Quite apart from the question whether marrying includes, in addition to the speaking of vows, a consummation in a sexual act, "to marry" is not a durative *process* but a *single* (though possibly complex) *act*. It is this act that Jesus condemns. He did not say that the *marriage* is the (continuous state of) adultery, but that the *marrying* is the (single act of) committing adultery. And for this act, as for all acts able to be truly repented of, there is certainly forgiveness through the blood of Christ.

That point action rather than a durative state or condition is contemplated by Christ is evident not only from the expression "shall *marry* another" (*gamese alleen*), but also from the expression "*committeeh* adultery" (*moichatai*). Although it is true, as the Committee on Divorce points out, that the Greek present tense *may* be used to express continued action, it *need* not do so, inasmuch as "the durative sense does not monopolize the present tense" (A. T. Robertson, p. 879). And since, as has been observed, the point action of marrying (*gamese*) governs the sense of the passage under consideration, it would seem to accord with the soundest principles of contextual exegesis *not* to take *moichatai* in the durative sense, especially since its root (*moichao*) carries no suggestion of continued status.

It is therefore the combined deed of divorcing and remarrying that Jesus calls adultery, and for the forgiveness of this single, though compound sin not *penance* but only heartfelt *repentance* is necessary and required.

2. The argument presented by the Divorce Committee concerning Herod's relationship to Herodias is the only one that might seem to have bearing on the mandate.

This is not saying, however, that it tells us anything definite on our problem of divorce and remarriage. We refer to it merely because the committee does so. And the Netherlands Committee and the R.C. make no reference to it.

The reason the Divorce Committee refers to it is this, that John the Baptist said, "It is not lawful for thee to have her." So here, it is argued, you have a plain condemnation of the continuing marriage relation, not merely of the first act of marriage or remarriage.

But the simple fact is this that you have here no proof whatsoever of the continuous adultery thesis. For

(a) This is not at all a case in point, namely *divorce* and remarriage. There is no proof in Scripture and no certain proof from other sources that a divorce was obtained by Herod. If not, the offense was bigamy. And then, of course, the relationship continued to be unlawful. But *that* is not disputed by any one and is not our problem.

(b) Most exegetes regard the marriage as both adulterous and incestuous. And it is the incest that is plainly emphasized in Scripture: "Thy brother's wife." But again, this has nothing to do with our problem. What must be proved is that a remarriage after illegitimate divorce that *does not involve either bigamy or incest*, is continuous adultery. For this purpose Herod's case manifestly cannot serve.

C. The Divorce Committee makes much of the "general support of Scripture" for its position. Much of what is said at this point has no real connection with the mandate. We are all agreed that God has established marriage as an holy ordinance, and that God established it as a life-long relationship. God also clearly forbids adultery in the form of divorce and remarriage. But none of this, we believe, proves the thesis of continual adultery. The committee admits that these passages do not "give a direct and clear-cut answer to the present question."

D. The second mandate of the committee reads as follows: (Acts 1952, Article 84, p. 23)

If the committee's findings conclusively substantiate the position that a second marriage after unbiblical divorce is a living in continual adultery, the committee shall study this further question — are there possible ethical involvements or circumstances which may demand that an unbiblically divorced and remarried person shall continue in the second marriage? If so, the committee shall draft a revision of point 2 which recognizes such involvements and gives guidance to our consistories that they may deal wisely with the specific cases.

The observations of the Divorce Committee on this mandate are somewhat beside the point since they have not "conclusively substantiated the position of continual adultery." But let us observe some of the utterances of the committee on the matter of ethical involvements. The committee reasons:

"One could hardly expect that clear-cut directives would be found for such things as ethical involvements arising out of Scripture." (Agenda 1955, pp. 125 and 126)

"The committee is in hearty agreement on the existence of these involvements and their difficult character." (Ibid, p. 126)

The consistories must deal in mercy toward repentant sinners; but are limited by the revealed will of God. They seem here to suggest a conflict between the demands of mercy and the revealed will of God.

It seems that "there is no perfect solution to this problem," says the committee, but the responsibility of dealing with the problem "lies squarely with those who have involved themselves in the sinful relationship and difficult position." (Ibid, p. 126)

In response to this we maintain that the Divorce Committee fails to face the fact that we are not merely dealing with philosophy or theology but with real people and their problems. Picture a woman involved in these circumstances. Perhaps she was married a few months, then divorced. Later she remarried and now after many years lives happily with her husband and family. But they have been brought to the Lord. They ask the church, How can we be right with the Lord? It is the duty of the church of Christ to answer. The committee, however, would merely say, "You got yourself into this; now find your way out!" Is this the advice Christ would give? Do we as His church have such conviction, has the committee given us such conclusive evidence from the Scriptures, that we *dare* say without hesitation, you cannot be saved unless you separate? This we cannot do unless we have much better evidence than the committee submits.

In this connection one statement of the Divorce Committee is of particular interest. "It would seem that while on the one hand it cannot be said that a person who has not forsaken an adulterous marriage is fully repentant, it cannot on the other hand be maintained that one who continues to seek the preaching of the Word is not giving some evidence of a willingness to listen to the admonitions of the church."

However, if the thesis of continuous adultery be true, then those living in that state are absolutely impenitent, lost, and hell bound. The church ought to so declare on the basis of the Word which clearly teaches that "no adulterer shall inherit the kingdom of heaven."

According to the other position, the church would seem to recognize some sort of half-way penitence, or a third spiritual class, neither penitent nor impenitent. In other words, half-way penitents, and that would it seems be their permanent status, somewhat acquiesced in by the church. But this is all wrong.

There are, of course, those who for a brief period reach only the lower stages of repentance, and give only the first manifestations of repentance. But if these are genuine, they are the work of the Holy Spirit. And He will complete His work and lead them to full repentance. And the church must continue to admonish them and to unceasingly warn them that the way of continuous adultery excludes them from the kingdom of heaven.

Finally, we remark that the phrase "ethical involvements" can mean only one thing, namely that following the prescribed way of repentance (abstinence from marital relations) would mean the commission of a sin. But this is an impossible position. God's conditions of repentance never can demand the commission of a sin. If therefore the conditions of repentance set by the church and approved by the Divorce Committee demand a sinful act or attitude, then such conditions of repentance are manifestly unbiblical.

V. IT IS NOW INCUMBENT UPON US TO GIVE OUR
ADVICE TO SYNOD IN MORE DEFINITE AND POSI-
TIVE FORM

We propose the following two points as the proper Biblical solution of our problem and advise Synod to adopt them as the future stand of our church. We give these two resolutions at once at this point in our report so that Synod may know at the outset what is the essence and thrust of the exegetical discussion and more general defense that follows.

We shall advise Synod 1956 to adopt the following:

1. No substantial and conclusive Scriptural evidence has been produced, to establish the thesis that parties remarried after being divorced on the ground of their own adultery, or divorced on non-Biblical grounds, are living in continuous adultery.

2. No substantial and conclusive Scriptural evidence has been produced to warrant the demand that a person remarried after being divorced on the ground of his own adultery, or divorced on non-Biblical grounds, must, in order to prove the sincerity of his repentance, cease living in the ordinary marriage relationship with his present spouse.

VI. IN SUPPORT OF THIS TWO-FOLD ADVICE WE AD-
DUCE THE FOLLOWING.

A. The position taken in the two resolutions above, if adopted by Synod, will mean that the church has a real gospel (glad tidings) also for this class of sinners. It need hardly be argued that we must have a gospel for all classes of sinners, for divorcees just as well as for adulterers and murderers. To all we must dare to say (and show that we mean it): If you repent, though your sins be as scarlet, they can be made white as snow.

And the church has that gospel for this class of sinners, if it says to them: We do not ask that you be untrue to your present mate and untrue to your legal responsibilities. We ask only that you sincerely repent of your past sins and that you live in your present marriage according to God's ordinance in constant faithfulness and love .

B. The advice given by this committee is in harmony with the preponderant testimony of other Reformed Churches and leaders.

1. The testimony of the Gereformeerde Kerken of the Netherlands. "Synod 1923 adopted, among others, the following resolutions:

the command that the newly married couple should abstain from any matrimonial intercourse has no sufficient foundation in the Scriptures, would be too heavy a burden, and would open the way for other and worse sins;

that . . . if, after the sin has been committed the sinners repent and want to return to the community of the Church, the Church can only ask that the sin should be confessed and repentance of this sinful act be shown;

that . . . the only reason for the Church to doubt the sincerity of such repentance would be if the same sin of an arbitrary and rash divorce and remarriage was committed again afterwards." (Acts 1923, p. 34; E. C. Report, p. 93)

2. The testimony of the Committee of South Africa.

"In regard to the question how the Church is to exercise discipline with reference to those who marry a second time after illegal divorce, the committee is of the opinion, first, that in such cases discipline must be exercised. The consistory must herein judge about each case separately. In cases concerning which in the Christian Church there is so much difference of opinion, such, as for example, divorce on the ground of malicious desertion, the consistory will do well to reckon with this difference of opinion.

Secondly, when after illegal divorce as well as in the case of a new marriage following, the guilty persons confess their sins, then the Church must again receive them into its communion when the sins have been confessed and repentance has been shown.

Thirdly, that the uprightness of such repentance must not consist in this, that the new marriage be annulled, which would be fornication anew, but herein that sorrow is felt on account of the sinful step which has been taken. Doubt concerning repentance may be entertained only when there is persistence in the sin of light-hearted divorce and repeated marriage." (Agenda 1934, Part II, pp. 238 and 239)

3. The testimony of the Ecumenical Committee. As we have already reported, the E. C. quotes with complete approval the decisions of the 1923 Synod of the Gereformeerde Kerken of the Netherlands just quoted. And it finally concludes as follows:

"In order not to accept too quickly the semblance of repentance, it is advisable to make serious investigations as to whether there is a godly conduct in general (as the synod of the Christian Reformed Church puts it), and in particular if in the second unpermissible marriage the guilty party appears to live 'in the holy bonds of marriage according to God's ordinance', 'in constant faithfulness and abiding love.'

According to the committee, and in accordance with the Holy Scriptures, no more may be required of the Church member who has committed the afore-mentioned sin in order to repeal the disciplinary measures." (Acts of the Reformed Ecumenical Synod 1953, pp. 94 and 95)

Your committee does not at all mean to say by this marshalling of other Reformed testimony that our church should hesitate to adhere to its traditional stand *merely* because by so doing it would stand somewhat alone in the Reformed world. Not at all. We must dare, if need be, to stand alone.

On the other hand, the testimony of those closest to us in spirit and tradition should not be lightly dismissed. And surely such strong testimony by churches whose orthodoxy is unquestioned should lead to an earnest and frank reconsideration of our traditional position.

Our report draws to a close. Synod will, we trust, in an appropriate resolution, express its appreciation of the work of the Ecumenical Committee and extend to it our hearty thanks.

We also feel constrained to make the following remarks in conclusion:

It should be remembered that this report does not deal exclusively, indeed not even in the first place, with the question of the status of illegitimately divorced and remarried parties.

Our first task was to report on the report of the E.C., to analyze and evaluate it. Toward the end, that report dealt with the question that has so long agitated our church. Because this committee now reporting agreed with the stand of the E.C. on this matter, and because this stand was in direct conflict with the present stand of the church, we finally had to devote considerable space to a task not directly assigned to us, and yet a task that could not be avoided, the task namely of showing the weakness of, and the lack of Scriptural support for the stand hitherto taken by our church. Hence our report reveals a not desirable, but also unavoidable two-foldness that can be understood and appreciated only in the light of the explanation here given.

We now conclude our report by advising Synod to adopt the following resolutions:

1. No substantial and conclusive Scriptural evidence has been produced to establish the thesis that parties remarried after being divorced on the ground of their own adultery, or divorced on non-Biblical grounds, are living in continuous adultery.

2. No substantial and conclusive Scriptural evidence has been produced to warrant the demand that a person remarried after being divorced on the ground of his own adultery, or divorced on non-

Biblical grounds, must, in order to prove the sincerity of his repentance, cease living in the ordinary marriage relationship with his present spouse.

The Marital Problems Committee

P. G. HOLWERDA, *Chairman*

G. HOEKSEMA, *Secretary*

WILLIAM P. BRINK

J. RIBBENS

HENRY STOB

REPORT NO. 27

CHAPLAIN COMMITTEE

ESTEEMED BRETHREN :

THE MEMBERSHIP of the Chaplain Committee during the past year has remained the same as in the previous year, and the same officers have served. At this time, however, the terms of three members expire, i.e. Mr. Harry Faber, Rev. George Vander Kooi, and Rev. Harold Dekker. The first two of these have served only one term of three years and are therefore eligible for reelection. Rev. Dekker has now completed two consecutive terms and is not eligible. Nominations for all three of these vacancies will be presented to Synod at the time that it convenes.

I. ACTIVE DUTY CHAPLAINS.

At this time last year we had four chaplains on active duty, one with each of the branches of our Armed Forces and one with the Veterans Administration. Since then one of them has been retired to inactive duty, but a new chaplain has entered the ranks, keeping our strength at a total of four.

After two years of service with the Air Force, at Victoria Field, Texas, and Pope Air Force Base, North Carolina, *Chaplain Albert Walma* was released to inactive duty. He had completed the two year period of his initial commitment, and although he was willing to continue for another year, the Chief of Air Force Chaplains decided that his services were no longer needed at this time. One of the objectives of the Armed Forces now is to develop a large reservoir of reserve chaplains who have had two years of active duty experience, ready for mobilization in the event of war or national emergency. Chaplain Walma is obviously more valuable to the Air Force now than he would have been without two years of active duty. Moreover, he believes that the experience he has had in this way is also very valuable for the civilian pastorate which he has now entered. And he hopes to continue his work with the Air Force as a part of the *active* reserve, by meeting regularly with an Air Force reserve unit near to his church, and possibly also by putting in some active duty each summer.

Our new chaplain is *Chaplain William Kosten*, one of last year's candidates. He is with the Navy. After completing Chaplains School at Newport, R.I., he spent several weeks in further orientation at the San Diego, Calif., Navy Base, and by the first of the year he was at Pearl Harbor, assigned to a squadron of destroyer escorts. Since he is unmarried, it is not surprising that he has received duty of this kind.

He will probably roam a good deal of the Pacific before returning to stateside duty.

It remains to account for our other three chaplains. In the order of seniority, the first is *Chaplain Elton Holtrop*. He has completed another year of service in his unique ministry to mental patients at the Veterans Administration Hospital, Battle Creek, Michigan. Incidentally, he also maintains his reserve chaplain commission with the Navy. *Chaplain Dick Oostenink* recently returned from two years with the army of occupation in Germany. He is now stationed at Fort Ord, California, in his tenth year of active duty with the Army. *Chaplain Adrian Van Andel* has requested, and at the convenience of the Navy has received, an extension of active duty to August 30, 1957, which will complete three years. At this writing he is still at Norfolk, Va., serving on a training ship.

II. CHAPLAINS IN THE RESERVE

Only three of our World War II chaplains remain in the reserve. All the others either have resigned or have been discharged due to overage. In addition to Chaplain Holtrop, mentioned above, Rev. George Vander Kooi continues in the Army Reserve, and Rev. Paul Boertje maintains his status in the Navy. The former participated in two reserve unit meetings per month while he served as minister in Muskegon, and last summer he attended a special three week course at the Army Chaplain School. The latter has been on active duty for two week periods in five of the past eight summers, and while at Alamosa, Colorado he attended weekly meetings of the local Navy Reserve unit. Chaplain Holtrop has put in two weeks summer duty with the Navy twice.

In addition to these three World War II chaplains, we have three others fully commissioned in the reserve. We have already mentioned that Chaplain Walma continues in reserve status. Rev. Dick L. Van Halsema served as a line officer in the Army in World War II, and a few years ago he affected a transfer to the Chaplain Division. He has been on active duty for two week periods in two summers at Fort Drum, N. Y., and has also been on duty with a local reserve unit for three meetings per month. Rev. Derke P. Bergsma entered the Navy chaplaincy as a probationary ensign while in the Seminary, and upon graduation in 1954 he was fully commissioned. During his ministry in South Dakota he has been attached to a Navy Reserve Training Center at Sioux Falls, involving attendance at weekly drill sessions. He has also had two weeks duty for one summer at Great Lakes, Ill., and anticipates the same for next summer.

The duties of these chaplains on two weeks summer duty have included most of the tasks which normally fall to a chaplain, such as the conducting of Sunday services, giving of character guidance lec-

tures, visiting hospital and brig or guard house, and carrying on a personal counselling program. Duty at regular drill sessions or other meetings of local reserve units has been found fruitful in such ways as the following: Opening sessions with prayer, conducting personal interviews with new recruits, giving of character guidance lectures, and of course casual, personal contact in various ways. One of the chaplains happens to have a very orthodox commanding officer at his unit, and he has found it possible to revise the Navy's rather moralistic character guidance lectures according to distinctly Christian ethical standards. All of these chaplains who are doing work in the active reserve speak warmly of the opportunities they have in many ways for an evangelistic witness and for a significant spiritual impact. They also refer to the representation they now give to our denomination in national life, and to the more favorable position for denominational influence they would have in case of war or national emergency because of their seniority, higher rank, etc. One chaplain mentions advantages for community outreach in being called on for talks before various groups, prayer at Memorial Day assemblies, etc. Even though he doesn't belong to a veterans organization, the community recognizes his interest in civic affairs, and community good-will is fostered. They also consider the general experience most helpful in better qualifying them for work in their various churches.

There are also certain financial compensations. Summer duty is always paid at regular scale for pay and allowances. Service with a local reserve unit is in some cases paid and in some cases not. In every case, points are earned toward promotion and retirement.

III. STUDENT CHAPLAINS

We have previously informed Synod regarding the provisions made by all three branches of the Armed Forces for seminary students to enter the chaplaincy on a provisional, trainee basis. There are presently five students at Calvin Seminary who are already in the reserve on this basis, all five of them in the Army. Four of the five have had a regular two month course of training at the Army Chaplain School. Three of them are seniors.

In addition to the five mentioned, there is one student whose application is now in its final stages, another who was rejected for physical reasons, and several who are considering submitting their applications.

IV. PRESENT QUOTAS AND OPENINGS.

At this writing the Christian Reformed active duty quota for the Navy is filled, with two chaplains on active duty. However, there are four vacancies in the other branches. For the Army our quota was recently raised from two to three, and we have only Chaplain Oostenink on duty. For the Air Force our quota was recently raised from one to two. The release of Chaplain Walma leaves us with no one on duty.

The Committee has presented this challenge to our prospective Seminary graduates, both to those already in the reserve and to those who are interested. Many of the students take the point of view, however, that they should have congregational experience before going on active duty. The Committee also takes the position that it is preferable to have on duty ministers with adequate experience. Of course some students have had more experience than others, particularly those who have themselves been in military service.

Our ministers have not been unresponsive to the challenge. One went through the entire application procedure and was finally disqualified for physical reasons. Three others decided to apply, only to discover that they were already a year or two over the age limits. (In this connection it should be noted that the absolute limit for the Air Force is 33, the limit for the Army is 33 with a possible age waiver for one or more years of previous commissioned service in the Army, and the limit for the Navy is ordinarily 33, with waivers possible for previous Navy service, commissioned or non-commissioned, and an absolute age limit of 36.)

Active duty openings are always limited somewhat by the quota. Even there, however, if our church were to have men available in larger numbers than our quota permits, it would be quite likely that one or more vacancies in the quota of some other denomination would be temporarily assigned to us. Moreover, it should not be overlooked that the openings in the reserve are almost unlimited. We could at this time place an indefinite number of our ministers in the reserve, with a commitment to active duty only in case of war or national emergency. On such a basis it is entirely possible that a man will be a reserve chaplain until he reaches the age of mandatory discharge and never be called to duty except perhaps for certain training purposes.

In other words, the door is open wide for our students and ministers. We could place many more in the reserve, and at least four more on active duty at once. Judging by our quotas, we are not now doing our duty. And these quotas will be subject to annual review at the beginning of the new fiscal year which is June 30. It would certainly not be to our church's credit if part of our quota were assigned to some other denomination!

V. SPECIAL MANDATE FROM SYNOD.

The Synod of 1955, in response to our suggestion, authorized us "to make a study of the various types of institutional chaplaincy, so that the denomination may have the benefit of adequate information and advice regarding what may be an important contemporary challenge." We feel that this study requires at least another year to complete. There are many aspects to it, and much depends on direct investigation of the actual opportunities and the practice of other denominations. More-

over, the members of our Committee have been unusually busy with other duties during the past year.

We have begun this study by interviewing Rev. J. M. Ghysels, emeritus minister now acting as chaplain to a number of rest homes in Grand Rapids, under the sponsorship of the Evangelical Ministerial Union. We have also interviewed Chaplain Lee Hoyer, minister of the Lutheran Church, Missouri Synod, now serving as institutional chaplain in Grand Rapids. It is interesting to note that the Missouri Synod is a pioneer in this field, now supporting 53 full-time institutional chaplains in cities across the nation, and having in addition a large number of ministers who do such work on a part-time basis. This effort is the largest of any Protestant denomination in the United States. It seems that the institutional chaplaincy is a rather specialized ministry which, although primarily evangelistic in nature, requires special denominational promotion and supervision. It is also apparent that a certain amount of special training is desirable for the work.

The Committee also has some information about prison chaplaincy, obtained through its Secretary, who has been a member of the Chaplains Advisory Committee appointed by the Michigan Department of Corrections.

It is intended to present a complete report on this matter next year, covering chaplaincies in mental institutions, penal institutions, medical hospitals, homes for the aged, sanatoria, etc. It may be possible also to say something in regard to industrial chaplaincies. There may be certain recommendations to offer.

The Synod of 1955 also instructed the Chaplain Committee to "make a study of the opportunities and benefits of participation by our ministers in the active reserve chaplain program of the armed service." The material under "II" above largely fulfills this mandate. Additional details or information as to local openings and opportunities may be obtained by any of our ministers or chaplains simply by contacting the Committee.

VI. FINANCE.

A financial statement follows. Our reserves are ample for current needs, and the Committee does not request placement on the list of causes approved for special offerings. It may be noted that the Committee has offered a temporary loan of at least \$2,000 to the Centennial Committee, in keeping with the decision of the Synod of 1955.

Respectfully submitted,

DEWEY J. HOITENGA, *President*
HAROLD DEKKER, *Secretary*
HARRY FABER, *Treasurer*
GEORGE VANDER KOOI
WILLIAM VANDER PLOEG

CHAPLAIN FUND
of the Christian Reformed Church
STATEMENT OF CASH RECEIPTS AND DISBURSEMENTS
March 1, 1955, to February 29, 1956

Balance on hand March 1, 1955..... \$1,504.01

RECEIPTS

Chandler, Minn. Christian Reformed Church.....	\$	25.00
Cash received from redemption of Washington, D. C. Christian Reformed Church Bond #50016.....		500.00
Interest received from Washington, D. C. Christian Re- formed Church Bonds		105.00
Total Receipts.....		\$ 630.00

DISBURSEMENTS

Banking Expense	\$	4.00
General Commission Dues		232.00
Travel Expense		105.12
Clerical Expense		46.61
Banner Subscription and Tracts.....		21.78
Miscellaneous		10.81
Total Disbursements.....		\$ 420.72

Balance on hand, February 29, 1956,
Represented by: Deposit in Commercial Bank..... \$1,713.29

OTHER ASSETS

United States Savings Bonds, Series "F" — Cost		\$2,405.00
(Maturity Value — February 1958, \$3,250.00)		
Bonds — Christian Reformed Church, Washington, D. C. — due December 1, 1964 — 3% interest.....		\$3,000.00

GENTLEMEN:

The above statement represents an accurate and correct record of receipts and disbursements of the Chaplain Fund of the Christian Reformed Church for the year ending February 29, 1956.

(Signed) **HARRY FABER**, *Treasurer*
1228 Dickinson St., S.E.
Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Dated: March 13, 1956.

REPORT NO. 28

KOREAN SPIRITUAL RELIEF

DEAR BRETHREN:

YOUR COMMITTEE for Korean Spiritual Relief has continued its work for the relief of the churches of the General Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church in Korea. Money has continued to flow in for this cause, and our treasurer has been forwarding it to Korea, as you will see from the financial statement included in this report.

Through our missionaries to Japan who have had occasion to visit Korea, we receive the assurance that the relief has been needed, that it was deeply appreciated, and that it should continue. The question has been raised, however, whether what we are doing is still relief, or whether it has reached the subsidy stage.

A year ago we wrote the Reverend Sutton in Japan and asked him to go to Korea and do a little investigating for us. The Reverend Sutton had intimated that he had a little vacation coming, and would be glad to serve us if we needed him. We made use of his services especially in connection with the request for aid in the erection of the new Seminary Building at Pusan.

It was upon the basis of his report that we recommended to the Synod of 1955 that our committee be authorized to divert \$10,000 of our funds toward labor costs for the new Seminary Building, and to acquaint our churches with this project in order to step up contributions for this cause. This recommendation was adopted by the Synod of 1955, but was not carried out by our committee, the reason being that the General Presbytery was able to procure a set of buildings quite suitable for their purpose from the United States Army. We did decide this spring to send them \$2500 toward the purchase of these buildings, and to await further developments in the matter.

The Synod of 1955 also instructed our committee to activate a plan of offering a number of limited scholarships and grants to aid Korean students for study at Calvin College and Seminary, and to investigate the possibility of sending one or more instructors or professors to assist the Korean church in its college and Seminary at Pusan. We have asked the Reverend Richard Sytsma of our mission in Japan, who was appointed by our Synodical Committee to attend the Korean General Assembly, to discuss these matters with the leaders of the Korean church. We hope to come with some advice or recommendation by the time Synod convenes.

Respectfully submitted,

J. T. HOOGSTRA, *President*

M. J. VANDERWERP, *Secretary*

E. VERMAAT, *Treasurer*

A. NABER

J. F. SCHUURMANN

KOREAN SPIRITUAL RELIEF

Balance on hand — January 1, 1955.....\$ 4,074.02

RECEIPTS FOR THE YEAR 1955

January	\$ 8,252.06
February	440.99
March	1,112.20
April	1,514.41
May	4,689.38
June	1,160.51
July	3,010.61
August	1,360.09
September	3,824.51
October	1,305.71
November	727.50
December	689.53
	23,037.50

Total Receipts.....\$32,111.52

DISBURSEMENTS FOR THE YEAR 1955

Korean Christian Relief Committee.....	\$25,610.00
For the Support of Rev. B. Hong.....	1,268.25
For Rev. S. Park.....	50.00
Schreur Printing Co.....	15.85
For Rev. R. Sutton.....	100.00
Christian Reformed Publishing House.....	14.46
Transferred to Korean Material Relief.....	364.98

Total Disbursements.....\$27,423.54

Balance on hand January 1, 1956\$ 4,687.98

EDWARD VERMAAT, *Treasurer.*

I have examined the records of the Korean Spiritual Relief Fund and have found them to be correct. The receipts and disbursements were examined, in so far as possible, and the bank balance of \$4,687.98 on Dec. 31, 1955, was also verified.

LEWIS LA GRAND.

February 7, 1956.

KOREAN ORPHAN FUND

Balance Brought Forward January 1, 1955.....\$1,191.28
 Receipts for the year 1955.....1,727.20

Total Receipts.....\$2,918.48

DISBURSEMENTS FOR THE YEAR 1955

To Korean Christian Relief Committee.....\$2,918.48

Balance on hand January 1, 1956.....\$0,000.00

EDWARD VERMAAT, *Treasurer.*

I have examined the records of the Korean Orphan Fund and have found them to be correct. The Receipts and Disbursements were examined in so far as possible, and the no balance in the bank was also verified.

LEWIS LA GRAND.

February 13, 1956.

REPORT NO. 29

THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

THE PERSONNEL and officers of the Committee during the larger part of the 1955-1956 season were as follows:

The Rev. M. C. Baarman, President
The Rev. John E. Meeter, Vice President
Mr. Rhine C. Pettinga, Secretary
Mr. Sidney Bangma, Treasurer
The Rev. N. H. Beversluis
Dr. Lewis B. Smedes
Dr. George Stob
Mr. Sidney Van Til

February 15th Mr. Pettinga's resignation as Secretary was accepted with regret, and Rev. Meeter made Acting Secretary; further, due to Rev. Baarman's continued absence in Florida Rev. Beversluis was made Acting Chairman.

I. RELATION TO THE SUNDAY SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Early in the season an attempt was made to define clearly the relation of the Committee on Education to the Sunday School Committee. The following recommendation was then adopted:

"After a careful perusal of Synodical decisions and Educational Committee minutes, we recommend to Synod that henceforth no member of the Committee on Education serve on the Sunday School Committee, but that the Committee on Education be empowered to establish such liaison as it deems necessary and advisable. Grounds:

1. Each Committee has its own full-time load. It is not fair to burden any man with two such distinct and heavy duties. In any event, a man can serve effectively only on one of these Committees.

2. Distance separating meeting places of these two Committees makes it impracticable and unnecessarily expensive to have a member from this area serve on the Sunday School Committee.

3. Such liaison as it needed may be established when and in such ways as the joint Committees consider feasible and necessary."

II. CATECHISM TEXTBOOKS

Miss Marian Schoolland has been asked by the Committee to prepare the first textbook of the series described in the Acts of Synod, 1954, p. 313. In the Acts of 1952, pp. 410-411, you will find this first course. *Elementary Bible Doctrine*, for grade 3, age 8, fully described. And

in the Agenda for 1955, pp. 317-318, you will find the proposed outline (or table of contents) for this textbook, arranged in four quarters of eight lessons each. Miss Schoolland has submitted the first and second quarters to the Committee, and the Committee has reviewed the first quarter and the larger part of the second quarter. The first quarter is appended to this report and is submitted as a sample of the Committee's work, for preliminary comment and evaluation.

III. OTHER PROJECTS

The Synod of 1955 authorized the publication in booklet form of the Compendium as revised by the Committee on Education, and invited "suggestions and constructive criticisms" from our ministers for a two-year period with a view to adopting officially the best possible draft in 1957. This 1955 revision has been published and sent out to all our ministers by the Publication Committee. So far, however, only three letters of comment and evaluation have been received by the Committee on Education. A wider response is needed, and requested, so that the Committee may complete this assignment.

The Committee is under mandate to prepare for publication a booklet containing the Church Order and our standards with prooftexts. A sub-committee is working on prooftexts for the Heidelberg Catechism.

IV. MISCELLANEOUS

A. *Committee appointment.*

Two members of the Committee must retire this year according to the six-year tenure rule: Mr. Sidney Bangma, and the Rev. N. H. Beversluis. The Committee suggests the following nominees: to take Mr. Bangma's place,

Mr. M. Okkema, teacher at the Eastern Christian High School,

Mr. R. Zuidema, teacher at the Eastern Christian Junior High School; to take Mr. Beversluis' place,

Mr. G. Dykstra, principal of the Midland Park Christian School,

Mr. C. Van Zwoll, principal of the Eastern Christian High School.

One member of the Committee has completed a three-year term: the Rev. John E. Meeter. For this position the Committee suggests as nominees the Rev. Earl Jabaay, minister of the Summer Street Church in Passaic, and Rev. Meeter.

B. *Representation at Synod.*

The Committee requests that it be represented at Synod by Dr. George Stob, delegate from Classis Hackensack.

C. *Finances.*

The Committee requests five hundred dollars (\$500) to meet its expenses during the 1956-1957 season.

The Committee is grateful for the privilege of doing this important work for the education of our covenant youth, and wishes you the blessing of God and the guidance of the Holy Spirit in all your deliberations and decisions.

Respectfully submitted,

M. C. BAARMAN, *President*

N. H. BEVERSLUIS, *Vice President*

JOHN E. MEETER, *Acting Secretary*

SIDNEY BANGMA, *Treasurer*

RHINE C. PETTINGA

LEWIS B. SMEDES

GEORGE STOB

SIDNEY VAN TIL

SUGGESTED CATECHISM TEXTBOOK — FIRST QUARTER

WHAT WE BELIEVE

Elementary Bible Doctrine

TO THE TEACHER

Our purpose in the publication of this book is to introduce Biblical doctrine to the child, teaching it in terms of Bible stories with which the child is familiar. The telling of the Bible story is not the chief aim. Rather, we would teach basic Bible doctrines, expressed in words which the child can understand, and make them clear by means of the story.

Here and there throughout the book there will be suggestions for the teacher, printed on yellow pages.

We should like the teacher to begin the course by reading the introduction with the class, so that they may know the purpose of the course. It may be well, also, to urge the pupils to call the attention of their parents to these pages.

In assigning each lesson, we suggest that the teacher read the lesson story with the class, or for the class, making whatever explanation seems necessary. The questions and answers of the Question Box should also be read and explained carefully, so that the pupils know what they are memorizing.

The children should be encouraged to reread the lesson story at home, and should be prepared to answer the questions from memory, as well as recite the scripture text.

There is a need of more familiarity with our beautiful hymns. The committee hopes that the given hymns will be memorized and sung. By repeated singing they are quickly fixed in the mind. But the meaning of the hymn, and its relation to the lesson, should not be neglected. Practical applications can often be drawn from them.

One or more of the exercises may be assigned. The teacher must be the judge of the ability of the class to do the easier or more difficult ones. The exercises should be completed, where possible, in the book, so that the evidence of the work that has been done is obvious. Some of the more difficult, with Bible references, can perhaps be done in class.

We hope that the prayer at the close of each lesson will be helpful as a guide. It can be incorporated in the Teacher's brief closing prayer. If the pupils close with prayer, they can be encouraged to include it with petitions of their own.

INTRODUCTION

To the Boys and Girls

Catechism is a study class in which we ask and answer questions. The most important questions are questions about God, and about ourselves, and about the world around us. There are many questions that we want answered. Where did we come from? What are we here for? Why isn't everything pleasant and good? What is right and what is wrong? To whom does the earth belong? What will become of the earth?

These questions are very difficult. Men have tried in many ways to find answers to them. The wisest of men have spent years and years trying to find the right answers. There is only One Person who knows all the answers. That is God. He knows how things began, because He created all things. He knows the purpose of everything, because He planned all things.

It is important that we should know the answers. If we do not know the answers to such questions, we cannot live happily, nor die happily. God has given us the answers in the Bible, which is His Word. He has told us all that we need to know to be happy in this life, and even forever.

That is why catechism is important. In catechism we learn just what we are on this earth for, and what God wants of us. We learn this from the Bible. But the Bible is a big book; it would take us a long time to read it all in catechism class. Besides that, there is much in the Bible that is hard to understand. So we have chosen some of the most important teachings of the Bible, and put them into this little book. We call these teachings "doctrines." These are the things that we believe. These doctrines are explained in this book, so that we can study them more easily.

There is still another reason for this little book. There are many people who believe that the Bible is the Word of God, but all these people do not understand the Bible the way we do. That is why there are many different churches, and many denominations. This book teaches the doctrines of the Reformed churches. These are the doctrines that we believe to be the truth of God.

There is a memory verse given with each lesson. These verses are texts taken from the Bible. They will help you to be sure that what you believe is truly God's Word. We should memorize these texts so that we can tell others the truth about God.

There are also psalms and hymns to memorize and sing. Many men and women who love the Lord Jesus write beautiful poems of praise to Him. David wrote many poems which we call psalms. Others have written poems which we call hymns. Christians everywhere use these psalms and hymns in singing praise to God. We can join our voices with theirs. These psalms and hymns can give us joy and hope. They can make us strong in time of trouble or temptation. So let us memorize them faithfully, and sing them often.

Each lesson is closed with a little prayer. God wants us to talk to Him, and He has promised to hear us. Prayer is wonderful! In each lesson you will find something for which to thank and praise God, or you will be reminded of something you need from Him. These little prayers are intended to help you pray and praise as you should.

May God bless us as we study this little book. May His Spirit guide us as we ask questions and find answers. May we learn to live as we ought to live, and be truly happy. We pray that this little book will also help you prepare to meet God when He comes to call you home.

Lesson I

GOD MADE ALL THINGS

Before you go on reading this book, will you look out of the window? Just look to see what you can see. When you have looked for a minute, come back and read on.

Did you see children at play? Did you see houses, and trees, and sunlight, and sky, and grass, or maybe snow? Where did all these things come from?

Perhaps you will answer, "God made the trees and the grass and the sun. Carpenters built the houses."

Yes, God made the trees and the grass and the sun and many other things that we see. And carpenters built the houses. Yet we can say that God made the houses, too!

Do you know what a carpenter uses to build a house? He uses wood and nails and stone and plaster and other things. All the things he uses were made by God. The wood came from the trees that God made. The nails and the plaster came from God's storehouse between rocky layers of the earth. God is Creator of all things. When man makes something, he uses the materials that God made. There is nothing in all the world that God did not make.

No man can tell us how God made all these things, and how the earth itself came to be. No man was there to see the beginning of things. But we know that all things had a beginning. And the Bible tells us how they began. It says, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."

Then the Bible goes on to tell how God created all things. It is a wonderful story! He called the heavens and the earth into being; He made them out of nothing, by His almighty power. Only He could do that!

The earth was in darkness, but God spoke and there was light; day came shining through the darkness. The first day began. Slowly the light passed away, and the first day ended.

The light came again. It shone on an earth covered with water. Then God spoke, and the waters were divided. Some were lifted up into the sky, to float there as clouds. That happened the second day.

At the word of God, mountains burst out of the earth. Great deep hollows were made, and the water that was upon the earth filled these hollows. Thus the oceans and rivers and lakes were made. And the land between the waters became dry. Then God spoke again, and the land put forth grass and flowers and trees. So the earth was changed on the third day.

God, said, "Let there be lights in the heavens." Then there was a sun shining down upon the earth. That night a moon arose, and the stars twinkled in the dark velvet of the sky. All this happened on the fourth day.

Then God made birds to fly in the air and sing among the trees. He also made fish to swim in the water. They were made on the fifth day. They were the first living creatures on the earth.

On the sixth day God made other animals—furry animals and insects and every other kind of creature. They made themselves homes in the forests and the fields.

So the earth was created, and made beautiful, and filled with living creatures. And God saw that everything He had made was very good.

Question Box

1. When you look about you, what do you see that God made?
2. What do you see that God did not make?
3. Tell what happened on each of the six days of creation.

4. By what power did God create? Notice how many times Genesis 1 uses the words "And God said."

5. How do the heavens and the earth help us to praise God?

MEMORY VERSE: Genesis 1:1. In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

God's creation is wonderful. Man cannot make one little leaf grow. Man cannot understand how the little ant can see and hear and feel. Man does not know where the rose gets its perfume. Surely, we should praise the earth with wonders. Today let us praise Him with the words of one of David's poems, Psalm 19. — Psalter Hymnal No. 31.

The heavens declare Thy glory,
The firmament Thy power;
Day unto day the story
Repeats from hour to hour;
Night unto night replying,
Proclaims in every land,
O Lord, with voice undying,
The wonders of Thy hand.

EXERCISES

- Questions from the introduction and the Lesson Story:
 - Where can we find the correct answers to our most important questions?
 - Who gave us the Bible?
 - We know about the beginning of things because _____ tells us in _____.
 - When we see the wonders of God's creation all around us, we should _____ Him.
- The Days of Creation. List the following under the days on which they first appeared:

sun	furry animals	stars	insects and creeping		
flowers	fruit trees	dry land	things		
light	mountains	grass	moon		
birds	fishes	rivers	sky or firmament		
1st day	2nd day	3rd day	4th day	5th day	6th day
- Questions about the Bible
 - To whom does the earth belong? See Deuteronomy 10:14
 - Why did God create the world? See Romans 11:36
 - Who said that all God made was very good? See Genesis 1:31
 - Should heaven and earth praise God? See Psalm 69:34

Closing Prayer

Father in Heaven, Thy creation tells us,
day after day, that Thou art very great.
Help us to praise Thee for all Thy wonderful work. We pray in Jesus' Name.
Amen.

Lesson II

GOD MADE MAN AFTER HIS LIKENESS

In our first lesson we talked about God's creation, but we did not finish the creation story. God made the very best of His creation last. In today's lesson we shall finish the creation story.

It was still the sixth day. God had made the animals. They were at home on the beautiful earth, in the trees, among the rocks, and in the fields. And then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. . . ."

Man was to be different from the animals. God planned to make man like himself — with a *mind* that could know and understand, with a *heart* that could love, and with a *soul* that could live forever.

God took of the dust of the earth to form the body of the first man. He made his body, shaping all the wonderful parts. He made his head, with ears, nose, and mouth. Then He breathed into the man the breath of life, and man became a living soul. God called this first man Adam.

God also made a young woman to be a wife to Adam. She, too, was made in the likeness of God. She was made from the flesh and bone of Adam. God put Adam to sleep. While Adam slept, He took a rib from Adam's side, and made Eve. Eve was to live beside Adam, and help Adam in the work God gave them to do.

God put Adam and Eve into a beautiful garden. The garden was their home. God told them to care for it. God also gave them dominion over every living creature upon the earth. God often came to earth, to walk and talk with them in the garden.

On all the earth there were no creatures as wonderful as Adam and Eve. No other creature could walk and talk with God. No other creature had a heart to love God. No other creature could know God as man could know Him.

Man was made the head of creation. Man was made to lead all creation to praise the great Creator. Other creatures do not see the wonders of God's work. Man does see them. Other creatures cannot speak the praise of God. Man has a voice to sing and speak of the glory of God.

Question Box

1. On which day did God make man?
2. How did God give life to man?
3. How is man different from animals?
4. What did God give man to do?
5. Which of all God's creatures can praise Him best? Why?

MEMORY VERSE: Genesis 1:26. And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.

We can praise God with the psalmist of long ago, using Number 14 of our Psalter Hymnal:

Lord, our Lord, Thy glorious Name
All Thy wondrous works proclaim;
In the heavens with radiant signs
Evermore Thy glory shines.
How great Thy Name!
Lord, our Lord, in all the earth,
How great Thy Name!
Thine the Name of matchless worth,
Excellent in all the earth,
How great Thy Name!

EXERCISES

1. Word Study
 - a. fellowship — to walk and talk, as with a very dear friend
 - b. image — one thing that looks like another
 - c. likeness — one thing that is a copy of another
 - d. dominion — the right to reign and rule like a king
 - e. Genesis — the name of the first book of the Bible: it means *beginnings*
 - f. soul — the life in man that never dies, and that was made for fellowship with God.

2. Complete the following sentences from the Lesson Story:
 God made man from the _____. God breathed into man and made him a living _____. God gave man a mind so that he might _____ God. He gave man a heart so that he might _____ God. The highest of all God's creatures is _____.
3. Adam and Eve were given dominion over God's creation. God also told them to take care of it. We, too, are care-takers of God's creation. As care-takers, there are things we ought to do, and things we may not do. In the list below, write *yes* before the things we ought to do, and *no* before the things we may not do.
- () use all we want of everything
 - () help take care of the forest and flowers
 - () enjoy the flowers God made
 - () pick all the flowers we want
 - () kill birds just for fun
 - () eat the delicious fruits He made
 - () praise God for His greatness
 - () thank Him for the many kinds of good food we have
 - () share with those who have not as much as we have

God does not come down to walk with us and talk with us as He did with Adam and Eve. But He still hears us when we talk to Him. We can still have fellowship with Him in prayer.

Closing Prayer

Father, we thank Thee for the privilege of prayer. Thou hast made us with wonderful minds and wonderful hearts, so that we may know Thee. Fill our hearts, every day, with more love to Thee. For Jesus' sake. Amen.

Lesson III

GOD IS LORD OVER ALL

In the Garden of Eden there were many beautiful trees. Some of these trees bore delicious fruit. God told Adam and Eve that the fruit of these trees was for them to eat. But there was one tree of which they should not eat.

God said, "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest eat freely; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die."

Why did God give such a command? Why did He forbid them to eat of that one tree?

We do not know why. God did not tell Adam and Eve why they should not eat of that tree. God does not have to give reasons for what He does. God is Lord of all. He does not tell us why He does what He does.

God made the heavens and earth and all that is in them. He made the trees; He planted the garden; He made Adam and Eve and put them into the garden. Everything is His. He can do as He pleases with everything, because it all belongs to Him.

God is ruler over all. He is sovereign. He is King of kings, and Lord of lords; He commands; man must obey. The angels, and even Satan, must do the will of God.

But God had a reason for giving the command. For God had a plan. From the very beginning, God planned all things. He planned how He would make heaven and earth. He planned how He would make man. He planned all that should ever happen on earth and in heaven.

There once was a little girl who did not like to go to bed. But when bed-time came, her mother picked her up and carried her to bed. The mother was much stronger than the little girl. God's hand is like that mother's hand. Sometimes we do not like what He does, and we do not want to obey Him. But He is Lord over all.

God has set the sun, moon and stars in the heavens. They travel around and around, doing just what He wants them to do. God sends sunshine and rain upon the earth, just as He pleases. God rules the heart of kings. God has given us all we have — our homes and our parents and our schools — and He can take them all away.

But we are not afraid of this sovereign God. We know that He is wise and good. We know that He always does what is best for His children. His great plan will bring glory to His name, and happiness to all who love Him.

Question Box

1. What do we mean when we say that God is sovereign?
2. When did God plan what should happen today?
3. How do the sun and moon obey God?
4. How do we know what God wants us to do?
5. What commandment did God give to Adam and Eve?

MEMORY VERSE: Genesis 2:17 . . . but of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.

Number 240 in our Psalter Hymnal speaks of the sovereignty of God:

Not unto us, O Lord of Heaven,
But unto Thee be glory given;
In love and truth Thou dost fulfill
The counsels of Thy sovereign will;
Though nations fail Thy power to own,
Yet Thou dost reign, and Thou alone.

EXERCISES

1. Mark the following as either True or False, with T or F before each.
 - a. () I may do whatever I want to do.
 - b. () When a person is grown up he may do as he pleases.
 - c. () I must obey God.
 - d. () I must find out what God wants of me.
 - e. () Obedience to God will make me happy.
 - f. () God doesn't notice little things I do wrong.
 - g. () God knows even what I think.
2. Questions about the Bible
 - a. How is God like the potter, who makes jars and bowls of clay? Read Jeremiah 18:1-5
 - b. How did David praise the Lord, in First Chronicles 29:11, 12
 - c. What did Solomon say about the heart of a king? Read Proverbs 21:1
 - d. What did Jesus say about the sparrows, and about our hair, in Luke 12:6, 7, 8?
3. God, the sovereign ruler, sends us both joys and sorrows. We must remember that all things come from Him.

Finish these sentences with words from the list below them:

- a. God sends _____ sunshine and _____ rain.
- b. God paints the sunset sky with _____ colors.
- c. God sends the _____ wind that bends and breaks the trees.

- d. God gave us the rose with its _____ perfume.
 e. God made the _____ thorns and thistles, too.
 f. In winter God sends the beautiful _____ snow.
 g. God also sends winter's _____ that makes us shiver.
 h. God puts _____ love in a mother's heart.
 i. But God sends _____ and sorrow, too.
 j. We could not live without the _____ of God.
- | | | | | | |
|--------|-------|--------|-----------------|------|------------|
| tender | sharp | bright | loving-kindness | cold | pure-white |
| pretty | sweet | stormy | delicious | pain | |

Closing Prayer

Almighty God, Thou art ruler of all creation. We pray that Thou wilt move our hearts to love and obey Thee all our days. We would glorify Thy holy name. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Lesson IV

EVIL CAME BY MAN'S DISOBEDIENCE

God is holy and great and good. All that He made was beautiful and good. When all was finished, He looked at all His work and He was pleased with it. He rested on the seventh day, and rejoiced in His work.

But now all is not good. There is much in the world that makes us unhappy. We have talked about storms and troubles and thorns that God sends. There is lying and stealing. There is war and death. The world is full of evil things. If all was good at the beginning, when did the evil come into the world?

God has an enemy. That enemy's name is Satan. Satan was once a good angel, but he turned against God. Now he is an evil spirit.

Since Satan is evil, he wants others to be evil, too. Because he hates God, he tries to destroy everything that belongs to God. When he saw God's beautiful earth, he wanted to spoil it.

Satan knew that Adam and Eve were the best and highest of all God's creatures. He knew that they were the care-takers of the earth. He knew that God had given them dominion over all that was on the earth. He knew that if he could cause them to disobey God, the beauty of God's creation would be ruined.

One day Satan went to visit Eve in the garden. He spoke to her through a serpent. In Genesis 3:1 we read, "Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which Jehovah God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of any tree of the garden?" Satan wanted Eve to think that God was not fair and good. He said, "God knows that in the day ye eat thereof . . . ye shall be as God, knowing good and evil."

Eve listened to Satan. She looked up at the fruit of the tree, and thought that it would taste very good. It looked as if it might make her wise. She had to choose between God's word and Satan's word. And she chose to believe Satan. She took the fruit and ate it. When Adam came, she gave some to him and he ate it. Both Adam and Eve disobeyed God.

Thus evil came into the world because man listened to the Evil One instead of to God. Since that day God's beautiful creation has not been all good and beautiful. There is much left that is good and beautiful, but there is very much evil and trouble.

We know that God is sovereign. He can turn even the hearts of kings.

He could have made Eve choose to do the right. But sometimes God lets us go our own way. That, too, is part of His great plan. It is a plan that we cannot understand.

Question Box

1. What are some of the evils in the world today?
2. How did bad things get into God's good world?
3. Who is the great enemy of God and of all that is good?
4. Why did Satan want Adam and Eve to disobey God?
5. What did Satan tell Eve?

MEMORY VERSE: Romans 5:12 . . . Through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin.

We are sorry that sin came into the world. We are sorry that the world is no longer full of praise to God, as it ought to be. Let us sing, Psalter Hymn, Number 162. It is a song of sorrow for sin.

Remember not, O God,
The sins of long ago;
In tender mercy visit us,
Distressed and humbled low.

O Lord, our Savior, help,
And glorify Thy name;
Deliver us from all our sins
And take away our shame.

EXERCISES

1. Place a line under the correct word or words for ending the following sentences:
 - a. Before Satan came to Eve, she was (happy) (lonely) (unhappy).
 - b. Satan told Eve (the truth) (a half truth) (all lies).
 - c. Today Satan (tempts us to sin) (does not know us) (is not on earth).
 - d. When we have done wrong (we are happy) (we like to hide) (we feel like singing).
 - e. Sin made the world (more beautiful) (less beautiful) (all ugly).
2. Complete these sentences from our Lesson-story:
 - a. Eve had to choose between _____'s word and _____'s word.
 - b. Satan said she should eat of the tree and become _____.
 - c. God said she should not eat of it, for she would surely _____.
 - d. Eve chose to believe Satan, and brought _____ upon the world.
 - e. We too must choose between _____'s word and _____ temptations.
3. God's Word is wonderful and powerful. Read what the Bible itself says:
 - a. Psalm 119:105 says that God's Word is a _____.
 - b. Isaiah 40:8 says the word of God shall _____.
 - c. Luke 8:11 says the word of God is _____.
 - d. Hebrews 4:12 says the word of God is sharper than _____.

Closing Prayer

Our Father which art in Heaven, lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. We know that we shall be unhappy if we sin against Thee. Forgive us our sins, for Jesus' sake. Amen.

Lesson V

GOD IS JUST, BUT ALSO MERCIFUL

Sin must be punished. God never says, "Forget about your sin; just try not to sin again." That would not be fair and just. Sin is the breaking of God's laws and commandments. Because God is just and righteous He must punish all who break His commandments and disobey His laws.

Adam and Eve disobeyed God, and they had to be punished.

Their first punishment came quickly; it was a feeling of unhappiness and shame. They had never before been unhappy or ashamed. They wanted to hide from each other, and they made themselves aprons of leaves

Their punishment was fear. They had never been afraid of anything in the whole world. They had never been afraid of God. But now fear came into their hearts. They had been made for fellowship with God; God had often walked with them and talked with them in the garden. Now they hid among the trees when they heard Him come.

But we cannot hide from God. God called them. And he pronounced more punishment upon them. He told Eve that she would have pain and sorrow. He told Adam that the ground would bring forth thorns and weeds, so that he would have to work hard. He told them that they must die, and turn to dust again.

Finally God sent Adam and Eve out of the garden, to work the ground and raise food for themselves.

But the worst of the punishment was the separation that came between God and man. Never again did God come down to walk with Adam and Eve, as He used to do. He sent them out of His beautiful garden, because sinful men cannot have fellowship with a holy God.

God had told Adam that if he ate of the tree of knowledge of good and evil he would surely die. Separation from God is death.

But God still loved His creation. He still loved even Adam and Eve. He showed His love by promising them a way out of their misery and death. Read Genesis 3:15. In those words God promised that one of Eve's children would be victor over Satan.

That child was born many years later. He is Jesus, the Son of God. He came to bear the sins of men. He paid the whole debt of sin. Through Him man can be happy again. Through Him we have fellowship with God again. And that fellowship is life — eternal life.

All the punishment that came upon Adam and Eve was good and just. God had given them the beautiful earth to use and enjoy. But when they turned against Him, they lost all right to the joys and pleasures of earth.

God's mercy is very great! Though He sent them out to work hard, He let the earth bring forth plenty of good things for them. Though He sent storms and cold, He also taught them how to make good homes and warm clothes. He sent pain and sickness, but He also supplied all kinds of medicines. Best of all, He promised a Savior who would pay the whole debt of sin, in order that man may live again and have fellowship with God again. For those who believe on Him there will be a new heaven and a new earth, full of peace and joy.

Question Box

1. Why did Adam and Eve try to hide from God?
2. Why does God punish sin?
3. What is death?
4. What promise did God give to Adam and Eve?
5. How does God show that He is just?
6. How does God show that He is merciful?

MEMORY VERSE: Romans 6:23 . . . For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

In Psalm 40 David sang of the mercy of God, which covered his sin. We too can sing about this, using Number 76 of our Psalter Hymnal:

Thy tender mercies, O my Lord,
Withhold not, I implore;
But let Thy kindness and Thy truth
Preserve me evermore.
For countless ills have compassed me,
My sinful deeds arise;
Yea, they have overtaken me;
I dare not raise my eyes.

Another beautiful hymn for today's lesson is Psalter Hymnal Number 162:

Remember not, O God, the sins of long ago;
In tender mercy visit us, distressed and humbled low.

O Lord, our Savior, help, and glorify Thy Name;
Deliver us from all our sins, and take away our shame.

EXERCISES

1. God punished the earth because of man's sin, and now there are many unpleasant things. List unpleasant things that you find.
 - a. that happen at home
 - b. that happen in nature
 - c. that happen in our bodies
2. God is merciful. List some of the pleasant things that we see or experience:
 - a. that we experience at home
 - b. that we see in nature
 - c. that we hear especially on Sunday
3. Right or Wrong? Cross out the wrong word.

Tommy is cross when he can't have what he wants. He says he does not see why he can't have his own way. Tommy is (right) (wrong). It is (right) (wrong) to be cross when we cannot have what we want. Mary is angry when she is punished for disobeying mother; she says mother is unkind. Mary is (right) (wrong). Mary (should) (does not have to) obey mother. It (is) (is not) God's will that Mary obeys mother.

Janie is happy almost all the time, although she does not have as many things as Mary has. Janie says she already has more than she deserves. Janie is (right) (wrong). We (do) (do not) deserve any of the good things God gives us. We (should) (should not) complain when others have more than we have.

Our greatest happiness is (to have everything we want) (to love and serve the Lord).

Closing Prayer

Thou are holy, O God, and we are sinners. We bow our heads in shame because of our sin. We thank Thee for Jesus, our Savior, through whom our sins are forgiven. Help us to become more like Him. Amen.

Lesson VI

WE ARE ALL SINNERS

One of the saddest of the Bible stories is the story of Cain and Abel. They were the first children born to Adam and Eve. No doubt Adam and Eve were very happy when God gave them these children. Perhaps they hoped that either Cain or Abel would be the Savior whom God had promised to send.

But Cain hated his brother Abel. One day, when they were in the field together, Cain became angry and killed Abel. Cain was a murderer. Therefore God sent him away, to be a wanderer upon the earth. Thus Adam and Eve lost their two children in one day.

This sad story shows us one awful result of sin. Adam and Eve had blackened their hearts by sinning against God, and their children were born with sinful hearts. They had many children. After a while these children had children. And in each heart there was the blackness of sin.

Many years have passed by since the days of Cain and Abel. Many, many children have been born into the world. Of all these babies, only one was born without sin. That sinless One was Jesus. All the others were born with sinful hearts. You and I, too, were born with sinful hearts. That is why we are so easily led into doing sinful deeds.

Abel's heart was sinful, too. But Abel had faith in God, and God kept him from sinful deeds.

God warned Cain against sin. Read Genesis 4:6, 7. God told him that his anger would lead him to do some greater sin. But Cain would not listen. He let anger rule in his heart, and he killed his brother.

Each of us must fight against sin. We are often quick to do what we should not do; we often choose the wrong instead of the right. We do not love and serve God as we ought. We know that we should glorify God in all that we do; but we like to be important. We like to be praised. We like to have riches and honor and all kinds of pleasant things for ourselves. We forget that everything was made for God. We forget that we were made to love and serve Him.

This sin will grow stronger and stronger in our hearts unless the Spirit of God enters in. Only the Spirit of God can cleanse us from sin.

If we know that we are sinners, and if we confess our sins to God, He will forgive us. He can forgive us because Jesus bore the punishment for sin. All who turn to Him find pardon and joy. If we love him we will fight against the sinful desires of our hearts.

Question Box

1. How did Adam and Eve lose two children in one day?
2. Why did Cain kill his brother Abel?
3. How did sin get into Cain's heart?
4. How many children are born with sinful hearts?
5. Who can take away sin from our hearts?

MEMORY VERSE: Romans 3:23 . . . For all have sinned, and fall short of the glory of God.

David wrote Psalm 51 when he felt very sorry for his sin. We sing it when we think of our sin, and when we feel that we need God's mercy. We find it in Psalter Hymnal Number 100.

God, be merciful to me,
On Thy grace I rest my plea;
Plenteous in compassion Thou
Blot out my transgression now;
Wash me, make me pure within,
Cleanse, O cleanse me from my sin.

EXERCISES

- Questions for Bible readers:
 - How much ought we to love God? Mark 12:30
 - Whom do we, by nature, love most? Philippians 2:20, 21
 - How much does God love us? John 3:16 and 1 John 3:1
 - How can we show love to Jesus? John 14:15
- Word study of our hymn.
 - merciful — kind to someone in trouble
 - grace — giving us something we do not deserve
 - plea — very eager asking
 - plenteous — having plenty
 - compassion — pity
 - transgression — sin or disobedience
- Learning to know sin.
 - Sin begins in the _____.
 - We sin with our tongue when we _____.
 - We sin with our hands when we _____.
 - We sin with our feet when we _____.
 - We sin with our eyes when we _____.
 - We sin in our wishing when we wish _____.
 - We sin in our thinking when we think _____.
 - We can keep from sinning only if _____ helps us to fight against sin.
- Excuses for sin. Cross out the wrong word.

Tommy wanted to go skating. Mother said he should not go; she was afraid the ice on the lake was too thin. Ralph said the ice was thick; he had been on it. Tommy and Ralph went skating. Tommy did (right) (wrong).

Tommy fell through the ice. When he came home he said, "It's Ralph's fault. He told me the ice was thick." Tommy was (right) (wrong).

Who is to blame for my sin? (Sometimes I am to blame) (Sometimes I can blame someone else) (I am always to blame).

Closing Prayer

Dear Father, help us to see our own sins. Dear Jesus,
live in my heart, so that I will try hard not to sin.
And forgive all our sins, we pray. Amen.

Lesson VII GOD'S PLAN GOES ON

In Lesson III we learned that God is ruler over all creation. We learned that He made a plan, and that all things must work out to fulfill His plan. We learn that even Satan must obey Him.

But Satan seemed to be stronger than God. He tempted Eve, and she sinned. Sin was in the hearts of Cain and Abel. Abel served God, but wicked Cain killed him.

Cain went away, to another part of the land. He and his wife had children, and their children were wicked. They were even proud of their wickedness, and boasted of their evil deeds.

God had put many wonderful things in the earth for man to find and use. Man should have used them to the praise of God. There was copper and iron and gold and silver. Cain's children began to discover these things. They used them only for their own pleasure and wickedness.

God's whole beautiful creation plan seemed to be a failure.

But God's plan never fails. God is almighty. He is sovereign over all.

When wickedness seemed to be spreading over the earth, God gave Adam and Eve another son. Eve named this boy Seth. The name means "appointed," for God had appointed Seth as a new beginning. God would not let wickedness overrun the whole earth. Seth served God. And in the time of Seth other people began to call upon the name of Jehovah. There were many other people, for Adam and Eve had many children. From among all these people God chose Seth, and his children, as the new beginning of His plan.

Satan had tried to turn all men away from God. But God would not let Satan rule the world. You remember the promise that God gave to Eve. He told her that He would send One to rescue them from sin and death. We know that Jesus was that Savior. He came many, many years afterwards. He came from the line of Seth. Seth was the first one chosen by God. All along the line of Seth's children God chose others to love and serve Him. And at last Jesus was born, from the line of Seth.

We cannot always understand God's plans. We do not know why He let Satan tempt Adam and Eve. We do not understand why He let Satan rule in Cain's heart. But we know that He rules over all. We know that He carried out His great plan when He chose Seth. We know that He is carrying out His great plan in the world today.

Question Box

1. What kind of children did Cain have?
2. What did Cain's children do with the good things they found in the earth?
3. What other son did God give to Adam and Eve?
4. What was the plan that God carried on through Seth?
5. Who was born from the line of Seth?

MEMORY VERSE: Luke 21:33 . . . Heaven and earth shall pass away; but my words shall not pass away.

It was God who chose Seth and made Seth the new beginning of His plan. It is God who calls us to follow Him and serve Him. God is carrying out His plan in your life and mine, too. If we are His, we shall follow where He leads us. Let us think of Seth, and also of ourselves, as we sing the following hymn, Number 446 in the Psalter Hymnal.

He leadeth me; O blessed thought!
O words with heavenly comfort fraught!
Whate'er I do, where'er I be,
Still 'tis God's hand that leadeth me.
He leadeth me, He leadeth me;
By His own hand He leadeth me.
His faithful follower I would be,
For by His hand He leadeth me.

EXERCISES

1. Questions for Thinkers:
 - a. What did Cain's children discover and make? Genesis 4:21, 22
 - b. The Bible gives us the names of Seth's children and grand-children. We find two with special honors. Who were they? Genesis 5:21, 22
 - c. Could Adam tell the story of the beginnings to his great-grandchildren? Genesis 5:5
2. Good and Evil
 - a. There are two powers at work in this world, the power of good and the power of evil.
From whom do all good things come? _____
Who is at the head of all evil things? _____
 - b. Arrange the following under one or the other:
Cain, Enoch, obedience, Seth, murder, kindness, love, lying, prayer, stealing, gospel preaching, Bible reading
THE POWER OF GOOD *THE POWER OF EVIL*
3. Tell what we can do to show that we are on the side of the power of good:
 - a. with our minds
 - b. with our hands
 - c. with our tongues
 - d. with our eyes
 - e. with our ears
 - f. with our feet
 - g. with radio and television
 - h. with our gold and silver

Closing Prayer

Our God and our Father, Thou dost call us to be Thy children and follow Thee. Help us to choose the good, and to walk as Thy children, in our home, at school, and at play. For Jesus' sake. Amen.

Lesson VIII

REVIEW

In the seven lessons which we have just finished, there are seven doctrines, that is, seven teachings from the Bible. These doctrines are truths which we believe. They are:

- I. GOD MADE ALL THINGS
- II. GOD MADE MAN AFTER HIS LIKENESS
- III. GOD IS LORD OVER ALL
- IV. EVIL CAME BY MAN'S DISOBEDIENCE
- V. GOD IS JUST, BUT ALSO MERCIFUL
- VI. WE ARE ALL SINNERS
- VII. GOD'S PLAN GOES ON

In this review lesson we shall ask ourselves questions about these doctrines so that we may understand and remember them better.

EXERCISES

1. Review all the memory verses, so that you can recite them without mistake and tell where each text is found.
2. Each memory verse explains one of the doctrines. Answer the following questions by reciting the texts.

- a. Which text tells about the punishment and mercy?
 - b. Which text tells us how many people are sinners?
 - c. What was the first commandment given by Him who is Lord of all?
 - d. How did evil come into the world?
 - e. Which text says that God's plans and promises shall always be fulfilled?
 - f. Which text tells us how wonderfully man was made?
 - g. Who made all things?
3. We have learned some new words. Choose from the list below to complete the following sentences.
- a. The first book of the Bible is called _____ because it tells of beginnings.
 - b. Man was made after the _____ of God.
 - c. God breathed into man and made him a living _____.
 - d. God gave Adam and Eve _____ over all.
 - e. We believe that God is _____ over all.
 - f. God came down to have _____ with Adam and Eve in the garden.
 - g. God is _____ to us when we confess our sins.
 - h. He will hear our _____ for pardon, if we ask in Jesus' name.

sovereign	fellowship	Genesis	merciful
dominion	likeness	soul	plea

4. Recite some of the hymns, without singing them.
5. Sometimes we understand the meaning of a hymn better if we put it into our own words. Let us study Psalter Hymnal Number 76 that way.
 - a. Thy tender mercies, O my Lord,
Withhold not, I implore;
"withhold" means to keep back — "I implore" means I beg or plead
Now write both lines, using these common words
 - b. But let Thy kindness and Thy truth
Preserve me evermore.
"preserve" means to keep safe — "evermore" means always
Now write these two lines, using the common words
 - c. For countless ills have compassed me,
My sinful deeds arise;
"countless" means more than I can count
"ills" are troubles
"compassed" means gathered all around
Now write these two lines, using the common words.
 - d. Yea, they have overtaken me;
I dare not raise my eyes.
"Yea" means yes — "overtaken" means caught up with
Now write these two lines, using the common words.

Closing Prayer

Let us use one of our hymn stanzas, only changing it to include all of us.

God be merciful to us,
 On Thy grace we rest our plea;
 Plenteous in compassion Thou
 Blot out my transgression now;
 Wash us, make us pure within,
 Cleanse, O cleanse us from our sin.
 In Jesus' name. Amen.

TO THE TEACHER

There are several ways of reviewing these doctrines, and of introducing the repetition necessary for learning.

For example, we notice that five of these seven doctrines tell us about God, and two speak about sin. We can group them thus for review.

A drill can be conducted, by having the teacher quote the text, and the pupil state the appropriate doctrine, or vice versa.

Exercise 5 may need explanation. The teacher can give one or two examples from some other of the hymns.

Thought questions are always good. We may ask, for example, "Cain's children found copper and iron and other treasures of God in the earth; have we found still more? Have we used them to God's glory? How can we use modern inventions to God's glory?"

It may be well to recite the hymns as well as sing them. A song fest, using all the stanzas memorized, will put spirit into the review lesson.

REPORT NO. 30

Majority Report
THE QUOTA-ADJUSTMENT MATTER

To the Synod of 1956

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

HEREWITH the Study Committee No. 9, appointed by the Synod of 1955, presents its report:

I. MANDATE — *Acts of Synod*, 1955, page 47, Art. 84, I, 2, under "Recommendations":

"a. That without prejudicing in any way the conclusions to which the Board of Trustees has come, the Synod defer action on this matter at this time and appoint a committee to give careful study to the quota-adjustment matter presented in the Sioux Center overture.

Grounds:

"(1) Any conclusion presented by the Board of Trustees could lay itself open to the charge of lack of objectivity.

"(2) The matter has broad implications for the entire quota system adopted by our church."

II. HISTORY.

In order to present a clear picture of the matter under study it will be necessary to give the history relating to the Sioux Center overture regarding quota adjustment for the Calvin College quota with a view to aid for the Midwest Junior College.

A. Overture to Synod of 1953 — *Acts*, p. 556, No. 31

Classis Sioux Center overtures Synod to allow Classis Sioux Center and any other classis which affiliates in an official manner with the Midwest Junior College movement to hold back 20 percent of the Calvin College and Seminary quotas, to be used by this midwest movement for their current running expenses when the junior college doors are opened.

You will notice that this overture was presented to Synod without stating grounds. Here follows a summary of arguments adduced by a delegate from Classis Sioux Center at Synod:

1. It is unfair to expect the above area to support two schools.
2. Readjustment of quotas will strengthen the love of this area for Calvin. Large numbers of people in said area expect a favorable decision.

3. Calvin will be strengthened by the junior college in Sioux Center on account of the larger number of students enlisted for higher education by a local junior college, going on from it to Calvin.

4. The readjustment asked for is justifiable because of its modest amount. It means a 25-cent increase in the quotas for other churches.

5. A dangerous precedent is not to be feared. In the unlikely event that the Michigan churches would alone have to assume a 20-percent rebate to *all other areas*, it would mean a \$4.00 quota increase for them.

6. Rejection of the overture is likely to react in an unwelcome move to separate Calvin from denominational ownership.

7. and 8. Arguments for the need of a junior college in the midwest area.

B. The advisory committee of the Synod of 1953 (page 146) recommended that Synod *do not* accede to the overture. Grounds:

1. As long as Calvin College and Seminary remain the property of the denomination, every church in the denomination is obliged to pay its proportionate part of its maintenance. This policy has been established by preceding Synods. *Acts*, 1924, Art. 30, VI; *Acts*, 1934, Art. 64, VI.

2. Permitting Classis Sioux Center (and conceivably other classes later) to hold back a percentage of the quota would only result in a raising of the quotas of the remaining churches.

This motion was *tabled*, and Synod referred the matter to the Board of Trustees for study, to report to the Synod of 1954.

C. The Board decided, February, 1954, that the Executive Committee constitute itself a committee or appoint a special one to study the Sioux Center overture and report to the May meeting (page 5, G).

D. The Executive Committee (March, 1954, Art. 19) appointed G. Hoeksema, R. Veenstra, B. T. Haan, and L. Bere.

E. Said committee proposed to the May, 1954, Board (Art. 90) that "the Calvin Board of Trustees recommends that Synod declare that the churches supporting the Midwest Junior College are deserving of financial co-operation in the matter of Calvin quotas, and that Synod appoint a committee which will:

a. Confer with the Exec. Committee of the Board of Trustees of the proposed junior college, and

b. Make recommendations to the Synod of 1955 as to the extent and method of co-operation."

A long discussion followed in which it soon became evident that the problem is too involved to come to a quick satisfactory solution.

The Board decided that a more geographically representative committee be appointed to give careful study to this overture of Sioux Center, and the problem raised by that overture, and to report to the Board as soon as possible.

It is decided that the Board advise Synod that this is a real problem that deserves the consideration of the church and that the Board needs more time to do satisfactory work and recommends that Synod decide that the Board continue its study of the matter.

The present "geographically representative" committee is appointed: J. K. Van Baalen, chairman; R. Veenstra, secretary; L. Bere, R. Bos, J. Hamersma.

F. The Synod of 1954 decided "that the Board shall continue its study of the Sioux Center Junior College matter and report to the Synod of 1955.

Ground:

Although much work has already been done, the Board needs more time to do satisfactory work on this involved matter" (*Acts of Synod*, 1954), Art. 81, item 11, page 37; see also page 364).

G. The more geographically representative committee appointed by the Board of Trustees in May of 1954 renders its report at the February 8, 1955, meeting of the Board. The minutes of the Board of that date (Art. 78) on this matter simply state: "Sioux Center Committee report: This Committee, because of its extended geographical distribution, had tried to deal with the Sioux Center material by correspondence and also by meetings during the session of the Board of Trustees. They acquainted us with the difficulty of the material and with the formulation of some of its recommendations. A discussion of the material followed and it was decided to defer action and refer this matter back to a committee for further study and to report to the May meeting of the Board."

From a letter of Rev. B. J. Haan, addressed to the Synod of 1955, we glean the information that this second committee of the Board of Trustees came with virtually the same recommendation as the first committee (see above) only with a few stipulations controlling such support.

H. At the February, 1955, meeting the third committee was appointed by the Board of Trustees to study the matter presented by the Sioux Center Overture. This committee was composed of Revs. T. Van Kooten, H. Venema, and William Vander Hoven. After giving careful consideration to the matter they gave the following report at the May, 1955, meeting of the Board of Trustees:

"The Board of Trustees of Calvin College and Seminary
Grand Rapids, Michigan

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

The undersigned were appointed as a committee to further study the Sioux Center overture and to report to the May meeting of the Board. Your committee herewith present the following:

I. We recommend that the Board advise Synod not to accede to the Sioux Center overture. Grounds:

1. As long as Calvin College and Seminary remain the property of the denomination, every church in the denomination is obliged to pay her proportionate part of its maintenance. This policy has been established by preceding Synods (*Acts*, 1924, Art. 30, VI; *Acts*, 1934, Art. 64, VI).
 2. It has never been the policy of Synod to establish or collect a quota, either directly or indirectly, for a cause which is officially unrelated to Synod.
 3. Were Synod to accede to the Sioux Center overture, and thereby depart from the policies as stated in 1 and 2, Synod would have yielded principles of action in the matter of quotas which would open the way for similar departures in favor of other causes.
- II. However, we propose that the Board advise Synod to recommend the Midwest Junior College to our churches for one or more offerings.
- Grounds:**
1. The school will fulfill a need in its area.
 2. Although the school is regional in character, denominational solidarity prompts the church to assist this area in its need."

The above recommendations of the third committee of the Board of Trustees became the basis for the Board of Trustees' recommendation to the Synod of 1955 (*Acts of Synod*, p. 329, I, A, 5).

I. The recommendation of the Board of Trustees to the Synod of 1955 (*Acts of Synod*, 1955, page 334, Supplement 27a, II, D, 3):

"a. The Board advises Synod not to accede to the Sioux Center overture.

Grounds:

"(1) As long as Calvin College and Seminary remain the property of the denomination, every church in the denomination is obliged to pay her proportionate part of its maintenance. This policy has been established by preceding Synods (*Acts*, 1942, Art. 30, VI; *Acts*, 1934, Art. 64, VI).

"(2) It has never been the policy of Synod to establish or collect a quota, either directly or indirectly, for a cause which is officially unrelated to Synod.

"(3) Were Synod to accede to the Sioux Center overture, and thereby depart from the policies as stated in 1 and 2, Synod would have yielded principles of action in the matter of quotas which would open the way for similar departures in favor of other causes.

"b. Without passing on the merits of the Junior College movement the Board recommends that if financial help is to be given by Synod to the Sioux Center Junior College that it be given in the form of church offerings."

J. Upon the recommendation of the Synodical Advisory Committee, Educational Matters, the Synod decided to defer action on this matter at this time and decided to appoint the undersigned committee to give

Careful study of the quota-adjustment matter presented in the Sioux Center overture (*Acts of Synod*, 1955, p. 47, Art. 84, I, 2).

III. ANALYSIS

Having given the subject matter contained in the Sioux Center overture and the reports of the committees of the Board of Trustees careful study, your committee presents the following considerations:

A. The three consecutive committees appointed by the Board of Trustees of Calvin College and Seminary have bestowed much time and labor on this matter.

B. That although these study committees of the Board of Trustees differ in their conclusions, yet they do agree in giving financial aid to the Midwest Junior College.

C. That the burden of the Sioux Center overture is a request for money to help operate the Midwest Junior College.

D. The *method* of granting financial aid to the Midwest Junior College presents the problem. The overture speaks of allowing Classis Sioux Center and any other classis which affiliates in an official manner with the Midwest Junior College movement to *hold back* 20 percent of the Calvin College and Seminary quotas, to be used by this Midwest movement for their current running expenses.

It will readily be understood that if the Midwest Junior College was a denominationally owned, controlled, and operated institution like our Calvin College and Seminary the problem of quota adjustment could readily be solved on the basis of justice. On the other hand, if Calvin College would be owned, controlled, and operated by a Society for Higher Education, then, too, the problem of quota adjustment could be speedily settled on the argument of justice. Why should one area support two society owned and controlled colleges or why should one part of the denomination be called upon to support two denominational colleges?

E. However, the facts in the case are these:

1. The Midwest Junior College is owned, controlled, and operated by a Society for Higher Christian Education through its board.

2. Calvin College and Seminary is an educational institution of higher learning owned, controlled, and operated by the entire denomination. The Board of Trustees consists in the main of one delegate from each classis. Thus every member of the Christian Reformed Church through his (or her) respective consistory and classis is represented on the Board of Trustees of Calvin College and Seminary.

3. It is *just* and *reasonable* that every church in the denomination, yes, every member in the Christian Reformed Church, be morally obligated to pay its proportionate part of the maintenance cost of their denominationally-owned school. This is also in harmony with the decisions of Synod (*Acts*, 1942, Art. 30, VI; *Acts*, 1934, Art. 64, VI).

4. It is also a fact that our denominationally loyal people in the midwest have a perfect right to own, control, and operate their own private junior college. However, the fact of their having a junior college in no way severs their relation with Calvin College and Seminary. This denominational educational institution of higher learning remains their institution. They may and do with just pride point to Calvin College and Seminary and say, "That is *our* college and seminary." They may continue to send their sons and daughters to Calvin College if they so desire.

5. Another fact clearly stands out for all to see. It is this: our good people in the midwest area do have an extra financial responsibility created by activities in the very sphere in which Calvin operates, namely, Christian higher education.

6. Furthermore, who will deny the fact that such a college will fulfill a need in the midwest area, and eventually be of value to the entire denomination and, what is more, to the extension of the Kingdom of God.

7. Finally, the fact of the Scriptural principle of bearing each other's burdens is not to be argued away.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

We believe that the above indisputable facts leave us no alternative but to draw the following conclusions:

A. That any request for quota adjustment *cannot and should not be based on the mere fact of the existence of a junior college per se*, for if a quota adjustment be made on that basis, Synod would be yielding a principle of action in the matter of quotas which would open the way for similar departures in favor of other causes. Let us bear in mind the facts mentioned above. Furthermore, if Synod would grant the request of Classis Sioux Center, namely, to *hold back* 20 percent of the Calvin College and Seminary quota, to be used by that classis for the running expenses of the junior college, Synod would virtually, either directly or indirectly, be establishing or collecting a quota for a cause which is officially unrelated to Synod.

B. That a request for financial aid by way of quota adjustment can be and should be granted on the principle of bearing each other's burdens.

V. RECOMMENDATION

That Synod reply to the Classis Sioux Center overture regarding quota adjustments as follows:

Classis Sioux Center and any other classis which affiliates in an official manner with the Midwest Junior College movement be permitted to reduce their Calvin College and Seminary quota by 20 percent *if they*

deem it necessary because of their heavy financial burdens created by activities in the very sphere in which Calvin operates, namely, Christian higher education.

Grounds:

1. The Midwest area has an extra heavy financial burden due to their junior college.
2. The Scriptural principle of bearing each other's burdens.

Respectfully submitted,

M. BOLT, *Chairman*

B. VAN SOMEREN, *Secretary*

R. J. FRENS

J. CAMPHOUSE

Minority Report

THE QUOTA-ADJUSTMENT MATTER

ESTEEMED BRETHREN :

THE UNDERSIGNED, a member of the above Study Committee, is unable to agree with the conclusions and recommendation of the Majority of the Committee. Therefore, he feels obligated to submit a Minority report and recommendation.

OBJECTIONS TO MAJORITY REPORT

1. The Majority recommendation — of providing for quota reduction where the particular Classes involved deem such adjustment necessary because of a heavy financial burden — rests essentially on the ground of "bearing each other's burdens." This is clearly indicated in the Conclusions of the Majority Report, wherein the Majority state the quota reduction requested by the Sioux Center Overture cannot be based on the mere fact of the existence of a Junior College. But, add the Majority, the quota adjustment can be and should be granted on the principle of "bearing each other's burdens."

The Minority feels that this principle is neither an adequate ground nor a sound basis for having the denomination extend financial support to a society-controlled and society-owned school. In the first place, the "sharing of financial burdens" can be accomplished by having Synod recommend the Midwest Junior College to our churches for one or more offerings each year. It need not involve quota adjustment. Secondly, Synod would embrace a dangerous fiscal policy if the justification for denominational financial support were to be based primarily on the principle of "sharing each other's burdens." Synod could properly be requested to finance many causes which have heretofore been considered predominantly local projects, such as elementary and secondary schools and neighborhood evangelism, or causes which, historically, have been recommended to our churches for free will offerings. The aggregate requests for financial support by the church-at-large — whether by means of "quota adjustment" or by "quota inclusion" — might well strain the denominational budget.

2. The Majority recommendation introduces a new financial and budgetary concept — namely, "contingent" financial support. The recommendation states that quotas may be adjusted in those cases where financial hardship is deemed to exist, as determined by the Classes involved. The effect of this provision is to increase the element of uncertainty in the denominational budget, one which will be complicated

by the not-predictable judgments of various Classes. It is recognized that, under the Sioux Center Overture, the dollar amount is nominal and would pose no real problem. However, if this practice should be extended to other areas of church finance, or as other Junior Colleges develop, it could become impossible to forecast denominational income and expenditures with a reasonable degree of accuracy.

3. The Majority recommendation repeats without clarification the ambiguous language of the Sioux Center Overture: namely, the phrase "Classis Sioux Center and any other Classis which affiliates in an official manner with the Midwest Junior College Movement." In view of the fact that the Midwest Junior College is a society-controlled school, it would appear to have no official relationship with any particular ecclesiastical body. In fact, the question might appropriately be raised as to how a Classis goes about the task of becoming "officially affiliated" with a society-owned school.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE MINORITY

1. That Synod reject the Sioux Center Overture. The grounds for this recommendation are as follows:

A. The reduction of synodical quotas in effect constitutes financial support by the denomination of an institution which is officially unrelated to Synod, and in which the denomination would have no official voice as to policies and administration.

(1) This action would represent a definite reversal of established policy.

(2) The church would establish a precedent with regard to the financing of future Junior Colleges as they develop.

(3) If Synod agrees to give financial support to a society-controlled Junior College, the same logic could be used to require denominational financial support of high school, elementary schools, and other local institutions and activities. The end result could well be that local projects would become primary and denominational projects secondary.

(4) It would, in effect, force the entire denomination to support a Junior College which is a parent-controlled school.

B. Inasmuch as Calvin College and the Seminary are denominational-ly-owned, every church and classis in the denomination is obliged to pay its proportionate part of the costs involved. This policy has been established by previous Synods (Acts 1924, Art. 30, VI; Acts 1934, Art. 64, VI).

C. As discussed under point 3 of the section "Objections to Majority Report," the Sioux Center Overture is loosely worded. Specifically, the Minority has reference to the phrase "Classis Sioux Center and any other Classes which affiliate in an official manner with the Midwest

Junior College movement." In view of the parent-controlled and parent-owned nature of the school, the Minority can see no official connection between any of our Classes and the Midwest Junior College, nor visualize how such a relationship could be established. Because of the importance of the Overture and its long range implications, the Minority feels that Synod should reject the Overture on this ground alone. Synod should not agree to extend financial assistance unless the conditions involved are well defined.

2. That Synod recommend the Midwest Junior College to our churches for one or more offerings per year.

J. F. MELLEMA

February 29, 1956.

CHRISTIAN REFORMED BOARD OF MISSIONS

To the Synod of 1956

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

IT is a precious privilege once again to be able to report to the Synod on the work of foreign missions as administered under the direction of the Christian Reformed Board of Missions. God has given us great favor in the matter of new recruits for the work and has blessed richly in the matter of health, as well as protecting care amid all the traveling that has been necessary. The support of our people has been such that work could go forward unhindered and we know too that the prayers of our people have been sent heavenward. The growing interest in missions in our church is evident in the increasing number of churches which are seeking to become calling and supporting churches. During the past year considerable deputation work has been carried forward to make the work of our missions known in Canada, and we discovered that there is among our immigrant families in Canada also an increasing desire to become more familiar with our foreign missions.

The report to follow will be divided into the following headings and major matters relating to each field will be given attention under the proper headings: Organization and Personnel, General Matters, Indian field, Japan, Sudan, Ceylon, Argentina and Brazil, Finances, Summary of recommendations. We would, however, notice that all the administrative and organizational matters which need the attention of Synod are not the whole story. There is a world of experience and development which does not yield itself to the written word, and underneath all lies the powerful work of the Holy Spirit who has called missionaries to the work and has brought fruit upon the ministry of the Word. All our missionaries are sent out with the same message "to testify of the gospel of the grace of God," and we know that the Lord will continue to honor that service which remains true to that gospel.

SECTION ONE

ORGANIZATION AND PERSONNEL

A. Board

The Board membership now consists of 26 classical delegates and three members-at-large. The Board met in plenary session in February and will again meet in June immediately after the close of Synod. Usually there is but one annual meeting of the entire Board, but because of a special concern about establishing a clear and acceptable

policy for Japan missions; we will have a special session in June. The members of the Board at present are:

<i>Classis</i>	<i>Member</i>	<i>Alternate</i>
Alberta.....	Rev. D. J. Scholten.....	Rev. Albert H. Selles
Cadillac.....	Rev. Martin Stegink.....	Rev. Frank Einfeld
California.....	Rev. Gerrit B. Boerfyn.....	Rev. Harry A. Dykstra
Chatham.....	Rev. John C. Verbrugge.....	Rev. Klaas Hart
Chicago North.....	Rev. Martin Bolt.....	Rev. Oliver Breen
Chicago South.....	Rev. Edward Visser.....	Rev. Clarence Flietstra
Eastern Ontario.....	Rev. Albert H. Smit.....	Rev. Ralph Wildschut
Grand Rapids East.....	Rev. John H. Schaal.....	Rev. Jacob Hasper
Grand Rapids South.....	Dr. Henry J. Kreulen.....	Rev. George Goris
Grand Rapids West.....	Rev. Renze O. DeGroot.....	Rev. Richard Rienstra
Hackensack.....	Rev. Dick Van Halsema.....	Rev. Eugene Bradford
Hamilton.....	Rev. John M. Dykstra.....	Rev. Andrew D. Folkema
Holland.....	Rev. Henry Baker.....	Rev. L. Oostendorp
Hudson.....	Rev. Rich. R. DeRidder.....	Rev. Marvin C. Baarman
Kalamazoo.....	Rev. Simon A. Dykstra.....	Rev. George Vander Kooi
Minnesota North.....	Rev. Simon Viss.....	Rev. Isaac Meuzelaar
Minnesota South.....	Rev. John A. Hoeksema.....	Rev. John E. VandenHoek
Muskegon.....	Rev. John C. Scholten.....	Rev. Edwin H. Palmer
Orange City.....	Rev. David D. Bonnema.....	Rev. John B. Hulst
Ostfriesland.....	Rev. Sidney P. Miersma.....	Rev. Garrett D. Pars
Pacific.....	Rev. Peter DeJong.....	Rev. John Petersen
Pella.....	Rev. Peter Y. DeJong.....	Rev. Wm. Vande Kieft
Rocky Mountain.....	Rev. Menko Ouwinga.....	Rev. Henry N. Erffmeyer
Sioux Center.....	Rev. G. Vander Plaats.....	Rev. Carl Toeset
Wisconsin.....	Rev. William Alkema.....	Rev. John H. DeHaan
Zeeland.....	Rev. C. M. Schemper.....	Rev. Fred Huizenga
Member-at-large.....	Mr. John Van Dellen.....	
Member-at-large.....	Dr. Edwin Y. Monsma.....	
Member-at-large.....	Dr. Richard J. DeMol.....	

The executive committee of the Board consists of the delegates from the Michigan and Illinois classes plus the three members-at-large, and has met regularly on the second Thursday of each month. The Board officers at present are: Dr. R. O. De Groot, president; Dr. H. J. Kreulen, vice president; Rev. H. J. Evenhouse, secretary; Mr. J. Van Dellen, treasurer; Dr. E. Y. Monsma, assistant treasurer; Rev. J. C. Scholten, minute secretary.

B. Office

The office administration continues to operate with the services of Mr. Harry Boersma, Mr. Alvin W. Huijbregtse, Miss Reta De Boer, and Miss Jane Deemter, along with the Secretary of Missions. During the month of March the office was moved to the new denominational building.

C. Members-at-large

During the past year Dr. Stuart Bergsma, who had been elected as a member-at-large by the Synod of 1954, had to leave us because of his extended absence from this area. We regretted this loss since he

is a man with considerable mission experience and is also vitally concerned about the work in that two of his own sons are serving under our Board. However, we are grateful that the Lord does provide men of mission devotion to take up the work which others must surrender. Dr. Richard De Mol, who has been alternate for the members-at-large, has entered into the vacancy created by the departure of Dr. Bergsma.

The term of Mr. John Van Dellen comes to a close at this session of Synod and it is necessary for Synod to elect someone to serve. He is eligible for re-election since he has served only three years. We offer to Synod the following nominations for member-at-large: John Van Dellen, Frank Dieleman. Nominations for alternate member-at-large: Joseph T. Daverman; Charles Schrader.

D. Field Personnel and Calling and/or Supporting Churches.

At the present time there are actually seven areas of the earth in which our foreign missionaries are active: New Mexico and Arizona; Nigeria; Ceylon; Formosa; Japan; Argentina; and Brazil. The entire mission staff at the present time in these several areas numbers no less than 297 (including husbands, wives, single persons, and children sent out from our home area).

We present here a list of the missionaries and their calling and/or supporting churches:

<i>Field and Post</i>	<i>Missionary</i>	<i>Calling and/or Supporting Church</i>
INDIAN		
Brigham City	Rev. Cornelius Kuipers.....	Peoria, Iowa
Carisso	Mr. Richard Kruis.....	Jamestown, Michigan
Crown Point	Rev. Jacob Van Bruggen.....	Sixteenth St., Holland
Farmington	Rev. Herman J. Schripsema.....	Oakdale Park, Grand Rapids
Gallup	Rev. Donald Houseman.....	Second, Kalamazoo
	Mr. Theodore Tibboel.....	
Nahaschitty	Mr. Edward Henry.....	
Phoenix	Rev. Calvin G. Hayenga.....	Bethany, Muskegon
Red Rock	Mr. Paul Redhouse.....	
Rehoboth	Miss Wilma Bambacht.....	Central Ave. S. S., Holland
	Mr. Edward Berkompas.....	
	Miss Janet Boogman.....	
	Dr. Louis H. Bos.....	Second Roseland, Chicago
	Mr. Arthur Bosscher.....	
	Miss Beulah Buus.....	
	Miss Marguerite De Jong.....	
	Miss Henrietta Diephuis.....	Burton Heights, Gr. Rapids
	Mr. John T. Ebberts.....	
	Miss Julia Ensink.....	Zutphen, Mich.
	Miss Adelene Haverhals.....	
	Miss Lillian Heronimus.....	
	Miss Marie Hoekstra.....	Overisel, Mich.
	Miss Dora Hofstra.....	Seymour S.S., Grand Rapids
	Mr. William Hoekstra.....	
	Miss Josie Holtgeerts.....	

Field and Post

Missionary

Calling and/or Supporting Church

	Mr. Edwin Kamps.....	
	Mr. Roland Kamps.....	
	Miss Betty Kollis.....	
	Miss Clara Kollis.....	
	Mr. Bernard Koops.....	
	Miss Mary Jean Kruis.....	First, Hudsonville
	Miss Mary Kuik.....	Waupun, Wisconsin
	Miss Gertrude Oranje.....	
	Rev. Abel Poel.....	Rehoboth, N. M.
	Miss Aletta Rus.....	
	Miss Hermina Sikkema.....	
	Miss Renzina Stob.....	Alger Park S.S., Gr. Rapids
	Miss Bessie Van Boven.....	
	Miss Marie Vander Weide.....	
	Miss Rena Van Doorne.....	
	Miss Sadie Van Dyken.....	
	Miss Theresa Van Houw.....	Sixteenth St, Holland
	Miss Hattie Veurink.....	Pease, Minnesota
	Mr. Theodore Visser.....	
	Rev. George Yff.....	Sherman St., Grand Rapids
San Antone	Mr. Jacob Bol.....	
Shiprock	Rev. Floris Vander Stoep.....	Classis Zeeland
	Miss Hilda Fridsma.....	First, Bellflower
Toadlena	Rev. J. C. Kobes.....	First & Immanuel, Ripon
Tohatchi	Rev. J. R. Kamps.....	Drenthe, Mich.
Two Wells	Rev. J. B. Swierenga.....	Fuller Ave., Grand Rapids
	Miss Gertrude Van Haitsma.....	First, Zeeland
Whitehorse Lake.....	Mr. Alfred Becenti.....	
Zuni	Mr. Julius Den Bleyker.....	Graafschap, Mich.
	Miss Ann De Vries.....	
	Miss Winabelle Gritter.....	
	Rev. Bernard Haven.....	First, Wellsburg
	Miss Faye Koning.....	
	Mr. Stanley Koning.....	
	Miss Carolyn Spoelhof.....	
	Miss Wilma Van Dam.....	Oakland, Mich.
	Miss Lenora Vander Veer.....	First, Zeeland
	Miss Rena Vander Woude.....	Third Roseland, Chicago
On sick leave.....	Miss Angie Nieuwsma.....	Eastern S.S. Ass'n, Paterson, N. J.
FORMOSA	Miss Lillian Bode.....	Second, Grand Haven
JAPAN		
Kawagoe	Rev. Richard Sytsma.....	Bethel, Grand Rapids
Kofu	Rev. Henry Bruinooge.....	Emden & Raymond, Minn.;
		Third, Bellflower
Suwa	Rev. Edward A. Van Baak.....	Fourteenth St., Holland
Tokyo	Miss Magdalena Koets.....	Third, Kalamazoo
	Rev. Robert Sutton.....	Prospect Park, Holland
	Rev. Leonard Sweetman.....	Immanuel, Hudsonville
	Rev. Maas Vander Bilt.....	Coldbrook, Grand Rapids
SUDAN		
Baissa	Rev. Robert Recker.....	First, Orange City, Iowa
	Miss Jennie Stielstra.....	Second, Fremont, Mich.
	Miss Ruth Vander Meulen.....	Holland Heights, Holland

<i>Field and Post</i>	<i>Missionary</i>	<i>Calling and/or Supporting Church</i>
Gindiri	Rev. Harry R. Boer.....	First, Roseland, Chicago
Harga	Rev. Ralph Baker.....	Seymour, Grand Rapids
Hillcrest School.....	Miss Dorothy Sytsma.....	De Motte, Indiana
Lupwe	Mr. Stuart K. Bergsma.....	Bethel, Paterson
	Dr. Joyce Branderhorst.....	Ninth St., Holland
	Mr. Raymond Browneye.....	Alger Park, Grand Rapids
	Miss Margaret Dykstra.....	Burton Heights, Gr. Rapids
	Miss Bena Kok.....	First Englewood, Chicago
	Mr. William Lemcke.....	First, Denver, Colo.
	Miss Mae Jerene Mast.....	Drenthe, Mich.
	Rev. Edgar H. Smith.....	Ninth St., Holland
	Dr. Leonard Van Ieperen.....	Wyoming Park, Gr. Rapids
	Miss Anita Vissia.....	Midland Park, N. J.
	Miss Evelyn Vredevoogd.....	Godwin Heights, Gr. Rapids
Mkar	Mr. Peter Bulthuis.....	Bethel, Lynden
	Dr. Herman Gray.....	First, Cicero
	Mr. Donald Van Reken.....	Second Englewood, Chicago
Sevav	Rev. Gerard Terpstra.....	Alpine Ave., Grand Rapids
Turan	Rev. Rits Tadema.....	Central Ave., Holland
Wukari	Rev. Peter Dekker.....	Fuller Ave., Grand Rapids
Zaki Biam	Rev. Peter Ipema.....	First, Rock Valley, Iowa
	Miss Geraldine Vanden Berg.....	Trinity, Jenison, Mich.
	Miss Neva De Vries.....	Prinsburg, Minn.
Language Study		
at Zaki Biam.....	Mr. Harold Bergsma.....	Second, Allendale, Mich.
	Rev. Harold De Groot.....	Neland Ave., Grand Rapids
	Mr. Stephen Lambers.....	East Leonard, Grand Rapids
Under		
Appointment	Rev. Cornelius Persenaire.....	Spring Lake, Mich.
	Mr. Ralph Dik.....	
	Miss Elsie Vander Brug.....	
On leave of		
absence	Dr. Roy Davis.....	Burton Heights, Gr. Rapids
	Miss Betty Vanden Berg.....	First, Kalamazoo
SOUTH AMERICA		
Argentina	Rev. J. Jerry Pott.....	First, Grand Rapids
Brazil	Rev. William Muller.....	Midland Park, N. J.
CEYLON		
	Rev. John Schuring.....	Third, Kalamazoo
	Rev. Clarence Van Ens.....	Prospect St., Passaic
	Rev. John Van Ens.....	First, Edgerton

The following workers are employed in our Indian field, although not under the direct (contract) appointment of our Board:

Crown Point	Mr. Ben Henry.....
Farmington	Mr. Chee Anderson.....
Gallup	Mr. Stewart Barton.....
Red Rock	Mr. John Redhouse.....
Rehoboth	Mr. John Charles.....
	Miss Nettie Damon.....
	Mrs. Alice Hamilton.....
	Miss Grace Henry.....
	Miss Marian Henry.....
	Mr. Tullie James.....

Field and Post

Missionary

Calling and/or Supporting Church

	Miss Louise Redhouse.....	
	Miss Bernice Shorty.....	
	Miss Sally Ann Yazzie.....	
San Antone	Mr. Howard Redhouse.....	
Shiprock	Miss Bessie Joe.....	
	Mr. Sampson Yazzie.....	
Toadlena	Mr. Sidney Nez.....	
	Miss Louise Nez.....	
Two Wells	Mr. Melvin Chavez.....	
Whitehorse Lake..	Mr. Jack Toledo.....	
Zuni	Mr. Rex Chimoni.....	
	Mr. Rex Natewa.....	

The growth of mission interest in the church is reflected in the desire of several churches to be calling and/or supporting churches for missionaries to our foreign fields. The following are now on the waiting list: Midland Park, N. J.; Montello Park, Holland; Sheldon, Iowa; Grandville Ave., Grand Rapids; First, South Holland, Ill.

E. Representation at Synod.

In order that the matters of our Board may be fully available to Synod, it is the desire of the Board that the Secretary of Missions, our chairman, Dr. R. O. De Groot, and our treasurer, Mr. John Van Dellen, be given the privilege of the floor when matters of foreign missions are taken up.

SECTION TWO
GENERAL MATTERS

A. Although the year 1957 will mark the centennial of our church, the year 1956 marks the sixtieth anniversary of the commencement of the mission work of our church among the Navajo Indians. Just sixty years ago the Rev. and Mrs. Herman Fryling and Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Vander Wagen were sent out to begin the work among the American Indians in New Mexico. The sixtieth anniversary is probably most notably brought to our attention in the request from a group of Navaho Christians at Gallup, New Mexico, to be organized into a Christian Reformed Church. A veritable army of men and women have served on our Indian field and many precious souls have been won for Christ, but this year we also see the progress of the work in the development of the organized church.

B. Kobe Seminary.

For the past several years our Board has supported the Kobe Theological Seminary in Japan with a gift of \$500.00. In 1954 this was by specific decision of Synod and last year by decision of the board. This year the request has again been made that we remember the Kobe Seminary with financial support, this year to the extent of \$800.00.

The board requests Synod for authorization to send \$800.00 to Kobe Seminary from special gifts. The reason lying behind this is twofold: The Kobe Seminary is a strong witness for the Reformed faith in Japan, and our missionaries receive assistance from graduates of this school. Were the school not there, we would in all likelihood have to establish our own training school.

C. Pension and Social Security.

Last summer the Board instructed the Committee of Pensions to study the possibility of integrating social security with the Unordained Employees Benefit Plan. It was felt that the old plan did not offer benefits which social security made available and also left out some unordained workers who were not eligible. The workers were polled and all agreed to the proposition to integrate the two plans. The new plan is more satisfying to all and includes those who were ineligible under the old plan. We trust that this arrangement will be acceptable to Synod.

D. South America and Ceylon mission policy.

The Synod of 1955 called upon our Board to take over the administration of the mission work in Ceylon and South America, which was under the care of the Committee on South America and Ceylon. As of the first of this year this transfer was effected. In assuming this responsibility for the administration of the work the board faced the question as to whether the work should continue on a "loaned pastor" basis, or whether there should be an extension of the work in wider fields of evangelization. The board decided to ask Synod to express itself on the following policy, adopted by the board: The Christian Reformed Board of Missions has accepted the responsibility for the South America and Ceylon work in line with the broadened "scope of its mandate of 1912 so that our work is not limited to the advancement of the spiritual interests of the Reformed people of Holland descent, but so that our ordained representatives in South America are also authorized to promote evangelistic work among people of other antecedents" (Acts 1946, p.100; Acts 1954, p.20). The Board believes that this was one of the reasons why Synod decided to transfer the work, and therefore the Board intends to move in the direction of more direct mission endeavor and the eventual discontinuance of the "loan" of ministers to these churches.

In view of the fact that so many new elements are involved in this work and the work is new to our Board, it was decided that the Secretary of Missions shall visit these areas so that the Board and Synod may have first hand information when the matter is further discussed. It is hoped that by the time Synod meets this visit will have been completed.

E. Formosa and Korea.

Miss Lillian Bode, our only missionary on the Island of Formosa, has completed three years of service in Formosa and will after two more years be due for furlough. Her work is carried on in conjunction with the missionaries of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church in the vicinity of Taipei. She conducts classes for religious instruction and is also doing a great deal of visiting and church work. Miss Bode continues to yearn for an expanded mission service by our church in Formosa and her desire that we send more missionaries to Formosa was also given expression by the foreign mission board of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church in a letter informing us of the following action taken: "That this committee inform the Christian Reformed Board of Missions that there is a large field of labor in Formosa and Korea and that we should be happy to have them labor by our side in these countries by sending missionaries there."

The Board decided that because of previous commitments in other areas we cannot open new fields in Korea and Formosa.

F. New Zealand.

The Synod of 1955 instructed the Board to serve the Synod of 1956 with advice on the request of the Reformed churches of New Zealand for ministerial help. A committee of the Board studied the matter extensively and carried on the necessary correspondence with the parties involved. Their report to the Board was received for information and it was decided to adopt the recommendations and to send the report on to Synod as follows:

REQUEST OF THE REFORMED CHURCHES OF NEW ZEALAND HISTORY. Acts of Synod 1955, pp. 88-90.

The Reformed Churches of New Zealand sent two communications to Synod.

I. The first letter requested:

1. "That the Reformed Churches of New Zealand receive three ministers on loan.
2. "That these ministers will serve in the Reformed Churches of N.Z. for a period of three years or more.
3. A. "That the maintenance grant for one minister will be for the calling Church and his traveling expenses paid by the Christian Reformed Church.
B. "That the maintenance grants for the other two ministers are for the Christian Reformed Church, while the calling churches will pay for the accommodation."

II. The second letter contained the following requests:

1. Loan one minister to serve the immigrant congregations in N.Z., our Church to pay the traveling expenses and whatever other expenses they are unable to meet. This minister will probably serve from three to five years or until such time as they are able to obtain candidates for the ministry from the recently established Reformed Seminary in Australia.

2. Loan one missionary pastor to lighten the load of the present Dutch Reformed ministers engaged in evangelistic labor among the New Zealanders. Our Church is asked to pay all of the costs for this work.

III. A telegram mentions that the Reformed Churches of New Zealand are "requesting third minister on terms we endeavor meeting half salary and other expenses excluding transportation to New Zealand." These matters were referred "to the Christian Reformed Board of Missions in consultation with the Committee for South America and Ceylon for study and advice to the 1956 Synod, and authorizes these committees to conduct an investigation in loco, if necessary. Synod instructs these committees to consult also with the Deputaten van de Generale Synode der Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland voor Emigratie."

The Board of Missions has endeavored to carry out the mandate. It contacted the Deputaten of the Gereformeerde Kerken.

Dr. Ralph Danhof, the Stated Clerk, informed the Reformed Churches of New Zealand of Synod's decision. He received a reply from the Reformed Church of Hamilton, N.Z. dated Oct. 14, 1955. That letter was transmitted to our Board.

In that letter the clerk, after expressing regret that our Synod did not act upon New Zealand's request because of lack of information, gives the following information.

1. The church of Hamilton desires to call a pastor. It will provide a new home and salary.
2. It requests that our Church assume responsibility for traveling expenses, if a minister of our Church is called. The Hamilton Church is interested in knowing whether there are young ministers in our Church that would be willing to serve churches in New Zealand. It solicits our assistance in obtaining that information.

In communications dated December 19, 1955 and January 21, 1956, the Rev. J. W. Deenik writes: "The Churches of New Zealand were instituted 2½ years ago. There are eight congregations, four of these have ministers. Two of them came from the Netherlands three years ago, one has been in N.Z. two years. The fourth minister, the Rev. J. A. Scarrow, came to the Reformed Churches of N.Z. with a part of his session and of his congregation. The Hamilton district is considered to be a very attractive district for farmer-immigrants."

The specific request is presented in the following paragraphs from the letter of the Rev. J. W. Deenik:

"One of the reasons why we consider it to be of the greatest importance that our churches would have at least one American pastor among their ministers is the fact that we would like to avoid as much as we can, that the Reformed Faith would be considered to be a peculiarity of Dutch people. The Presbyterian Church of N.Z. is certainly not a so-called evangelical church. The real evangelical ministers, with some inclination to fundamentalism, are only a very few, but we are convinced that our churches would receive immediately far more hearing and esteem, as soon as an American theologian would enter our ranks. That would mean, of course, that this man would have to be a man of joyful readiness to fight for the Reformed Faith.

"But what we read about the work of your men in Ceylon, and what we hear about Rev. Dick Bouma in Sydney, is encouraging us very much.

"If your committee could advise favorably to the Grand Rapids Synod, the matter of the person of the minister would arise. Do not you think, brethren, that in the meantime, that means in the months before Synod, we could start to contact ministers, and would you be able to help us by your advice and your mediation in that respect?"

IN VIEW OF THE FACTS:

1. The request comes from a sister-denomination that is seeking to establish itself and maintain a witness of the Reformed faith in a new country lacking such a witness,
2. It is apparent that the need of a Reformed theologian from our country, who is able to use the Holland and English language is urgent,
3. The Lord has graciously favored our Church with a goodly number of ministers and therefore our Church is in a position to render the requested assistance,

WE RECOMMEND THAT SYNOD:

1. Assume the responsibility for the traveling and moving expenses of a minister of our Church duly called by one of the New Zealand Churches, subject to the following stipulations:
 - a. He shall serve the New Zealand Churches at least five years, unless an eventuality arises that would make his return to our country necessary.
 - b. Should he be called by one of our congregations after five years of service in New Zealand and the call be accepted, his return passage shall be paid by our Church.
 - c. Salary is to be paid and residence provided by the New Zealand Church, as they have promised, with the Committee authorized to make a salary adjustment (or supplement) if circumstances should demand such.
2. The committee feels there should be no delay in their receiving a minister. Therefore, in the event that the Churches of New Zealand fail in obtaining a minister of our Church in response to calling one of our ministers, as suggested in No. 1, as an alternative we recommend: Synod make arrangements through one of its committees to loan a pastor to the New Zealand Churches, the arrangements to be similar to those that prevail with respect to South America and Ceylon, subject to the following stipulations:
 - a. The minister's term of service shall be for a period of at least five years.
 - b. A furlough of one half year be granted after five years of service, with expenses of the furlough to be paid by our Church.
 - c. The loan arrangement shall be renewed or continued as long as there is need.
 - d. Salary to be paid and residence provided by the New Zealand Church as promised, with the committee authorized to make salary adjustments (or supplement) if circumstances demand such.
3. Synod allow an adequate amount in the budget of either the committee or Board to which the work is assigned for the above named expenses.

SECTION THREE INDIAN FIELD

During the past year our missionaries have been faithfully sowing the Word. At this time we offer comment only on some of the major

matters of interest. Although each mission station is in and by itself a significant part of the work, the field must be thought of as one and the work as a single enterprise for the Lord. The Indians are in a period of great flux and the United States Department of the Interior, under which the reservations are administered, is trying seriously to provide education for all the Navaho Indian children, as well as carry forward a plan by which the Indians may be integrated into the American society and culture. This leads to increased mobility amongst the people and disrupts the traditional home life, so that parents and children are often separated and the Indians once leaving home are apt not to return to their home areas. That this all adds to the complicating problems of our missionaries can easily be seen.

A. *Gallup Church Development.* By the time Synod meets, the request of the Gallup Christian group for organization will have been presented to the Rocky Mountain Classis. This request would have been directed to Classis California, in line with Synod's decision, but in view of the fact that Rehoboth Church belongs to the newly created classis, it was considered appropriate to ask this classis for permission to organize. We trust that the shift from Classis California to Classis Rocky Mountain is agreeable to Synod.

B. *Representation at Synod.* General Conference annually has one of its representatives present at Synod to offer advice and information concerning the Indian field. This year the Rev. Jacob R. Kamps has been delegated and we ask Synod to permit him the privilege of the floor on all matters relating to Indian missions.

C. *Fourth Teacher for Rehoboth High School.* It was decided to ask Synod's permission to place a fourth teacher in the Rehoboth High School. Grounds:

1. The curriculum must be broadened in order that the graduates may meet college entrance requirements, particularly those of Calvin College.

2. Music courses are a necessary part of the curriculum of any mission school because they further the evangelistic purposes of the school and make an important contribution to the development of the native church. Science courses are now lacking in the Rehoboth School and these courses should be added to make a broad curriculum.

3. Any broadening of the curriculum without the addition of a fourth teacher is not possible. The present arrangement already places a great burden on our Educational Superintendent in addition to his administrative duties, and the teachers too are overburdened.

4. The recent emphasis by the government on education for the Indians makes it imperative that we have a school of high academic standard with a broadened curriculum.

D. *Intermountain Indian School.* During the past year Rev. Cornelius Kuipers has carried on his work with the students at the Intermountain School in Brigham City, Utah. Because the missionary was not resident in Brigham City and was without adequate facilities in that city, the experience at Intermountain does not give sufficient background and basis for final decision as to the continuance of or the extensiveness of the program to be conducted. It was decided that the work shall be continued for another year and that a home shall be provided for the missionary in Brigham City with facilities which will make possible further work with the students. A special committee of the Board was appointed to:

1. Consider whether this type of work, so far removed from our field, belongs to the province of our Home Missions Committee or our Board.
2. Thoroughly investigate the Intermountain School project (in loco) and report to our Board meeting in 1957.
3. Confer with the Home Missions Committee on this matter.

E. *Divorce and remarriage.* In 1944 our Board asked Synod to keep in mind the specific needs of our Indian field in any decision that Synod might at that time reach on the matter of mixed marriages. Now that this Synod is to take up the question of divorce and remarriage and this issue is of great concern to those who are doing mission work amongst the Indians (and also elsewhere) the Indian General Conference has adopted the following, which we call to the attention of Synod:

"The Indian General Conference in considering the matter of organized churches on the Indian Field is confronted with the problem of divorce and remarriage. The missionaries on the Indian field are apprehensive of the possibility of Synod's adopting a final position on divorce along the lines suggested in the report of the Synodical Committee ad hoc because in our opinion this position would practically make mission work by our church impossible. Witnessing to the unsaved would entail disconcerting investigations as to their marriage status and many members now on believers rolls would not qualify for membership in our churches. After a study of this question as it pertains to the natives we present the following to the Christian Reformed Board of Missions for its consideration and approval at the 1956 meeting so that the organization of churches on the Indian Field may not be impeded.

"A. Recommendations:

1. That sincere confession be made of all sins of this nature committed previous to conversion.
2. That such persons be declared eligible for membership in the church.

"B. *Grounds for these Recommendations:*

1. Scripture teaches that true repentance and genuine faith are required for church membership and admission to the Lord's table. (Mark 1:15; Luke 13:3,5; Acts 2:38,41; Acts 26:20; Rev. 2:5; John 1:12,13; Acts 16:33; Acts 13:39; Acts 8:37,38.)

2. There is no Scriptural demand that one guilty of the sin of divorce and remarriage, though repentant, should be excluded from the fellowship of the church, though the sinful condition of many of the cities where Paul organized churches would lead us to expect that such demands would have been made."

It is the desire of our Board that Synod take note of this report and decision of our missionaries on the Indian field and that in the decisions to be made with reference to these issues, the needs of our mission fields be remembered.

F. *Star Lake.* For many years the Star Lake area has been a part of the active mission field amongst the Navaho Indians. It was considered part of the Crown Point area. Because of the paucity of Indians in the area and the lack of sufficient water supply, it was decided to discontinue the work at Star Lake, and the Board has authorized our business manager to dispose of the property, especially so since the building on the property was in a state of terrible disrepair. The neighboring community of White Horse Lake will be under the direction of Mr. Alfred Becenti, who recently graduated from the Cook Christian Training School, and who for many years worked with the Rev. J. Van Bruggen at Crown Point.

G. *Ford Foundation.* During the course of the past year the Ford Foundation made an offer of \$10,000 to be used for the Rehoboth Hospital. After consultation with the medical staff at Rehoboth and with Indian General Conference, it was decided to accept the offer and to use \$3,500 for improving the pediatric section of the hospital, and the remaining \$6,500 to provide additional lodging for the hospital staff.

H. *Relocation of missionaries.* The pressing need for someone to occupy the Beautiful Mountain area led to a shift of some of our missionaries. Mr. and Mrs. Edward Henry will take up the work at Beautiful Mountain after six years of service at Nahaschitty. They are to live in a trailer house at this place where we already have a chapel, and will carry on the school work that is open to them and call on the hogans in that extensive field. The Rev. and Mrs. John B. Swierenga have been assigned to work in Nahaschitty after eleven years of service in Two Wells. The Board is seeking a replacement for Two Wells.

SECTION FOUR
JAPAN

During the latter part of June the Board is expecting to have a conference with five of our experienced Japan missionaries. Rev. Henry

Bruinooge and Rev. Edward Van Baak are nearing the close of their furlough and this coming summer will return to Japan for the commencement of a second term of service in the land of the rising sun. Miss Magdalena Koets is due for furlough in June. The Rev. Richard Sytsma and Rev. Robert Sutton are due for furlough this coming winter, but because of the great importance of establishing a clear and workable policy in Japan, it was decided to ask the last two mentioned missionaries to come home a few months early, prior to the departure of the first two mentioned, so that all our experienced missionaries can meet in joint session with the Board to discuss the work together. There are several questions which need rather definitive answers if the work is to be carried forward with the minimum of misunderstanding and with the maximum of effectiveness.

The Japan field is still a wide open door for missions and the Board has decided to issue calls for two more ordained missionaries to join the present staff of seven. The Rev. Leonard Sweetman and Rev. Maas Vander Bilt are still engaged in language study and will continue this for the coming year.

One of the difficult problems facing the missionaries on the field is the severe income tax levied by the Japanese government on all foreigners. At present the missionary living costs are already high in Japan, necessitating a subsidy. The tax picture is still uncertain, but the pressure is on for a very high tax rate on missionaries and all foreign residents. Since the matter is not at this time clearly defined we are not able to determine what the exact pattern will be. The Board, however, has decided that it must face the following issues. Shall we send missionaries if taxation is extreme? The reply of the Board has been that we cannot withhold missionaries because of the tax factor at this time, certainly not since we believe that the Lord has sent us to carry forward his work in Japan. A second matter relates to the financial burden which our missionaries face as they serve in Japan. To spare the missionaries of this impending burden, the Board has decided to meet the situation by the following regulation: Our missionaries in Japan shall be in the same position as they would be if employed in the United States, therefore the Board proposes to pay the difference between each individual missionary's income tax in Japan and what it would have been in the United States.

SECTION FIVE

SUDAN

The rapid expansion of our Sudan work is probably the matter of most importance to be brought to the attention of Synod with reference to Nigeria. This growth will most likely continue for some time, and is due to our church adopting the Tiv mission field in addition to what we already had. Until 1950 our work was conducted exclusively

with Hausa speaking people, although among several tribes. In 1950 we took over the work among the Tiv people, who are living in the territory east of the Katsina Ala River. This was at the request of the Dutch Reformed Church Mission. In 1954, by decision of Synod and at the invitation of the D.R.C.M., we extended our range of mission effort to the Tiv west of the Katsina Ala River with the understanding that the D.R.C.M. was to move out and we take over their work in the course of the next ten or fifteen years. This work is a challenging call, as the Tiv tribe numbers 800,000 and is an aggressive and responsive people. The opinion seems to prevail amongst our missionaries that we will have to assume full responsibility for the work in about five years. One of the questions confronting us is that of employing the missionaries of the D.R.C.M. There are some which may desire strongly to remain in the work amongst the Tiv people, and we as a responsible mission must face the fact that when we take over we will need more missionaries than we can ourselves place in the field in such short a time. Especially will it be necessary to have trained missionaries to continue the work at its present level. The Nigerian General Conference has been given advice on many matters relating to the transfer of the Tiv work and committees from our mission and the D.R.C.M. are working together seeking to set a plan of procedure which will be acceptable to our church and that of the church in South Africa, and be propitious for the furtherance of the cause.

In the Hausa speaking area we are now working in close fellowship and cooperation with the newly established church known to us as the Church of Christ in the Sudan, Benue Province. This church now has eight congregations and is very eager for close association with our church as the mother church through which, by the good providence of God, she came into being. There continues to be but one ordained minister within this church from amongst the nationals, but hope springs warmly in the hearts of our missionaries, as well as the people in Nigeria, that soon more men will be ordained and available to the congregations. To this end considerable effort is put forth by our mission to cultivate courses in spiritual training for the more promising students. The Rev. and Mrs. E. H. Smith have been active in this work to prepare evangelists and pastors.

In the Tiv area there are no ordained nationals as yet, but four young men have been receiving training and this year there is great rejoicing in the Tiv church since these men are expected to pass their examinations and be admitted to the regular ministry. This event will be one of signal importance and would be worthy of special attention on the part of Synod. It means that our work in the Tiv area also will be carried forward in close association with a church which has come to the point of having a ministry of her own.

Since the last session of Synod there has been a considerable increase in mission staff in Nigeria. The following have been added: Miss Ruth Vander Meulen, Rev. and Mrs. Rits Tadema, Rev. and Mrs. Harold De Groot, Mr. and Mrs. William Lemcke, Rev. and Mrs. Cornelius Persenaire, Mr. and Mrs. Stephen Lambers, Mr. and Mrs. Harold Bergsma, Mr. and Mrs. Peter Bulthuis, Dr. Harry R. Boer, Dr. Len Van Ieperen, Miss Elsie Vander Brug, and Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Dik. Miss Vander Brug and Mr. Dik were appointed at our annual Board meeting and will be leaving for Africa this coming summer.

The calling of more ordained missionaries has been held up until we know more particularly what the development will be with reference to the continued services of some of the missionaries of the D.R.C.M.

We are still looking for more nurses. The Board has appointed Mr. Lawrence Den Besten as doctor, but he will not be able to enter the field until the early part of 1958. With the return of Dr. Joyce Branderhorst on furlough it became necessary to secure help from outside our own church and we are grateful for the willingness of Dr. Len Van Ieperen to go to Nigeria for one term. At the time of his appointment he was a confessing member of the Gereformeerde Kerk in the Netherlands, but is now a member of the Christian Reformed Church. He had his medical training in the Netherlands with some graduate study at the Memorial Hospital, Worcester, Mass.

We were deeply saddened to learn last fall that Dr. Herman Gray had to return to the United States a few months prior to the completion of his regular term because of illness. He is currently in the Hinsdale Sanatorium, but we are hopeful that by the time Synod is in session he may have been permitted to leave the sanatorium. He continues in the hope, as we do also, that he will recover his strength to return to the field of work which has the love of his heart.

Hillcrest School. The Board has recently appointed Miss Elsie Vander Brug as a teacher in the Hillcrest school. This school is located in Jos, Nigeria and is a joint program of several missionary groups, all Protestant Orthodox Christians. Considerable discussion has centered on the question whether we should set up a school of our own or whether we should have the children of our missionaries in Hillcrest School, and it was finally decided to enter into the joint program with the understanding that we have a teacher of our own in the school and that we seek to secure a piece of property conveniently close to the school for a home of our own for the children. We now have the teacher, but we have not yet been able to secure the piece of property for the proposed children's home. Efforts for this goal continue.

Gindiri. Not a great deal as yet can be said about the theological education to be carried forward at Gindiri under the instruction of Dr. Harry Boer. The past half year has been mostly of an exploratory nature. Mr. Boer has made a study of theological training being given by other missions to determine whether there would be students coming from these missions and what the level of preparatory training would be. Mr. Boer has also served to instruct the evangelists class at Lupwe, which had been begun by Rev. E. H. Smith who is now on furlough. The further planning of the Gindiri theological school is still in process. It should be borne in mind that Dr. Boer is a missionary from our church and is serving as a member of the Nigerian General Conference. He is in close association always with our own mission and his work and proposals are subject to conference review and judgment.

Educational policy. The decision of the Synod of 1953 "that education on the mission field be restricted as much as possible to a literacy program in keeping with the performance of the evangelistic task—viz, the direct oral and written transmission of the gospel, and the encouragement of native covenantal schools" has been a source of great concern to our missionaries on the Indian field and in Nigeria. Synod gave concession to the Indian field in view of its history to have the school program in Rehoboth and Zuni continue, but as a matter of fact the educational involvements in Nigeria are actually also beyond what may be classified as "literacy training."

By decision of the Board the educational program in Nigeria has been continued on the lower level (junior and senior primary—comparable to our grammar school). We have also engaged in teacher training classes, but now the request faces us to provide teachers also for the higher education comparable to our high school. The appeal has come from the churches which feel the great need for further education of their youth. The importance of such education for the future of the church community cannot be questioned, but the Board is mindful of the need to cultivate covenant mindedness. Our missionaries too are deeply conscious of this need and are striving to bring about a covenant mindedness with reference to education. A proposal has been given to the church that it try to provide teachers for the lower levels of education and that as they do so we will yield our white teachers for service in the upper levels. This would not unduly multiply our number of white teachers and would serve as an inducement to the native church to get behind her own educational needs. It should be remembered that all this does not entail questions about school buildings, since these are not supplied by our church.

SECTION SIX

CEYLON, ARGENTINA AND BRAZIL

Since the Christian Reformed Board of Missions has so recently taken over the work of the committee formerly in charge of the South America and Ceylon work, there is little that can as yet be written. The Rev. William Muller returned to Brazil in the fall of 1955 to resume his work. At the last session of Classis Buenos Aires the Rev. Jerry Pott was assigned to work in the Mar del Plata area until such a time as a missionary arrives from the United States. After the Secretary's visit to South America we will have a more complete report on the work and specific recommendations concerning further effort.

In Ceylon Rev. John Schuring, Rev. Clarence Van Ens and Rev. John Van Ens are ministers in the Dutch Reformed Church. The Rev. John Van Ens is presently home on furlough. The former brethren are carrying on the work of shepherding the flock, of instructing the youth not only in catechism but also in the Bible institute courses which have been established, and in carrying forward mission work amongst those outside the church. The presence of Rev. John Van Ens in our midst will enable us to secure further light on the work and the visit of the Secretary will also provide information which will enable the Board to more clearly understand the work facing us.

The calling of a fourth man for Ceylon and the sending of a missionary to Mar del Plata, as authorized by the Synod of 1955, have not been carried out. This is due to the fact that there was considerable ambiguity in the mind of the Board as to the specific assignment to be given. We trust this uncertainty may soon be removed and that we may be able to go forward with clear understanding of the task to be carried on.

At the present time there are two young men from Ceylon studying at Calvin College and one at Calvin Seminary. All three are preparing themselves for the ministry and will eventually return to Ceylon. Mr. Ananda Perara, who is a junior in the seminary, has been supported from the budget formerly set up by the South America and Ceylon Committee. This arrangement continues with the Christian Reformed Board of Missions. The other two brethren have been given support through the same committee, but this was not in the budget. The funds were raised through grants from several of our classes from their student funds. It is the request of our Board that these two college students be referred by Synod to the Committee on Sponsorship of Foreign Students.

SECTION SEVEN FINANCIAL MATTERS

A. TREASURER'S REPORT.

The following are concise statements of receipts and disbursements

and balance sheets of the various funds at the close of December 31, 1955, subject to final verification by the auditor. A detailed account of all transactions will be presented to the Budget Committee of Synod.

COMPARATIVE SUMMARY OF CASH RECEIPTS AND DISBURSEMENTS

Mission Operating Fund

RECEIPTS:

	Year Ended December 31,	
	1955	1954
Classical Quotas	\$ 532,208	\$ 576,067
For Salaries	146,598	129,236
Rehoboth:		
Hospital operation	24,354	19,279
Other operations	13,315	12,286
Other stations	2,074	1,745
Miscellaneous Income	6,787	2,621
	\$ 725,331	\$ 741,234

DISBURSEMENTS:

Administration	\$ 35,648	\$ 31,802
Mission Fields:		
Indian	372,820	387,229
Sudan	159,324	117,602
Japan	61,375	39,310
Formosa	4,225	4,782
South India	3,620	26,492
General	19,124	23,341
	\$ 656,136	\$ 630,558
Excess of Operating Receipts over Disbursements...	\$ 69,195	\$ 110,676
Changes in asset and liability accounts which effect cash receipts and disbursements either directly or indirectly:		
Add: Increase in South America, Ceylon and scholarship funds	10,586	2,160
Decrease in notes and accounts receivable...	2,200	.....
Decrease in prepaid budget and salaries — Sudan .....	.....	7,756
Increase in insurance and depreciation reserves .....	.....	7,282
Other — Net	2,000	1,633
	\$ 83,981	\$ 129,507
Less: Increase in Michigan National Bank certificate	\$ 100,000	\$ 50,000
Increase in other investments and petty cash funds	8,126	4,556
Increase in prepaid budget and salaries — Sudan	4,366	.....

Elimination of fire insurance reserves	23,237	.....
Increase in notes and accounts receivable.....	.....	3,204
	\$ 135,729	\$ 57,760
Excess of cash receipts over Cash Disbursements....	\$ (51,748)	\$ 71,747
Cash balance beginning of year.....	319,648	247,901
Cash balance end of year.....	\$ 267,900	\$ 319,648

Designated and Special Funds

	Year Ended December 31,	
	1955	1954
RECEIPTS:		
Designated	\$ 51,894	\$ 45,030
Non-Designated	36,951	45,286
Sale of Assets	7,680	19,872
Total	\$ 96,525	\$ 110,188
DISBURSEMENTS:		
From current receipts	\$ 56,784	\$ 62,360
From held funds	16,093	18,277
From earmarked funds	11,914	53,591
Total	\$ 84,791	\$ 134,228
Excess of cash receipts over cash disbursements before purchase of additional securities	\$ 11,734	\$ 24,040
Purchase of Michigan National Bank certificates.....	.....	45,000
Net excess of cash receipts over Cash Disbursements	\$ 11,734	\$ (69,040)
Cash balance beginning of period	15,146	84,186
Cash balance end of period	\$ 26,880	\$ 15,146

Annuity Fund

	Year Ended December 31,	
	1955	1954
RECEIPTS:		
Annuity gifts	\$ 1,500	\$
Interest	76	43
Total	\$ 1,576	\$ 43
DISBURSEMENTS:		
Purchase of Michigan National Bank certificates....	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000
Payment to Special Gift fund upon cancellation of annuity certificates by donor .....	.....	1,175
Annuity payments	329	336
	\$ 1,329	\$ 2,511

Excess of cash receipts over cash disbursements.....\$	247	\$ (2,468)
Cash balance beginning of period	3,779	6,247
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Cash balance end of period	\$ 4,026	\$ 3,779

CONDENSED COMPARATIVE BALANCE-SHEET DATA

	DEBITS	
	December 31,	
	1955	1954
Cash on deposit	\$ 298,780	\$ 338,574
Petty cash at stations	16,525	12,055
Receivables	15,527	21,794
Inventories	7,115	7,746
United States Government Securities	108,886	108,886
Michigan National Savings Certificates	197,000	96,000
Marketable Securities	30,980	20,480
Prepayments	25,416	21,109
Land and buildings	843,754	841,945
Furniture and equipment	297,801	216,810
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	\$1,841,784	\$1,685,399

CREDITS		
Current liabilities	\$ 8,200	\$ 419
Reserve for depreciation	400,328	360,440
Unexpended balances in special funds	154,732	180,025
Surplus	1,278,524	1,144,515
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	\$1,841,784	\$1,685,399

COMPARATIVE STATEMENT OF CASH RECEIPTS AND DISBURSEMENTS

Pension Fund

RECEIPTS:

	Year Ended December 31,	
	1955	1954
Mission board contribution	\$ 12,000	\$ 17,955
Employees contribution	7,048	6,961
Interest on Investments	2,799	2,178
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total	\$ 21,847	\$ 27,094

DISBURSEMENTS:

Purchase of U. S. Savings Bonds	\$ 13,000	\$ 23,000
Termination payments to employees	3,867	1,194
Pension and death benefit payments	2,805	2,566
Interest and other expenses	190	82
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total	\$ 19,862	\$ 26,842

Excess cash receipts over cash disbursements.....	\$ 1,985	\$ 252
Cash balance beginning of period	1,172	920
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Cash balance end of period	\$ 3,157	\$ 1,172

Relief Fund

RECEIPTS:

From churches	\$ 12,430	\$ 11,619
Interest on investments	614	173
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	\$ 13,044	\$ 11,792

DISBURSEMENTS:

Purchase of U. S. Savings Bonds	\$ 13,000	\$ 18,000
Benefit payments	150	69
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	\$ 13,150	\$ 18,069

Excess of Disbursements over Receipts	\$ 106	\$ 6,277
Cash balance beginning of period	2,326	8,603
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Cash balance end of period	\$ 2,220	\$ 2,326

CONDENSED COMPARATIVE BALANCE-SHEET DATA

Pension Fund

DEBITS

	December 31, 1955	1954
Cash on deposit	\$ 3,157	\$ 1,172
United States Government Securities	115,000	102,000
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	\$118,157	\$103,172

CREDITS

Employees reserve fund	\$ 28,584	\$ 25,403
Surplus	89,573	77,769
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	\$118,157	\$103,172

Relief Fund

DEBITS

Cash on deposit	\$ 2,220	\$ 2,327
United States Government Securities	33,500	20,500
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	\$ 35,720	\$ 22,827

CREDITS

Reserve	\$ 35,720	\$ 22,827
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B. BUDGETS.

1. *Special Requests for 1956.* In addition to the budget allowed by Synod of 1955 for the year 1956, other needs have arisen which the

Board feels are necessary and should be allowed by Synod. We request approval for the following expenditures which must be taken from funds on hand at the beginning of 1956:

From Operating Funds

GENERAL

Part time office help	\$ 2,000.00
New Bookkeeping Machine	4,100.00
Salary Adjustments	6,000.00

INDIAN FIELD

General	— Ted Tibboel Rent	840.00
	— Summer student pulpit supply	2,000.00
Brigham City	— Additional rent	400.00
Carisso	— Merit and family increase, interpreter...	110.00
	— Additional pickup expense	200.00
Crown Point	— Merit increase, native helper	60.00
	— Sunday School Papers	140.00
Farmington	— Plumbing improvements, manse	200.00
Red Rock	— Study on back porch	500.00
	— Additional pickup expense	200.00
Rehoboth Field Pastor	— Additional salary, interpreter	730.00
Indian Village	— 900 extra miles at 6c	54.00
Rehoboth Industrial	— Additional replacing 4" Steam Line.....	3,500.00
	— Improvements Central Heating Plant...	1,500.00
	— Commissary increase	3,000.00
Rehoboth School	— Replacing three typewriters	480.00
San Antone	— Replace Water Heater	135.00
Shiprock	— Merit increase, interpreter	60.00
	— Additional mileage, missionary	75.00
	— Additional mileage, Bible woman	75.00
Two Wells	— Merit increase, interpreter	60.00
	— Additional jeep to station wagon trade-in	700.00
Zuni	— Merit increase, native workers	105.00
JAPAN	— Additional for furloughs and board meeting	13,200.00

Total from Operating Funds\$40,424.00

From Special Gifts Funds

Carisso	— Chapel at Beclabito	\$ 5,500.00
Indian Village	— Chapel	10,000.00

Total from Special Gifts Funds.....\$15,500.00

2. *Budget Requests for 1957.* A complete detailed list of budget requests for 1957 will be submitted to the officers of Synod and to members of its budget committee when Synod meets. A summary of these requests follows:

a. Operating Budget:

Administrative, General, and Promotion	\$ 80,360.00
Indian	378,797.00

Formosa	7,300.00
Japan	117,900.00
Sudan	237,280.00
South America and Ceylon	84,440.00
Salary Adjustments	10,000.00

\$916,077.00

Less Expected Contributions for Salaries..... 159,000.00

\$757,077.00

Reduction of Working Funds 68,057.00

Net balance for Quota \$689,020.00

46,855 families — Quota per family \$ 14.86

Quota	1956	1957
Indian and Foreign	\$13.46	\$13.29
South America and Ceylon	1.40	1.57
	\$14.86	\$14.86

In addition to the \$50,000 deducted from Surplus in 1956 the working fund will be reduced as follows:

Special Requests for 1956 \$ 39,424.00

Requested Carry-overs 23,719.00

Deducted from 1957 Budget Requests 68,057.00

Expected Shortage in Receipts from Classes 65,000.00

\$196,200.00

Thus, if 1956 and 1957 budgets are fully spent, our working funds will be reduced by \$246,200.00.

b. Special Requests for 1957 from Special Gifts Funds:

INDIAN FIELD	
Carisso	— Enlargement of chapel.....\$ 6,600.00
Rehoboth	— Rebuilt laundry mangle 5,000.00
JAPAN	— Two homes 30,000.00
	— Mission equipment 1,000.00
	— Two cars 5,600.00
SUDAN	— Radio work 4,000.00
	— Tiv guest house furnishings 560.00
	— Hillcrest Boarding School 9,000.00
	— Two homes 7,000.00
	— Two cars 5,800.00
	— Takum Hospital 25,000.00

Total special gifts requests for 1957..\$ 99,560.00

SECTION EIGHT

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Delegates appointed to the Board by the classes. Section One, A.
2. Election of member-at-large. Section One, C.
3. Representation at Synod. Section One, E; Section Three, B.
4. Kobe Seminary request for \$800.00. Section Two, B.

5. Approval of integration of pension plan and social security. Section Two, C.
6. Policy in mission work in Ceylon and South America. Section Two, D.
7. New Zealand. Section Two, F.
8. Gallup Church Development. Section Three, A.
9. Fourth teacher, Rehoboth High School. Section Three, C.
10. Divorce and remarriage issue, Indian mission field. Section Three, E.
11. Ordination of four men in Tiv field, Nigeria. Section Five.
12. Assignment of two students from Ceylon to Committee on Foreign Student Sponsorship. Section Six.
13. Budgets. Section Seven, B.

Respectfully submitted,
Christian Reformed Board of Missions
HENRY J. EVENHOUSE, *Secretary*

THE BACK TO GOD HOUR

ESTEEMED BRETHREN :

THE Back to God Hour Committee is happy to present its report of activities performed during 1955 in behalf of the Christian Reformed Church. The Church is urged to give its earnest attention to the materials present herein. The mandate of the Committee is found on pp. 53-54, and 69 of the 1955 Acts of Synod.

I. ADMINISTRATION AND PERSONNEL

A. *The Back to God Hour Committee.* The personnel of the Committee is as follows: the Revs. W. Kok, A. W. Hoogstrate, H. Baker, G. Postma, R. O. De Groot, and J. Zandstra, and the Messrs. H. Hoving, J. Hamstra, A. Evenhouse, G. Zuiderveen, L. Beré, and A. Van Noord. At its September, 1955 meeting, the Committee elected its officers as follows: President, the Rev. W. Kok; Vice-president, the Rev. H. Baker; Secretary, the Rev. A. W. Hoogstrate; and Treasurer, Mr. L. Beré. The terms of Revs. Baker and Hoogstrate, and Messrs. Zuiderveen and Evenhouse have expired. Nominations for Committee members will appear in Section V of this report.

B. *The Business Manager.* Mr. C. J. den Dulk has rendered valuable service as business manager. He took up this difficult position at personal sacrifice and has rendered consecrated and efficient service. During the illness of Rev. Eldersveld he took added burdens with commendable willingness and zeal. The denomination owes him a word of thanks.

C. *The Office Staff.* Under the efficient direction of the office manager, Mr. Harold Pals, the office staff has been operating zealously. The mailing of various pieces of literature, the answering of mail, the detailed labor of sending out packages of responses to responsible people in certain areas who are doing follow-up work, and many other tedious labors are being performed cheerfully by the staff in our office at 10858 S. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois. We are thankful for the selfless endeavors of every member of the office staff. Visitors receive a hearty welcome when they put in their appearance.

D. *The Building.* The Back to God Hour Building, which is a legacy of the late Mr. D. Van Eck, is under our management. A few business firms house their facilities in our building, and a rental is charged. A financial Report for 1955 which pertains to our building will be in the hands of the Synodical delegates.

E. *The Radio Minister.* Rev. Peter Eldersveld was stricken with a heart attack during the month of September, 1955. We are very thankful to report that the Great Physician was with him during his convalescence both in the hospital and at his home, and that he was enabled by God's grace to return to the air waves on the first Sunday in February of 1956. We thank our God for the marvelous manner in which He empowered our Radio Minister to return to his labors on behalf of our Church, and we pray that the process of healing will continue in undiminished fashion. During Rev. Eldersveld's illness four of our ministers graciously assumed the burden of speaking on our broadcast. We thank them for their willingness to add to their already crowded schedules.

F. *The Radio Choir.* Under the inspiring direction of Professor James De Jong, the Calvin College Radio Choir again rendered excellent service to our program. Listeners' comments on the fine music have been legion. During the year the Choir was privileged to take various tours to certain sections of the country so that listeners might see and hear the choir they learned to love on the radio. The Choir and Professor De Jong may be assured of our heartfelt gratitude for their inspiring music. A special word of thanks is due to him for his extra work when Rev. Eldersveld suffered his heart attack.

G. *The Radio Stations.* The Mutual Broadcasting System contract continues. Approximately 290 stations carry our program every Sunday. This number includes those in the Mutual Contract, together with certain stations which are not in the Mutual Broadcasting System, but which are secured on a spot basis. Some stations are being paid for by individual Christian Reformed congregations, and these congregations are bearing this burden over and above their regular quota for the Back to God Hour. We are grateful for their loving interest thus displayed in our program.

H. *The NBC Matter.* There seems to be evidence that NBC is reversing its longstanding policy against paid religious broadcasts. The decision of the 1956 Synod re this matter (cf. 1955 Acts, p.54) has not as yet been carried out. It is possible that further progress will be made in our Supplementary Report to the 1956 Synod.

I. *Foreign Broadcasting.* The Synod of 1954, in answer to an overture from Classis Pacific, instructed the Foreign Mission Board, the Home Mission Board, and the South America and Ceylon Committee to investigate the possibilities of using our denominational witness in conjunction with their mission program, in consultation with the Back to God Hour Committee. A report was made to the Synod of 1955 concerning this matter. This Synod decided as follows: "Synod declare that it takes grateful recognition of the opportunities for expanding the witness of our denominational broadcast to their foreign

countries and refers the matter to the Back to God Hour for consideration in consultation with the Board and Committee mentioned in order that a recommendation may be presented to the Synod of 1956." A committee of members of the Back to God Hour Committee and members of the Christian Reformed Board of Missions has studied this matter and has made the following recommendations:

A. That we recognize that there are two lines of radio ministry which must be kept in view as we think of the work of our board and the radio committee. We are particularly interested as a foreign mission board with that of "local contact" while the radio committee is particularly interested in presenting "a universal witness."

B. That radio ministry shall be considered the sphere of concern for the foreign mission board in those areas where the foreign mission board presently is carrying on its work, that is, in Ceylon, in Japan, and in Nigeria.

C. That all the program material prepared by the Back to God Hour shall be made available to our mission in whatever area it pleases to use it.

D. That the denominational radio committee shall refer to the foreign mission board such information as would indicate from correspondence received in the Back to God Hour office the existence of new areas which ought to be investigated for "on the scene" mission effort.

The Back to God Hour concurs in these recommendations.

The Back to God Hour Committee also brings to the attention of Synod the following information re a possible program of foreign broadcasting: At a cost of approximately \$15,000 per year, the gospel can be brought in English to an estimated audience of 100 million people throughout the world, by using the following stations: DZAS Manila, Philippines, covering the far eastern area, ELWA Liberia, covering Africa, GOA, covering India and Ceylon, and WRUL Boston, a powerful shortwave station which has a coverage over Europe, Asia, and Africa. For Synod's further information, the Back to God Hour is being broadcast over HCJB Quito, Ecuador, and HOXO Panama, and is being paid for by private support. The Back to God Hour Committee has no recommendation at the time of this report to Synod.

II. RESPONSE

A. *Mail.* During the year 1955 57,259 pieces of mail reached the office. These responses came from every corner of the United States and Canada and also from various foreign countries. It would be impossible to classify the responses with any degree of accuracy. People from all walks of life and from various faiths wrote to the Back to God Hour. Some wanted questions answered. Others told

of their own personal salvation through our efforts. Still others had criticism. Most expressed great appreciation for the presentation.

B. *Follow-up Work.* The responsibility for follow-up work is shared by the Back to God Hour Committee and the General Committee for Home Missions. Your Committee instructs the office to analyze the mail with a view to possible new fields of follow-up work by a missionary on the field, and the attention of General Committee for Home Missions is called to these possible fields, when and if they arise. Without a doubt the Christian Reformed Church could and should pursue the follow-up program with a much greater degree of efficiency.

C. *Literature.* Thousands of listeners request copies of the radio message. 174,286 were sent during the year to those asking for one or more of a certain sermon only. Adding to this figure the large number sent out regularly each month, we find that almost 1,800,000 copies found their ways into homes, factories, bus and railroad stations in all parts of the world. 80,000 copies of the Family Altar reach the homes of our country each month. Over 50 of our ministers have written materials for the Family Altar since its inception, and many expressions of appreciation have reached our ears. Many homes into which the Family Altar goes had no devotions before it reached them. We thank the writers for their excellent labors. Evidence for the desire to know more of the Reformed interpretation of Scripture is found in the fact that over 1,000 doctrinal booklets were sent out. These include such booklets as *The Sovereignty of God* and *The Covenant of Grace*, while many copies of our *Confession of Faith* are still being sent upon request. Interest in our various Reformed publications is shown in that subscriptions to our *Listeners Digest* now number almost 1,500. The Readers' Guide Series are lists of recommended books for the home, the campus, and the pastor's study, and were compiled some time ago in answer to listener requests for good books in keeping with the teaching on the Back to God Hour program. More than 1,200 such lists were sent out in 1955, and nearly 1,500 books were sold by our office. There are three homestudy courses available for our listeners, and in the past year more than 1,500 of these were ordered and sent out to them. These courses are: Books of the Bible, New Testament Epistles, and Old Testament Prophecy.

III. TELEVISION

The Synod of 1954 gave its approval for the filming of a second television series. This has not as yet been done, due to Rev. Eldersveld's illness. However, everything is being put in readiness for the production of a series of television films to be tied in with our Centennial celebration. The first series of 13 films is still circulating and has been shown over 160 different stations, all on donated time from

the stations themselves. We have found that a personal request to the Program Director of a station often results in a station accepting the film series. Therefore, if these messages on the Ten Commandments have not yet been shown in your area, a call by you may be instrumental in bringing the Gospel to the many TV viewers in the vicinity of your church. We will gladly supply you with a sample audition film to be shown to the Program Director when you call on him.

IV. FINANCES

The treasurer's report for 1955 is attached hereto, along with the proposed budget for 1957. The Supplementary Report to Synod will contain an additional treasurer's report to cover receipts and disbursements for the first four months of 1956.

V. MATTERS WHICH REQUIRE SYNODICAL ATTENTION

A. The Committee recommends that Synod thank our Radio Minister, Rev. Eldersveld, the summer speakers, and those who served during his illness, Professor De Jong and the Radio Choir, Mr. Ralph Rozema, our Agency Representative, Mr. C. J. den Dulk, our Business Manager, the office staff, announcers, and technicians for their faithful and efficient service.

B. The Committee presents the following nominations:

- Revs. H. Baker and J. H. Brink (Holland area)
- Revs. A. W. Hoogstrate and J. Hasper (Grand Rapids area)
- Mr. G. Zuiderveen and P. Stuwyn (Denver area)
- Mr. D. Evenhouse and J. Blom (Chicago area)

The terms of Revs. Baker and Hoogstrate, and Messrs. Zuiderveen and Evenhouse have expired. These men are eligible for reelection.

C. The Committee recommends that the proposed budget for 1957 and the quota of \$6.75 be adopted.

D. The Committee recommends that Synod pass a resolution of gratitude to Almighty God for Rev. Eldersveld's recovery.

BACK TO GOD HOUR

Financial Report December 31, 1954 to December 31, 1955 and comparative figures with previous year

RECEIPTS:

	1955	1954
Synodical Quotas	\$293,985.45	\$296,896.78
Churches	8,445.07	5,538.33
Organizations	16,242.81	15,603.02
Individuals	106,519.07	104,928.03
Station Sponsors	4,047.63	1,640.00
Literature	6,207.95	5,375.70
T.V.	13,192.32	6,893.15

Others	953.48	814.45
Transfer from Building Fund	297.59	.....
Total Receipts	\$449,891.37	\$437,689.46

DISBURSEMENTS:

Broadcasting:		
Mutual Network	\$189,235.12	\$205,956.74
Spot Stations & Recording	74,338.86	67,974.04
Salaries	40,768.41	34,225.25
Committee:		
Travel	2,111.62	2,179.39
Other Expenses	46.74	20.00
Office:		
Supplies	1,536.10	1,389.53
Equipment	482.99	687.90
Rent .....	.....	450.00
Phone, light & power	1,994.92	1,339.14
Other	20.00	.....
Travel	2,838.14	3,069.05
Choir:		
Music & Equipment	393.26	166.36
Travel	2,766.40	1,242.89
Repairs:		
Office	57.06	35.48
Manse	1,306.51	989.30
Publicity:		
Messages	14,483.43	15,783.08
Postage	14,174.68	12,929.74
Other Printing	13,590.08	8,446.01
Advertising	1,605.94	2,109.67
Books & Periodicals	957.65	1,517.95
Hall Rent	567.50	705.00

DISBURSEMENTS:

	1955	1954
Payment of mortgages & interest	\$	\$ 5,106.67
Release fees and other expenses .....	.....	109.50
Interest on Bank loan .....	.....	100.00
For transfer only .....	.....	154.38
T.V. ....	.....	14,433.73
Family Altar:		
Printing	38,631.60	30,197.40
Postage	8,900.00	8,750.00
Writers	1,426.25	1,110.00
Radio Bulletin	7,922.67	12,059.12
Literature	4,305.86	6,991.99
Christmas Gifts & Honorariums	775.00	380.00
Insurance	808.30	645.86
Auto Allowance	500.00	.....
Moving Expense	2,306.96	.....
Gift to Radio Minister	500.00	.....
(Hospital & Medical)		

Adjustments — funds remitted to us in error and spurious checks	375.20	179.14
Audit	150.20	132.40
	<u>\$429,877.95</u>	<u>\$441,566.66</u>
Balance — December 31, 1954		\$ 5,190.90
Receipts over Disbursements		20,013.42
		<u>\$ 25,204.32</u>
Note:		
Unexpended Reserve for T.V. in above cash balance		\$ 5,367.99
	<i>Lambert Beré, Treasurer</i>	

**THE BACK TO GOD HOUR BUILDING FUND
FINANCIAL REPORT, 1955**

RECEIPTS:		
Balance, January 1, 1955	\$ 1,650.94	
Rentals	8,375.00	
	<u> </u>	
Total Receipts		\$ 10,025.94
DISBURSEMENTS:		
Janitor's Salary	\$ 1,121.48	
Taxes	3,289.54	
Repairs	1,387.20	
Water	31.95	
Coal	905.15	
Advertising	42.20	
Insurance	297.59	
Awning Storage Service (Two Seasons)	76.00	
Scavenger Service	96.00	
Miscellaneous	8.80	
	<u> </u>	
Total Disbursements		\$ 7,255.91
		<u> </u>
CREDIT BALANCE, December 31, 1955.....		\$ 2,770.03
		<u> </u>

BACK TO GOD HOUR

Tentative Budget — 1957

Estimated Receipts	1957	Actual — 1955	Budget—1955	Budget—1956
Synodical Quotas—46,000 families @ 6.75	\$310,500.00	\$293,985.45	\$303,000.00	\$304,000.00
Churches	9,000.00	8,445.07	2,000.00	2,000.00
T.V.	25,000.00	13,192.32	-----	26,000.00
Organizations & Rallies....	16,000.00	16,242.81	18,000.00	16,000.00
Individuals	107,000.00	106,519.07	91,000.00	105,000.00
Station Sponsors	5,000.00	4,047.63	-----	2,600.00
Literature	6,000.00	6,207.95	5,500.00	5,500.00
Others	500.00	1,251.07	300.00	500.00
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
	\$479,000.00	\$449,891.37	\$419,800.00	\$461,600.00

	1957	Actual — 1955	Budget—1955	Budget—1956
DISBURSEMENTS:				
Broadcasting:				
Mutual Network	\$190,000.00	\$189,235.12	\$210,800.00	\$206,000.00
Spot Stations & Recordings	90,000.00	74,338.86	65,000.00	75,000.00
Salaries	44,000.00	40,768.41	37,500.00	42,000.00
Committee Expense:				
Travel	3,000.00	2,111.62	3,000.00	3,000.00
Other Expense		46.74		200.00
Office:				
Supplies	1,600.00	1,536.10	2,000.00	1,500.00
Equipment	1,000.00	482.99	1,500.00	1,000.00
Phone, light & power...	2,500.00	1,994.82	1,700.00	1,500.00
Travel	3,000.00	2,838.14	3,000.00	3,000.00
Choir:				
Music & Equipment ...	400.00	393.26	500.00	200.00
Travel	3,000.00	2,766.40	2,000.00	1,500.00
Repairs:				
Office		57.06	500.00	500.00
Manse	1,000.00	1,306.51		
DISBURSEMENTS:				
Publicity:				
Messages	\$ 16,000.00	\$ 14,483.43	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 16,000.00
Postage	15,000.00	14,174.68	11,000.00	14,000.00
Other Printing	10,000.00	13,590.08	4,000.00	9,000.00
Advertising	2,000.00	1,605.94	2,000.00	2,000.00
Literature	8,500.00	5,263.51	6,000.00	8,500.00
Hall Rent	1,000.00	567.50	1,000.00	1,000.00
T.V.	25,000.00			20,000.00
Family Altar:				
Printing	40,000.00	38,631.60	35,000.00	37,000.00
Postage	9,500.00	8,900.00	9,000.00	9,000.00
Writers	1,400.00	1,426.75	1,200.00	1,200.00
Radio Bulletin	8,500.00	7,922.67	7,000.00	6,500.00
Christmas Gifts —				
Honorariums	800.00	795.00	500.00	500.00
Insurance	700.00	808.30	200.00	700.00
Auto Allowance	800.00	500.00	500.00	500.00
Moving expense		2,306.96		
Gift to Radio Minister (Hospital & Medical)...		500.00		
Interest	100.00		200.00	100.00
Adjustments (Refunds & spurious checks)		375.20		
Audit	200.00	150.20	200.00	200.00
	<u>\$479,000.00</u>	<u>\$429,877.95</u>	<u>\$420,300.00</u>	<u>\$461,600.00</u>

CENTENNIAL COMMITTEE

DEAR BRETHREN :

A SENSE OF URGENCY has accompanied the planning efforts of the Centennial Executive Committee in the last several months. The Christian Reformed Church will have entered its one-hundredth year by the time the Christian Reformed Synod of 1956 convenes.

God has blessed our efforts and through His providence has encouraged us. We are happy to report that our denominational membership has been very co-operative in all aspects of Centennial planning, thus making the tasks of the Centennial very pleasant and very fruitful.

We pray for God's continued guidance in the remaining months of 1956 and beg that His blessing will rest upon the Christian Reformed Church as it completes its 100th year in April, 1957. As we look back we see God's hand; as we look forward we see God's promises. For the blessings of the past and the assurances of the future we honor His name.

Scores of persons have been recruited from throughout the denomination in the last year to participate in the 1957 Centennial events. As the year 1956 progresses, even more will be asked to take part so that we hope that our Centennial will in every sense be a denominational event.

As they plan the details of the Centennial celebration, your Centennial committees have in mind the original "purpose and scope" of the celebration as they were reported to the Synod of 1954: "The Centennial Celebration of the Christian Reformed Church has as its central purpose the recognition and public acknowledgement of God's blessings. * * * There are secondary purposes as well, however, and these also ought not to be lost from view. We wish to lead the church in utilizing this occasion to preserve, and even, if possible, to improve, the excellent denominational solidarity which has characterized us up to this point. Another purpose, equally important, is to define our heritage, by recounting and evaluating the events of the past. The Centennial provides an excellent opportunity to make clear, both to ourselves and our neighbors, just what we are and what we believe. It will thus have the further purpose of publicizing the denomination in the American environment, with the aim not of self-exaltation but the propagation of that heritage. And finally, in all humility, we may do something in the way of charting the future as a result of our celebration: in the light of the 100 years past we ought to be able to define some objectives toward which we will consciously strive in the future."

With the overall purpose of accomplishing these objectives, the Centennial Executive Committee has been co-ordinating the work of several committees with specialized functions. In addition, the Centennial Executive Committee and its sub-committees have been working co-operatively and effectively with many of the permanent committees and agencies of the denomination.

I. *Centennial Administration.* Your Centennial Executive Committee is happy to report that it has obtained the fulltime services of a Centennial Manager, Mr. Casey Wondergem, jr., until June, 1957, under the authority granted by the Synod of 1955. The Centennial Manager's importance to the organization and operation of the Centennial celebration already has been demonstrated.

A headquarters for Centennial activities has been established in Calvin Seminary building and much expense has been spared through using facilities of the College and Seminary. The use of these facilities has expedited the work of the Centennial Executive Committee and its subcommittees. Space in the new denominational headquarters building will become available before the peak Centennial requirements for storage and distribution space are felt. The Centennial Executive Committee is appreciative of the co-operation shown which oftentimes has been extended at inconvenience to the co-operating institutions.

We are happy to report that college students and other church members have volunteered at times to help with clerical duties, mailings and other such tasks, thus reducing the expense required for paid assistance.

Mr. Lester Ippel of the college staff has served very capably as treasurer of the Centennial Executive Committee and its sub-committees.

Since much of the Centennial activity has implications for home mission work, the Centennial Executive Committee has maintained contacts with the Home Mission committee, exploring the possibilities of developing to mutual advantage and to the extension of God's Kingdom a liaison between our Home Mission program and the Centennial program.

II. *International Celebration.* On the authority of the Synod of 1955, your Centennial Executive Committee has taken steps to invite delegates from sister and corresponding churches to join the Christian Reformed Church in its Centennial celebration in June of 1957. The Centennial Executive Committee and its sub-committees have laid the groundwork for an "international" celebration to mark this occasion, with the events confined as much as possible to the three days, June 12 to 14, which are to conclude the first week of the 1957 session of Synod. Your committees have spent a considerable amount of time discussing the possibilities of making this event as significant as possible for all our members in the United States and Canada and as profitable as possible

for the official delegates from other churches. In accordance with this, tentative plans have been made for a commemorative Centennial broadcast within this three-day period over a network of stations which is substantially the same as that for our Back to God Hour broadcast; for a Centennial banquet for delegates to Synod and honored visitors; and a special presentation of the Centennial pageant. Since it is impossible to make firm commitments for such a presentation without final authorization, no definite plans have been made for the details of this "international" celebration.

III. *Celebrations Committee.* Considerable headway has been made at this point toward the ultimate objective of enlisting every congregation in the United States and Canada in our Centennial celebration. Area representatives for all sections of both nations have been appointed and have at this time appointed in turn most of the district chairmen needed. With the co-operation of individual consistories, an effort is to be made to obtain by summer of 1956 a Centennial representative in each congregation. Upon the Celebrations Committee, its area representatives, district chairmen and congregational representatives will fall much of the responsibility for enlisting the full participation of all our churches in the 1957 Centennial event.

The eight areas for which representatives have been appointed are the following: Eastern United States; Western United States; Mid-West United States; Mid-Central United States; Eastern Canada; Western Canada; Grand Rapids; Out-state Michigan.

IV. *Program Committee.* In order to make the Centennial celebration of maximum value in each area, each community, and in each congregation, a comprehensive set of program materials is being developed and, in addition, several denominational and Kingdom organizations are developing their own program materials in conjunction with the Centennial Program Committee. Complete descriptions of these program materials and the cost involved in obtaining them, will be listed in a kit of program materials which will be distributed as widely as possible.

A Centennial pageant has been outlined and several talented persons are currently at work on completing pageant details. Every effort will be made to develop a pageant which can be given not only with full staging and full cast in a large auditorium but also with simplified staging and a limited cast to encourage maximum enjoyment and benefits from the pageant. A Grand Rapids performance of the pageant as a "pilot run" for subsequent presentations throughout the United States and Canada tentatively has been set for February 27 and 28, 1957, in the Civic Auditorium in Grand Rapids. Maximum assistance will be given then and later to help regional and area groups to produce

locally their own performance of this pageant. A repeat performance of the pageant is being planned for the synodical celebration in June, 1957, as noted above.

Every effort has been made to stimulate many entries in the Centennial hymn and anthem contest which is being staged by the Centennial Program Committee. Deadline for entries in this contest is June 1, 1956.

Believing that children's activities should constitute a considerable part of the Centennial celebration, the Centennial Program Committee has designated one of its members as co-ordinator of children's activities. In co-operation with the National Union of Christian Schools, a complete schedule of activities is being developed for Christian school children. Among these are essay, poster and art and junior photo contests, a children's pageant, Centennial music and lesson materials and audio-visual materials for classroom use. In addition, with the co-operation of the denominational Sunday School Committee, plans are being completed to include Centennial emphasis in all four Sunday School publications for a 13-week period. This is to be accomplished with Centennial inserts for the publications and special issues of the publications for a limited period.

One of the most versatile set of program materials which is being developed for the Centennial celebration period is a set of 12 sight-sound projects in which colored slides accompanied by recorded narration will depict the growth and development of the Christian Reformed Church in such areas, among others, as Missions, Mercy and Education. These programs will be self-contained so that they be used easily by groups of any size. The content of these sight-sound productions will be such that they will be permanently valuable and worthy of reshowing to adults and children for years to come.

As much assistance as possible will be given by the Centennial Program Committee in developing program materials for Centennial rallies to which members of the Christian Reformed Church can invite their neighbors and inform them of the Christian Reformed heritage and message.

Included in the program kit as an aid to local groups in developing their own Centennial programs will be a comprehensive compilation of facts and figures about the Christian Reformed Church, its history and its environment. A questionnaire anticipating all types of information which possibly might prove valuable in developing a local Centennial program or might be historically significant in years to come has been distributed to our churches. Co-ordination of these activities has been through the chairman of the Centennial Executive Committee and the Executive Committee wishes to acknowledge the invaluable assistance of Rev. Howard Spaan in compiling statistical material and distributing

the questionnaires and of several seminary students in compiling statistical and other data which will prove valuable to the Centennial program and to church historians.

V. *Publications Committee.* Two major publication projects have been set in motion by the Centennial Publication Committee.

First to appear from this committee will be a 1957 Centennial calendar, due to be printed in August of 1956. Original artwork has been completed for this calendar by recognized artists and significant dates in the history of the Christian Reformed Church have been recorded. It is hoped that this calendar will receive saturation distribution in the denomination for 1957 so that our denominational solidarity can be strengthened by a daily reminder of our denominational heritage.

A second major effort of this committee will be a Memorial Book to be released late in 1957 as a word and picture record of the Centennial and of the Christian Reformed Church in its Centennial year. Rev. Henry J. Kuiper has been appointed editor of this publication and major assignments have been completed.

VI. *Memorial Development Committee.* In accordance with the advice of the 1955 Synod, a committee has been appointed by the Centennial Executive Committee to devote its sole attention to the Centennial Thankoffering for a Centennial Memorial. This committee has prepared preliminary plans on which to take action after the 1956 Synod makes a final decision on the Centennial Memorial.

VII. *Promotions Committee.* A complete set of promotion materials is now in preparation for the use of local, district and regional groups in the Centennial year. These include radio programs and announcements, newspaper advertising, bulletin covers, periodical covers, a Centennial Report to Fellow Countrymen, a commemorative seal for mailings, postage meter dies, decals and outdoor signs.

In addition, an effort has been made through our church and church-related publications to acquaint the denomination with the objectives of the Centennial celebration. Newspaper and news service releases have been distributed in an attempt to acquaint our church communities and the nation at large with the Christian Reformed heritage and message.

Contacts have been maintained with the Back to God Hour Committee so that its next series of television programs will benefit as much as possible from Centennial publicity and so that the television series will as much as possible enhance our Centennial celebration.

Plans are under way to encourage state and civic recognition of the Centennial. Two major contests are planned, in oratory and photography, with the dual purpose of stimulating interest in the Centennial and publicizing the Centennial to our community and national neighbors.

In co-operation with the Centennial Program Committee, the Promo-

tions Committee plans to include descriptions and costs of Promotion materials in a kit to be available with the Program kit, or separately, if preferred.

VIII. *Timetable.* Although there is certain to be Centennial interest throughout 1957, the peak effort in program and promotional activity has been set for the 13-week quarter beginning March 3 and ending June 2. Your committee felt it would be difficult, if not impossible, to sustain a high level of activity for longer than a calendar quarter because of the time required from participants, the higher cost and the admitted difficulty in sustaining interest over a long period. The period chosen includes Centennial Sunday and is brought to a climax just before the annual meeting of Synod and the international celebration. Intra-church programs and celebrations are expected to begin January 2, 1957. All promotional, program and publication materials needed for the intensive 13-week period are expected to have been completed by that time.

IX. *Financing.* The reproduction in quantity of publication, program and promotion materials is expected to be done on a pay-as-go basis with every effort made to retrieve all costs involved. To finance such a self-liquidating program the 1955 Synod authorized the Centennial Executive Committee to borrow and denominational bodies to loan the funds required. The Centennial Executive Committee is happy to report that a revolving fund of \$63,000 has been assured by four denominational bodies (Chicago Jewish Mission Board, Board of Home Missions, Board of Foreign Missions and the Chaplain's Committee). Whether this fund will be sufficient will depend on the response of our membership to the use of these materials. The Centennial Executive Committee pledges it will order supplies as much as possible in line with assured demand. To protect the funds of the denominational agencies which have offered loans the Centennial Executive Committee is requesting "financing contingency" funds to assure complete repayment of these funds to the lending agencies. The Centennial Executive Committee is hopeful it will not be necessary to use these contingency funds, but believes it is necessary that they be appropriated to safeguard the loans which will be used as revolving funds.

X. *Budget.* Through economies and an understandable reluctance to spend denominational funds until Centennial plans had been crystallized, your Centennial Executive Committee and its many subcommittees had spent only \$1,755.21 as of January 1, 1956. To give a realistic picture of the entire Centennial project, an 18-month budget covering 1956 and six months of 1957 is here presented. Every effort has been made to prepare a realistic budget. The committee realizes that the Centennial offers a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for commemorating and proclaiming God's blessings. If the opportunity is lost, it can never be

retrieved. To do full justice to the opportunities that are present, your committee believes it will need an operating budget requiring a quota of 77 cents per family for 1957. In addition, your committee has outlined a financing contingency fund of 48 cents per family to underwrite the loans that have been authorized by denominational agencies.

As the report shows, Centennial expenditures for the first few years have been very conservative. You can be assured that there will not be any unnecessary expenditures in the remaining months.

Financial Statement, Operations from June, 1953 to January 1, 1956:		
RECEIPTS (1955 quota)	\$ 5,980.16	
DISBURSEMENTS		
Printing	\$ 679.12	
Supplies	22.40	
Postage	42.00	
Salary	875.00	
Travel, meetings	118.69	
Miscellaneous	18.00	
Total	<u>1,755.21</u>	
Balance on hand, Jan. 1, 1956	\$ 4,224.95	
Operating Budget, 18-month Period, January 1, 1956 to June 30, 1957:		
Centennial Administrative budget:		
Salary	6,300.00	
Clerical help	7,500.00	
Office supplies	360.00	
Mailing	2,800.00	
Equipment, service	750.00	
Telephone	270.00	
Total	<u>17,980.00</u>	
Celebrations Committee:		
Committee expense	2,000.00	2,000.00
Promotion Committee:		
Committee expense	750.00	
Promotion kit	1,500.00	
Stationery	500.00	
Special promotions	750.00	
News releases	750.00	
Use-Charts	100.00	
Contests	600.00	
Preparation of promotion materials:		
Radio series	1,300.00	
National radio	200.00	
Radio Spots	125.00	
TV Cards	100.00	
Advertising	1,300.00	
National ads	250.00	
Bulletin covers	1,300.00	

Cover designs	500.00	
Brochure	1,000.00	
Postage meters	60.00	
Mailing seals	350.00	
Signboards	225.00	
Church signs	50.00	
Decals	50.00	
Window displays	225.00	
Total		7,035.00
Publication Committee:		
Fees for calendar	750.00	750.00
Program committee:		
Pageant	2,000.00	
Sight sound	2,000.00	
Program kit	1,500.00	
Facts brochure	1,500.00	
Sunday school materials	300.00	
School materials	300.00	
Hymn, anthem	300.00	
National celebration	6,000.00	
Total		\$13,900.00
Total Operating Budget, January 1, 1956 to June 30, 1957:		\$46,615.00
Balance on hand, January 1, 1956		4,224.95
Required for 1956-57 operations		42,391.05
Estimated 1956 receipts		10,429.87
Deficit to be met in 1957		31,961.18
\$0.77 per family requested for operating budget	35,693.35	
Estimated shrinkage	3,732.17	
		31,961.18
Financing contingencies (this amount is to guarantee repayment of loans to denominational agencies providing financing for Centennial materials sold at cost to participating churches, groups and individuals).		
Promotion materials	15,000.00	
Program materials	4,000.00	
Publications	1,000.00	
Total		20,000.00
\$0.48 per family request for financing contingency	22,250.40	
Estimated shrinkage	2,250.40	
		20,000.00
Operating budget request per family .....		.77
Financing contingency request per family .....		.48
Total request per family	\$	1.25

XI. *Personnel.* We are grateful to Almighty God for sparing the lives of all those who have been members of the Centennial Executive Committee and its sub-committees since their organization. We are sorry to report that Dr. Henry Zylstra, a member of the Centennial Executive Committee and of the Centennial Program Committee, found it impossible to continue as a member of these committees. His advice and services will be missed. However, your committees can report they have been generally strengthened in the last year through the appointment of new members. With the report limited to the Executive Committee and those committees reporting directly to the Executive Committee, the present membership is as follows:

XII. *Centennial Executive Committee* — Dr. John H. Kromminga, chairman; Herbert G. Daverman; Prof. Harold Dekker; Dr. Jacob T. Hoogstra; Rev. William Kok; Rev. E. B. Pekelder; Sydney T. Youngsma; Fred H. Baker, secretary.

Centennial Celebrations Committee — Herbert G. Daverman, chairman; John Brower; John Hamersma; Henry Holtvluwer, Sr.; Benjamin Ottenhof; William VanGenderen; Rev. John VanStempvoort; Rev. John Verbrugge; Nicholas Workman.

Centennial Program Committee — Prof. Harold Dekker, chairman; Miss Betty Duimstra; Rev. Jacob D. Eppinga; Rev. Jacob Hasper; Prof. Seymour Swets; Mrs. Dick L. VanHalsema; Sydney T. Youngsma.

Centennial Publications Committee — Dr. Jacob Hoogstra, chairman; Peter DeVisser; Rev. H. J. Kuiper; Richard Postma.

Centennial Promotion Committee — Fred H. Baker, chairman; Miss June Bos; Miss Henrietta DeLoof; Ralph Rozema; Rev. John VanderPloeg.

Centennial Memorial Development Committee — Gordon H. Buter, chairman; Kenneth Bergsma; Jack Dekker; Edward J. Hekman; Prof. R. B. Kuiper; Bernard D. Zondervan.

XIII. *Recommendations.* In order to carry the Centennial through to successful conclusion, your Centennial Executive Committee respectfully requests Synodical approval of the following recommendations.

Recommendation A: (International Celebration). That Synod authorize the Centennial Executive Committee and the appropriate Centennial sub-committees in conjunction with the Stated Clerk of Synod to prepare details of the International Celebration to be held in the first week of the 1957 session of Synod.

Ground 1: It is impossible to anticipate all the details and to make the necessary commitments for such a celebration a year in advance and hence impossible for Synod to complete the plans at its 1956 sessions.

Ground 2: It will be too late for the Synod of 1957 to formulate its own plans for the International Celebration because of the necessary arrangements to be made for such aspects of the celebration as for foreign visitors, radio commitments, banquet and auditorium commitments and other details.

Recommendation B: (Memorial Development Committee). That Synod authorize the Centennial Memorial Committee to obtain, principally through a thankoffering on Centennial Sunday, April 7, 1957, the funds necessary to provide the Centennial Memorial on which the Synod of 1956 is expected to take final action.

Ground 1: Such authorization will be in line with the wishes expressed by the Synod of 1955, which recommended the organization of a committee to make the financial arrangements for the Memorial.

Ground 2: Such authorization is necessary to implement the decision of the 1956 Synod as to the Centennial Memorial.

Recommendation C: (Financing). That Synod authorize a quota of 48 cents per family for 1957 to underwrite the revolving funds to be provided by loans from denominational bodies.

Ground: Despite every care, it is possible that a deficit may be incurred in the pay-as-you-go plan to provide Centennial program, promotion and publication materials, thus jeopardizing the loans offered by denominational agencies.

Recommendation D: (Operating Budget). That Synod authorize a quota of 77 cents per family for 1957, to complete the preparation of plans and materials for the Centennial celebration.

Ground 1: Such a quota is necessary to meet the operating costs anticipated through June of 1957.

Ground 2: The items included in the operating budget of the Centennial are in line with plans approved in general by the Synods of 1954 and 1955.

Recommendation E. (Personnel). That Synod ratify the committee appointments made by the Centennial Executive Committee and that Synod authorize the Centennial Executive Committee to appoint new members to its committee or that of sub-committees as necessary.

Ground 1: The appointments made have been in accord with instructions given by earlier Synods.

Ground 2: Authorization to appoint new members as necessary is essential to carry out an effective Centennial observance.

Conclusion. The Centennial Executive Committee has tried to keep the denomination as fully informed as possible on developments in Centennial planning. An effort has been made in this report to present a comprehensive but brief summary of Centennial plans as they stand

in mid-March, 1956. Since Centennial plans are by their very nature in a constant state of development, it may be possible that some significant plans may be formulated between the time of this writing and the meeting of Synod. So that the Centennial will be truly representative of the entire denomination, attempts will be made to keep the church at large informed on such developments. In addition, the chairman of the Centennial Executive Committee will be, the Lord willing, one of Synod's advisers. As such, he will be available to inform Synod or any of its advisory bodies on matters contained in this report or developments subsequent to the drafting of this report.

May the Lord God bless our Church as it approaches its Centennial!

Respectfully,

Centennial Executive Committee,

JOHN H. KROMMINGA, *Chairman*

HERBERT G. DAVERMAN

HAROLD DEKKER

JACOB T. HOOGSTRA

WILLIAM KOK

E. B. PEKELDER

SYDNEY T. YOUNGSMAN

FRED H. BAKER, *Secretary*

REPORT NO. 34

FAITH, PRAYER AND TRACT LEAGUE

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

THE swift passage of time has brought up the due-date of another report. It is this swift passage of time that impels all Kingdom workers to labor with dedicated energy. And it is the same which stimulates the Faith, Prayer and Tract League to prepare gospel leaflets in various formats and to find and service workers who will distribute them.

It is with joy that a few highlights of the past year are brought to your attention. Of more interest than the sending out of more tracts than in any previous year is the publication of four tracts in the Spanish language. This was done at the request of two of our Classes who do much work among Spanish migratory workers, but availability of these tracts was publicized and the distribution has been widespread throughout North, Central, and South America.

During the year the printer which has been printing the tracts for the past nine years retired and a new firm was secured. The transition also involved a change from letterpress to offset printing with some new problems but also new printing possibilities.

The financial report will show how bountifully God has supplied our physical needs. Letters from those who have been brought to Christ or strengthened in life's trials indicate that these leaflets are being used by the Spirit. Ever new ways to use these "Silent Evangelists" are reported by the distributors.

Our requests are that Synod again appoint a representative to the board of the League, that Synod again commend the League to the churches for their prayers and gifts, and that our people increasingly use the printed page in making Christ known.

Respectfully submitted,

JOHN KEUNING,

Representative of Synod.

**FAITH, PRAYER & TRACT LEAGUE
GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN**

**STATEMENT OF CASH RECEIPTS & DISBURSEMENTS
YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 1955**

Balance on hand, January 1, 1955..... \$ 477.27

RECEIPTS

Sale of Tracts.....\$14,117.17

Donations 7,061.53

Membership Fees	447.00	
Sale of Tract Racks.....	441.05	
		22,066.75
Total Available Funds.....		

		DISBURSEMENTS	\$22,544.02
Printing	9,751.82		
Advertising	546.14		
Supplies	1,068.57		
Engraving	104.41		
Postage	2,913.59		
Wages and Salaries:			
General Manager	2,555.00		
Clerical	2,246.65		
	4,801.65		
Rent	515.00		
Artist's Fees	231.50		
Bank Charges	68.22		
Taxes	17.19		
Telephone	44.38		
Miscellaneous Fees	423.42		
Tract Rack	359.67		
Board Meeting Expenses.....	244.39		

Total Disbursements..... 21,089.95

Balance on hand, December 31, 1955.....		\$ 1,454.07
Balance December 31, 1955 consisted of the following:		
Cash in Old Kent Bank, Alpine-Leonard Branch.....	1,305.43	
War Stamps	3.35	
Cash on Hand (Not Verified).....	145.29	

Total..... 1,454.07

SUMMARY OF TRACTS PRINTED AND DISTRIBUTED

Tracts Printed 1955.....	3,115,850	Tracts Sold 1955.....	2,475,443
Previously Printed	25,559,250	Tracts Donated 1955.....	554,723
Total 1922 thru 1955.....	28,675,100	Total for 1955.....	3,030,166

To The Faith, Prayer & Tract League,
Grand Rapids, Michigan.

GENTLEMEN:

At your request, I have examined the books and records of the Faith, Prayer & Tract League compiled by your treasurer, Mr. S. J. Brondsema, for the year ended December 31st, 1955.

Since cash is received from a great number of small sales together with the larger amounts, we were not able to verify all of the supporting sales invoices.

The attached statement of cash receipts and disbursements which is compiled from the books and hereby presented, does, in my opinion, reflect fairly the cash transactions of your League.

Respectfully submitted,

PETER B. VANDER MEER.

Grand Rapids, Michigan, March 15, 1956.

THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF CALVIN COLLEGE AND SEMINARY

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

THE Board of Trustees of Calvin College and Seminary is privileged to report to the Synod of 1956 of the Christian Reformed Church concerning its administration of our denominational educational institutions. The trustees are grateful to God for the numerous blessings and evidences of God's favor in the face of large problems which have presented themselves in the sphere of higher Christian education and in the training of our ministry. The administrators, faculties, and trustees, together with all other employees of these institutions have worked harmoniously and are striving to truly Christian service in this Christian Reformed Church project.

As in previous years, for the convenience of Synod, the materials submitted will be divided into Part I — Information, and Part II — Recommendations. These two parts will be further subdivided into matters pertaining to the Board of Trustees, the Seminary, the College, and Property and Finance.

I. INFORMATION.

A. BOARD OF TRUSTEES.

1. *Membership*

A considerable change in the membership of the Board of Trustees has taken place in the past three years. Eleven new delegates were present at our winter meeting, two of which represented the new classes recently formed, namely, Classis Cadillac and Classis Rocky Mountain. The Board now numbers 35 trustees of which 26 are ministers from the various classes and 9 laymen representing the four districts, namely, Eastern, Central, Midwest, and Far-West. There has been in the past three years a change in personnel of about 30 on the Board of Trustees. The Rev. N. J. Monsma was elected as president of the Board; first vice-president, Rev. J. Breuker; second vice-president, Dr. Leonard Greenway; secretary, Dr. Daniel De Vries; assistant secretary, Dr. J. T. Hoogstra. These officers were elected at the past winter session of the Board held February 7, 1956 and following days.

2 *Meeting*

The winter sessions of the Board of Trustees required three and one-half days of work. At this meeting matters submitted by the Executive Committee as summarized by the secretary in the report of the Board, the reports of the presidents of the college and seminary,

and materials submitted by various other committees, including the Long Range Planning Committee, were included in the agenda of materials considered.

3. Committees

a. Standing Committee on Seminary Appointments. Due to the appointment of the Rev. John Vander Ploeg to the editorship of *The Banner*, Dr. Leonard Greenway was appointed to this committee to fill the vacancy created. This committee submitted a suggested nomination of three for the department of Dogmatics in the Seminary. A request also was submitted as to whether or not it should address itself to recommending candidates for reappointment to the Seminary faculty.

b. Diamond Jubilee Scholarship Committee. A report was submitted to the Board of Trustees in which it recommended that Mr. David Holwerda, graduating student at our Seminary, who intends to pursue his graduate studies at the Free University of Amsterdam, be awarded the scholarship for September, 1956. This was confirmed by the Board. The problem of applications for this scholarship as against faculty selection was discussed and the Board decided that in event no suitable applicant is found that the committee is not confined in its recommendation to men applying.

c. Pension Committee of Calvin College and Seminary. The Rev. J. Breuker was reappointed to continue to serve on this committee. He had previously taken the place of Mr. L. Beré who had resigned, and this appointment was confirmed by the Board of Trustees. This committee has completed its study concerning the advisability of separating the social security benefits from the benefits to which retired faculty members are entitled under the pension plan. The committee further has formulated an amendment to the rules and regulations of the pension fund and this was approved by the Board of Trustees. This amendment will be included under the recommendations to Synod for approval together with a procedure for payments.

d. Seminary President Nominating Committee. This committee also needed a replacement for the Rev. J. Vander Ploeg who is no longer a member of the Board of Trustees, and Dr. Leonard Greenway was appointed by the Board of Trustees to fill this committee vacancy. A trio of names was submitted to the Board by this committee as its recommendation for a nomination for the presidency of Calvin Seminary. According to the rules for this committee the Seminary faculty presented its evaluation of the nominees suggested and the Board, after consideration of two additional candidates, rejected the nomination and this matter has been referred back to the Nominating Committee for further study and if possible for submitting of a new nomination to the spring session of the Board of Trustees.

e. Committee on Sponsorship of Foreign Students. The Synod of 1955 (Acts of Synod, 1955, Art. 65) decided that this committee is a synodical committee and requires a representative of the Board of Trustees as one of its members. The Executive Committee at its meeting held August 2, 1955, appointed Mr. Gordon Buter. This was confirmed by the Board.

f. Long Range Planning Committee. The vacancy occurring on the Long Range Planning Committee, because of the expiration of the term of Mr. Henry Holtvluwer, was filled by the appointment of Mr. Gordon Buter by the Executive Committee and confirmed by the Board of Trustees. The Rev. John Vander Ploeg, president of this committee, was retained as chairman until the report of the committee and other details involved could be satisfactorily presented to the Board of Trustees. The Board decided to include this committee report in the Agenda for Synod. This is appended. Recommendations concerning the Long Range Planning for Calvin College and Seminary will be included in Part II for Synod's consideration and approval.

g. The Th.D. Committee. It was the reasonable conclusion of the Th.D. Committee that the Th.D. program undertaken by Calvin Seminary would have to be a matter of many years' preparation and would be beset by some difficulties inherent in the very nature of Calvin Seminary and her relation to the Christian Reformed Church. The committee is willing to prosecute this study further in the hopes of presenting some constructive suggestion, and the Board instructed this committee to continue its study.

h. Orientation of Immigrant Ministers. The Synod of 1955 (Acts of Synod 1955, Art. 69) instructed the Board of Trustees to continue the orientation program for immigrant ministers as was done the previous year. The Board instructed its Executive Committee to carry out Synod's mandate. This will be done in conjunction with the Ministers' Institute which is held each spring on the Calvin campus. Particularly those immigrant ministers who were unable to attend last year and newcomers to Canada will be invited to attend.

i. Seminary Scholarship Committee. A document in which the terms of eligibility and conditions are outlined for this scholarship was preliminarily processed by the Executive Committee and with a slight amendment was approved by the Board of Trustees. Calvin Seminary, under the authority of the Board of Trustees of Calvin College and Seminary, will offer a scholarship annually consisting of \$300 to a member of the graduating class of Calvin College. The award will be made in the fall immediately following his graduation to a student who plans to enter the ministry in the Christian Reformed Church. The selection of the winner of this award will be made by the Scholarship and Guidance Committee of the College with approval by the College faculty and

the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees. This committee on Seminary Scholarships was also instructed to formulate the terms of the new Battjes Foundation Scholarship which gives a stipend for each of two years of \$2,000; \$1,250 shall be awarded to the Student and \$750 to Calvin Seminary. These matters will be completed at the spring meeting of the Board.

4. *Class Visits.*

Members of the Board of Trustees living in the Grand Rapids area have visited classes of the teaching personnel, both of the College and Seminary. However, only particular attention could be given to those members of the faculties who are being considered for reappointment. At least one or more visits have been made to these professors and the reports were available and read at the time the Board of Trustees considered recommendations to Synod for reappointments.

The question was raised at the Board whether or not sufficient class visits were being made. The members of the Executive Committee are kept very busy with the business of this committee together with numerous other subcommittee assignments and a large scale visiting of all classes of the College and Seminary is most difficult. This matter was placed in the hands of the Executive Committee for study, with the suggestion that the trustees from neighboring classes, particularly Canada, Cadillac, Illinois, Wisconsin and Iowa be utilized to come to Grand Rapids for class visits.

B. SEMINARY.

1. *Faculty.*

a. The Seminary faculty has again chosen Dr. John H. Kromminga as registrar and Dr. Henry J. Stob as secretary.

b. At the convocation on September 9, 1955, three new members of the teaching staff were welcomed to Calvin Seminary. Dr. Anthony A. Hoekema, Lecturer in Dogmatics, the Rev. Marten Woudstra, Instructor in Old Testament, and the Rev. Harold Dekker, Instructor in Missions. Dr. Anthony Hoekema, Lecturer in Dogmatics, continued to serve the pastorate of Alger Park Christian Reformed Church.

c. Synod of 1955 (Acts of Synod 1955, Art. 79) decided to terminate the Lectureship in Dogmatics at the end of the academic year 1955-56 and to move in the direction of a more permanent appointment to stabilize the important department of Dogmatics. In harmony with these decisions the Board has prepared a nomination of two for the department of Dogmatics and it will be included in Part II of this report.

d. The Seminary faculty at the present time consists of Emeritus Professor Louis Berkhof and Emeritus Professor Clarence Bouma, Professor R. B. Kuiper, president; the following professors: Dr. John

H. Kromminga, Dr. Herman Kuiper, the Rev. Martin Monsma, the Rev. Henry Schultze, Dr. Henry Stob, Dr. Ralph Stob, Dr. Martin Wyngaarden; a total of eight active professors of theology. The Rev. Carl Kromminga taught as an Instructor, the Rev. Marten Woudstra, as Instructor, and the Rev. Harold Dekker, Instructor, with Dr. Anthony Hoekema as Lecturer in Dogmatics. This is a total of 12 teachers in the Seminary.

e. Professor Emeritus Clarence Bouma is still ill although at times there are some encouraging reports concerning him.

President Emeritus Louis Berkhof enjoys a goodly measure of health which has stood him in good stead during the recent recovery of Mrs. Berkhof from severe accidental auto injuries.

f. Dr. Wilhelm Niesel, professor of Dogmatic Theology at the Kirchliche Hochschule of Wuppertal-Barmen, West Germany, will, by Seminary faculty's invitation, address the seminary students and faculty on March 16, 1956. Professor Niesel is the author of *The Theology of Calvin* and co-editor of Calvin's *Opera Selecta*. He is an outstanding authority on Calvin and Calvinism.

g. At the request of the Board of Trustees, President R. B. Kuiper of Calvin Seminary was sent to the Netherlands to represent Calvin Seminary and the Board of Trustees at the 75th Anniversary Celebration of the Free Reformed University of Amsterdam on October 19 through 21, 1955. He also read a congratulatory scroll from Calvin College. He was received most cordially and had the opportunity to speak at a Netherlands radio broadcast concerning Calvin College and Seminary.

2. Curriculum

a. All prescribed undergraduate courses in the Seminary are being taught this year. In consultation with the various departments of the Seminary, the Educational Policy Committee continues a thorough study of the entire undergraduate curriculum. This is a complex matter but it appears that definite proposals for an augmented and improved curriculum may be submitted to the May, 1956 Board of Trustees meeting.

b. The following electives or graduate courses were taught the first semester: *Messianic Prophecies and Their Fulfillment*, *Problems of Old Testament Biblical Theology* by Prof. M. J. Wyngaarden; *Advanced Reading of the Greek New Testament* by Associate Professor R. Stob; *Roman Catholicism Since the Reformation* by Associate Professor J. H. Kromminga; *Common Grace* by Associate Professor H. Kuiper; *Early Apologetic Literature* by Associate Professor Henry J. Stob; *The Liturgy of the Christian Reformed Church* by Associate Professor M. Monsma; *Doctrinal Preaching* by Prof. R. B. Kuiper.

During the second semester the following graduate courses are being taught: *Problems in Old Testament Biblical Theology* and *The Decalogue* by Prof. M. J. Wyngaarden; *The Period Between the Old and New Testaments* and *The Epistle to the Hebrews* by Prof. H. Schultze; *Advanced Reading of the Greek New Testament* by Associate Professor R. Stob; *Ethical Preaching* by Prof. R. B. Kuiper.

c. The custom of granting a graduate certificate to certain of our graduates and withholding from them the B.D. degree has been a perennial source of irritation to our senior classes. After some three years of careful study, the Board decided to grant the B.D. degree to all who qualify for graduation from the Seminary. The faculty had unanimously recommended that the graduate certificate be discontinued.

d. A policy concerning the exchange of credits between the college and seminary has been agreed upon by both faculties. Publication of this material will be forthcoming in the College Bulletin of 1956-57.

3. *Students.*

a. Enrollment. The enrollment for the first semester in the Seminary was 117. Of that number 37 were Juniors, 40 were Middlers, and 24 were Seniors, 11 graduate students and 5 listed as unclassified. 5 Juniors and 2 Middlers were special students. According to the rules adopted by the Board of Trustees in session February, 1955, the Middler special students will have to spend four years at the Seminary.

b. Four graduate students for orientation studies, who have indicated their desire to become ministers in the Christian Reformed Church have, with faculty approval, been given license to exhort in our churches.

c. One student was admitted to the seminary under special circumstances by the Executive Committee. He has had training in the Netherlands and was given special permission to complete his seminary work in two years. Licensure to exhort in our churches was granted him with Seminary faculty approval.

d. A change in the rules concerning graduates from other seminaries who intend to become ministers in the Christian Reformed Church was approved by the Board of Trustees. Besides inquiring into the moral and spiritual fitness of the applicant, the Board must be satisfied that he has met the requirements of our pre-seminary curriculum or their equivalents. This takes into consideration that the concern is not only of post-graduate work in our seminary, but specifically deals with the matter of entering into the ministry of the Christian Reformed church. There should be no two-fold standard, one for our own young men and another for those who come from the outside.

C. COLLEGE

1. *Faculty*

a. New Members. The Board of Trustees appointed 15 new staff members at its sessions last year. Several of these appointees had had

previous college teaching experience but most of them were inexperienced. It is therefore gratifying to report that each appointee has responded well in the adjustment to a new career.

Dr. Carl Sinke who was appointed Instructor of Mathematics (Acts of Synod 1955, Art. 65) could not receive a release from military duty and therefore has not yet joined our staff.

b. Several members of our faculty are at present on leave-of-absence. Assistant Professor Henry Ippel is making progress toward the completion of his doctoral dissertation. Mr. Robert Otten more than likely will complete his dissertation before beginning the academic year 1956-57. Mr. George Harper is also in the dissertation writing stage having completed all preliminary examination requirements. Assistant Professor Lester De Koster is on a reduced schedule leave. He is working on a doctoral degree program at the University of Michigan. Assistant Professor Lagerwey will likewise be on a reduced schedule leave this semester, giving more continuous time for dissertation work. Dr. John Daling is at present in the Netherlands where he will spend a semester leave and work with Dr. Waterink. Four other requests for leaves of absence will be presented at the May meeting of the Board in order that the president of the College may work out arrangements for replacements and adjustments on teaching loads.

c. Appointments. Several new appointments and many reappointments were considered by the Board of Trustees at its winter sessions. Interviews were conducted for new appointments as well as for the reappointments with indefinite tenure of members on the College faculty who were eligible. Once again we were reminded of the dearth of teaching personnel candidates as the need was emphasized for necessary appointments in the field of Bible, Philosophy, Physics, History, Chemistry and English. A list of reappointments and also new appointments will be listed in Part II for the approval by Synod.

d. The loss of one of the College faculty by death touched the faculty deeply. Dr. Cecil De Boer died suddenly on November 28, 1955. He was a distinguished scholar in the department of Philosophy and also editor of the Calvin Forum.

e. Prof. John Bratt received his Th.D. from Union Theological Seminary in June, 1955. His dissertation is entitled "The Rise and Development of the Missionary Consciousness in the Christian Reformed Church."

f. Prof. Bernard Fridsma received his Ph. D. degree in German Language and Literature from the University of Michigan in February, 1956. His dissertation is entitled "Social and Cultural Criticism in the Works of Ernst Wiechert."

g. Several members of the College staff were hospitalized for illness. Mrs. Nell Ornee of the library staff, Dr. William Radius and Dr.

Evan Runner submitted to surgery. All have had a favorable convalescence.

2. *Curriculum*

a. Progress has been made by the Pre-seminary Course Study Committee and many difficulties have been removed by changes in the Physics-Engineering curriculum.

b. Exchange of academic credits between the College and Seminary can now be effected since both faculties have agreed upon a policy. The rules will be printed in the 1956-57 College Bulletin.

c. The Board of Trustees approved that a Bible major be instituted in the College as endorsed by the Educational Policy Committee. It is agreed that a Bible major may be elected by students working for either the A.B. in Education or for a General A.B. degree, with the understanding that every attempt should be made to make such a major Bible sequence academically sound in the liberal arts program. Since a Bible major or Bible minor are at present not acceptable as fulfilling the requirements for teachers certification, it was agreed that students desiring to obtain certification for teaching should be advised to take the Bible major or minor in addition to the regular prescribed major and minor requirements.

3. *Students*

a. Enrollment. A comparison of the first semester enrollment statistics for the past five years will emphasize the rate of increased enrollment at our College:

1951 — 1170

1952 — 1191

1953 — 1234

1954 — 1386

1955 — 1541

Of this enrollment of 1541 students, 578 are registered in education courses and 191 in the pre-seminary course. 1371, or 89%, are from Christian Reformed homes. The total Michigan registration is 844 of whom 532 are from Kent County and 143 from Ottawa County.

b. The student health service has been expanding rapidly and being used extensively by out-of-town students. From September to February the Health Center had had 3091 visits of which 2176 were by out-of-town students. Dr. Stanley Sluyter is campus physician and Dr. Douglas Blocksma is campus psychologist. The campus nurse is Mrs. Marjorie Monsma, R.N., A.B.

c. The Board approved of President Spoelhof's presentation of the College faculty's revision of the regulations for use of automobiles by students. These place restrictions not only on freshmen but also on upper classmen.

d. Students whose college interest is primarily motivated by social pressure for a college education constitute a real problem for Calvin College. His presence raises intramural difficulties with academic standards and adds to the monetary expense of providing college education for our constituency. New admissions policies are being very carefully considered and studied. Hasty decisions must be avoided but definite action must be forthcoming. More careful screening by high schools for college entrances, greater care exercised in pastoral recommendations, aptitude tests and College Board entrance examinations may furnish the college with some means for finding a solution to this problem of admissions.

e. Numerous scholarships in the form of free tuition were awarded to graduates of Christian high schools and public high schools (where no Christian high school is available). The General Motors scholarship and the Herpolsheimer Company scholarship will continue for the year 1956-57. These are for incoming freshmen. Keeler Brass Company again provided two types of awards — three to students already at Calvin who plan to continue at our school and three to graduates from our pre-engineering course who have been admitted to the University of Michigan. A Seminary scholarship and the Battjes Foundation scholarship will be presented for the first time next year. Approximately 120 scholarships were held by Calvin College students during 1955-56.

D. PROPERTY AND FINANCE

1. *Gifts*

a. The presidents of the college and seminary have completed a study to formulate a policy concerning the matter of soliciting and receiving gifts from outside sources other than our own immediate constituency. It is as follows:

“Our basic source of financial support should always be lodged with ‘our own’ people.

“Within that broad area of agreement Calvin College and Seminary shall:

(1) Be permitted to receive gifts from ‘outsiders’ when the donor is generally aware of what we are and what we strive to be and no ‘undesirable strings’ are attached.

(2) Be permitted to solicit gifts from ‘outsiders’ when such donors are informed of what we are and what we strive to be and without permitting unwanted restrictions on the gift.

(3) Solicit gifts only with the approval of the Board of Trustees and/or its Executive Committee. Synod shall be kept informed of large grants as they are made or contemplated.”

b. Foundation grant. The duPont Foundation awarded Calvin College another grant of \$2500 for use by the Chemistry department. Additional \$1500 was given towards the development and improvement of supporting disciplines.

c. Ford Foundation. There are no developments at this writing in the matter of the Ford Foundation grant to Calvin College of approximately \$384,200.00 other than its announcement. Determination of the exact amount which Calvin College will receive must await completion of a questionnaire which will be sent shortly to all participating colleges.

d. Anna Maris Estate. Calvin College and Seminary was a beneficiary in the estate of Mrs. Anna Maris, a former member of LaGrave Ave. Christian Reformed Church. Our share in the bequest was \$12,799.40. This was gratefully received and will be placed in the fund for the new seminary building.

e. Other Gifts. Numerous gifts were received by Calvin College and Seminary during the course of the past year. Some were designated for the general funds and others for restricted funds, such as, the Calvin Emergency Fund, the Library Book Fund, Student Loan Fund, and other unexpected funds.

f. Gifts - Policy. Since numerous grants and gifts are being received by Calvin College and Seminary, it was deemed advisable to formulate a policy concerning acceptance of these gifts and their assignment to various funds of the college and seminary. The Board of Trustees approved a formulation of this policy which the Executive Committee had accepted. When the purpose of the gift is stipulated by the donor, this designation shall be honored in assigning the gift to a particular fund. When the purpose of the gift is not stipulated by the donor and if the amount is under \$500, the business manager shall determine to which fund the money shall be allocated in the light of the needs of the institution. If the amount is \$500 or more, the presidents of our educational units are to make a recommendation to the Executive Committee as to its allocation. The Board of Trustees reserves the right at all times to reject any and all gifts. This rejection may result from a consideration of the source of the gift, the purpose of the gift, and the size and form of the gift.

2. *"Needs of Today" Campaign*

As was reported last year, the receipts of the "Needs of Today" campaign was approaching the three quarters of a million dollar mark. The flow of money from our constituency from pledges and other added gifts in this campaign continues to come in and is now approaching the one million dollar mark. The total amount received at the time of the writing of this report is \$930,222.23. The trustees are

thankful to our constituency for this continued generous giving to Calvin.

3. *Investment of Institutional Funds*

The president of the College apprised the Board in his report that occasions arise when the College becomes recipient of sizeable gifts of money which cannot be used for operational or capital expenditures for a stipulated period. To invest these under the policy as adopted by the Synod of 1936 can be detrimental to the best interests of the institution and its personnel. The Board of Trustees requests Synod that the rule of Synod that the investment of funds held by Boards or Committees (Acts of Synod, 1936, Art. 143, VI) be modified to permit the Board of Trustees of Calvin College and Seminary to invest non-quota funds as the Board sees fit with particular attention to preservation of the principal. The grounds will be outlined in Part II - Recommendations.

4. The Board of Trustees established the position of Assistant Business Manager and outlined the qualifications, responsibilities, method of appointment and duties of this new administrative person.

5. Procedure for Appointment of Business Manager and Development Secretary. These persons are administrative employees of Calvin College and Seminary who function for both the Seminary and the College. Although it is true that the appointments to these positions will not have to be made frequently, it was deemed desirable to have a procedure established for appointment should that become necessary. The Board of Trustees approved rules which apply when a vacancy occurs: notification of the Board of Trustees' members, of the faculty, a recommendation by the presidents of the college and seminary with final approval of the appointment by the Board of Trustees.

6. Centennial Committee - Loan. Since the Synod of 1955 has authorized the Centennial Committee to borrow money from various denominational boards for repayment at a later date, the Board decided to give the Executive Committee power to act in making a loan to the Centennial Committee. However, it was previously decided that before a loan was made that there should be a meeting of representatives of the various denominational boards to decide how this is to be done.

II. RECOMMENDATIONS

A. BOARD OF TRUSTEES

1. The Board of Trustees at its winter session did not make a nomination for lay Board members whose terms expire this year. Two vacancies must be filled in our members-at-large. Mr. J. De Nooyer, a member from the Central District, resigned from the Board of Trustees, and the term of Mr. J. Brouwer of the Midwest District expires. Four alternates must also be appointed by Synod since those

lected at the 1955 Synod were specified to expire in 1956. These are: one from the Eastern District, two from the Central District, one from the Midwest District. The Board will include nominations for these vacancies in its supplementary report.

B. SEMINARY

1. *Appointment.* Considerable time was spent by the Board of Trustees at its winter meeting concerning the appointments and reappointments to the Seminary faculty and also for the position of Seminary president. The Standing Committee on Seminary Appointments reported concerning the department of Dogmatics, the Seminary faculty gave its recommendation for reappointments to the faculty as did also the president of the Seminary who gave advice. Class visit reports were also read in connection with reappointments. The following recommendations are made to Synod.

a. That the Rev. Harold Dekker be reappointed as Instructor in Missions for a term of one year.

b. That the Rev. Carl Kromminga be appointed as Associate Professor of Practical Theology for two years.

c. That the Rev. Martin Monsma be reappointed as Associate Professor of Practical Theology for two years.

d. That Dr. Ralph Stob be reappointed as Associate Professor of New Testament for four years.

e. That the Rev. Marten Woudstra be appointed as Instructor in Old Testament for one year.

f. The Board of Trustees presents to Synod the following nomination for the department of Dogmatics: Dr. Anthony Hoekema and Dr. Fred Klooster. One must be elected as Associate Professor for two years.

2. *Change of Rules - Graduates from Other Seminaries*

The Synod of 1954 (Acts of Synod 1954, p. 34) received as information the policy adopted by the Board of Trustees for the admission of students who after completing their undergraduate work elsewhere, come to our Seminary with a view to entering the Christian Reformed ministry. A change of rule two was adopted by the Board of Trustees at its winter session and reads as follows: "Before admitting such a student the Board, besides inquiring into his moral and spiritual fitness, must be satisfied that he has met the requirements of our pre-seminary curriculum or their equivalents. It shall be the task of the Educational Policy Committee of the Seminary to make recommendations to the Board respecting his academic acceptability." This is submitted to Synod as information to note change of this rule.

3. The rules governing the Board of Trustees in the appointment of members for the instructional staff of the Seminary as adopted by

the Synod of 1953 (Acts of Synod 1953, p. 66ff.), in its procedure for making appointments established a standing committee on Seminary appointments. The Board of Trustees acted upon a letter of inquiry from this committee on Seminary Appointments as to whether or not it should address itself to the matter of reappointments to the instructional staff of the Seminary. The following was adopted, that the Standing Committee on Seminary Appointments is called upon to act only where there is a vacancy or anticipated vacancy and is to act in the case of reappointments only when the Board of Trustees or its Executive Committee instructs it to do so. This is submitted to Synod for approval.

4. The Board further submits to Synod that it has decided to abolish the graduate certificate and will grant the B.D. degree to all graduates of our Seminary. This was recommended by the Seminary faculty to the Board of Trustees which approved of this change. Synod should approve.

C. COLLEGE

1. *Reappointments and Appointments*

The president of the College presented a resumé of the teaching record, qualifications, and his recommendations concerning the following faculty members for reappointment and for candidates for appointment to the staff of the College. The Board, after hearing class visit reports, submits the following to Synod for approval:

a. Ervina (Van Dyke) Boevé, A.M. was reappointed as Assistant in Speech for two years.

b. Clarence Boersma, Ph.D. was reappointed as Professor of German with indefinite tenure.

c. Donald Bouma, Ph.D. was reappointed Professor of Sociology with indefinite tenure.

d. John Bratt, Th.D. was reappointed Professor in the Department of Bible (indefinite tenure was approved by the Synod of 1954).

e. Lester De Beer, Ed. D., was reappointed as Professor of Education with indefinite tenure.

f. Arlene Doorn, A.M., was reappointed as Assistant in Biology for one year.

g. Betty Duimstra, A.M., was reappointed as Assistant in English for two years.

h. Bernard Fridsma, Ph. D., was reappointed as Professor of German with indefinite tenure.

i. Alan Gebben, A.M., was reappointed as Assistant in Biology for one year.

j. John Hamersma, S.M.M., was reappointed as Instructor in Music for two years.

k. George Harper, A.M., was reappointed as Instructor in English for two years.

l. Fred Klooster, Th.D., was reappointed as Associate Professor in the Bible department for four years.

m. Peter Oppewal, A.M., was reappointed as Instructor in English for two years.

n. Arthur Otten, A.M., was reappointed as Instructor in French for two years.

o. Cornelius A. Plantinga, Ph.D. was reappointed as Professor of Psychology with indefinite tenure.

p. Bernard Ten Broek, A.M., was reappointed as Assistant in Biology for one year.

q. Leonard Vander Lugt, B.S., was reappointed as Assistant in Chemistry for two years.

r. Sherman Van Solkema, M. Mus., was reappointed as Instructor in Music for one year.

s. Ernest Van Vugt, A.B., was reappointed as Assistant in Classical Languages for two years.

t. Anthony A. Hoekema, Th.D., was appointed to the department of Bible; rank, tenure and salary to be determined later by the Board of Trustees.

u. Phillip Roger Lucasse, A.M., was appointed as Dean of Men for two years.

v. Howard Rienstra, A.M., was appointed as Instructor in History for two years.

w. Robert Vander Vennen, Ph.D., was appointed as Instructor in the department of Chemistry for two years.

2. The Standing Committee of Synod called Sponsorship of Foreign Students (Acts of Synod 1955, Art. 148 II A, p. 35) requires a representative of the Board of Trustees. The Board has appointed Mr. Gordon Buter to this committee and confirmation is sought of Synod for this appointment.

D. PROPERTY AND FINANCE

1. *Appointments*

Approval of these appointments by Synod is sought:

a. Henry DeWit, M.B.A., C.P.A. has been reappointed as business manager for Calvin College and Seminary for one year by the Board.

b. Gordon Buter, M.B.A., has been appointed treasurer of Calvin College and Seminary.

2. The Board of Trustees recommends the following to Synod of 1956 concerning the Long Range Planning Committee report:

a. That Synod adopt the new campus plan (Appended report, V, C) as the long-range plan for Calvin College and Seminary.

b. That Synod authorize the Board of Trustees to

(1) select and purchase at least one hundred acres of land for a new campus for Calvin College and Seminary;

(2) sell the present campus, provided such a sale be approved by Board in full session, and provided the Board shall safeguard the financial interests of the church and the educational program of Calvin College and Seminary in transacting this sale.

Further recommendations by the Board will be forthcoming in a supplementary report following the May meeting concerning plans for the Seminary building and plans for financing the new campus.

3. Concerning the investment of institutional funds, the Board of Trustees requests Synod that the rule adopted by Synod for the investment of funds held by boards or committees (Acts of Synod 1936, Art. 143, VI) be modified to permit the Board of Calvin College and Seminary to invest non-quota funds as the Board sees fit with particular attention to preservation of the principal. The grounds are as follows:

a. Occasions arise when the College and Seminary become the trustees of substantial sums of money which cannot be used for a stipulated period of time. Examples of this are certain endowment funds and foundation grants.

b. As trustees the administration of the institution has an obligation to protect these funds to the best of its ability. Not only must the actual dollars be preserved but more particularly, in the case of these long term investments, the purchasing power of the fund must be maintained. The second of these goals cannot be achieved through bond investment. This type of investment promises a return of a specified number of dollars, irrespective of their purchasing power at the time.

c. Many other institutions have faced this problem and almost without exception have broadened their investment policies.

Approval is sought from Synod for this modification of the rules.

4. The Committee on Pension (Faculty Plan) has studied the advisability of separating the social security benefit from the benefits to which retired faculty members are entitled on the pension plan. The following amendment was approved by the Board and it is submitted to Synod for approval: "Payments from the pension fund at Calvin College and Seminary will remain the same as established on September 1, 1952. However, each employee, for pension purposes, in the event he retires, or the employee's widow or dependent children, in the event of the employee's death, will receive the same amount of income from the pension fund as established as of the above date."

The following procedure for payments was adopted by the Board of Trustees for approval of Synod: "It is agreed that faculty members who retired in September, 1954, and are now on pension shall be eligible for payments as determined by the above amendment. An application of this amendment for them shall be retroactive to January 1, 1955."

We have sought to give Synod an account of the main matters with which the Board of Trustees of Calvin College and Seminary have been busy. Many other routine matters have been dealt with in the course of our meetings, bearing in mind that we are accountable to Synod not only but also to the King of the Church. The Board has sought guidance upon bended knee in the face of major decisions and has spontaneously risen to the singing of the doxology in praise for the evidence of God's dealing with our Calvin College and Seminary.

It is the prayer of the Board of Trustees that the Holy Spirit may endow every member of Synod with wisdom in all deliberations and decisions.

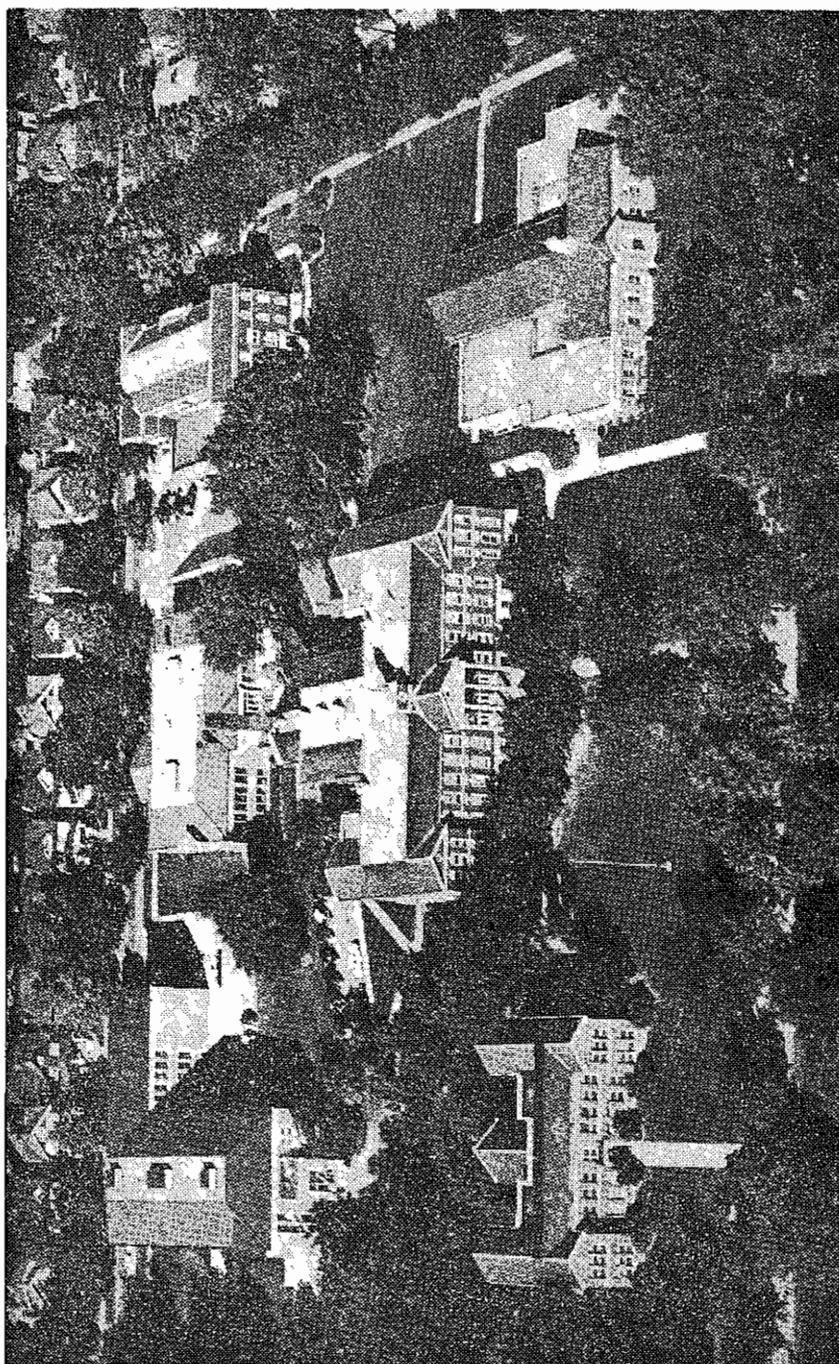
A supplementary report will be submitted to the Synod of 1956 following our spring meeting.

Humbly submitted,

Board of Trustees of

Calvin College and Seminary

DANIEL DE VRIES, *M.D.*, *Secretary*



LONG-RANGE PLAN FOR CALVIN COLLEGE AND SEMINARY

Note: Before reading the text of this report, please familiarize yourself with the exhibits appended, pages 303-315.

I. THE HISTORY OF OUR CAMPUS PLANNING

Long-range planning of an academic and building program is not new to Calvin College and Seminary. The development which Calvin has experienced from a literary department to a preparatory school, to a junior college, to a four-year college, and to a reputable liberal arts college attests the vigor with which academic planning has been prosecuted. The acquisition of a 10-acre site "out in the country" in 1909 and the erection of a college building at the cost of \$150,000 in 1915 before the Madison Avenue property had been disposed of—moving out before selling out—display the courage and daring of our early long-range campus planning. (See page 303)

The architects who planned our Administration Building in 1915 also plotted a campus plan, still extant, on which were spotted buildings for future growth. We have adhered to this plan remarkably well, despite some temporary waverings and haltings.

Features which have characterized our academic and campus planning are *caution* and *taking a second look*. Our building facilities have always grown out of long-established "needs of today." In other words, planning in all its phases always occupied the attention of some one faculty officer or group, even in the absence of titular planning committees or long-range planning documents.

Academic planning and planning of physical facilities must always accompany each other. Only controlled conditions, however, could produce a perfect meshing and an exact scheduling of the two related phases of planning. Even today, when everyone is conscious of the need of long-range planning, there are problems and questions which defy immediate solution. Such situations do not call for suspension of effort, but demand a greater concern for flexibility within broad commitments to a general plan.

The first stage in our present campus development gave us a 10-acre site on which were placed an administration building, a dormitory, a small library, and a seminary building. These were built during the years 1915 to 1932, in the order listed.

The second stage in our present campus development began in 1941. In that year, the Board of Trustees reported to Synod that "in view

of the crowded conditions in the college building [enrollment was then 499], a committee was appointed to make plans, raise money, and take steps to procure a science building."

Since that date (1941) Synod, at almost every session, entertained recommendations on some phase of a building program. The table (Exhibit B) is almost as graphic as a fever chart in portraying the delays and deliberations which guided our growth. Note well that many of the building needs to which Synod has long given an emphatic right-of-way have not even been started. Our hesitancy cannot be attributed necessarily to lack of funds, nor to lack of faith. Rather, all persons involved in responsible action felt instinctively that, bound as we were to our present campus, the immediate satisfaction of Synod-approved needs, as well as the eventual satisfaction of those needs which Synod had not considered, would involve the College and Seminary in an inflexible, money-wasting, irrevocably committed, short-sighted plan. It was just for this reason that the Board informed Synod in 1954 that, with Synod's approval, all construction save emergency remodeling would be halted pending a thorough study of our needs. Such is the present status of our campus development.

II. POSSIBLE ALTERNATIVES

Taking a long, deliberate look down all possible approaches, the Long-Range Planning Committee isolated three alternatives to follow:

- (1) Retain the present site and develop, by acquisition of and removal of structures, the area separating our two campuses (Present-Campus Plan)
- (2) Retain the present east and west campuses for instructional facilities only and build all service and recreational units on suburban land located within easy access of the present site (Split-Campus Plan)
- (3) Develop an entirely new campus and dispose of our present holding (New-Campus Plan)

In making a decision, we should be guided only by such considerations as the following:

- (1) The best interests of the College and Seminary
- (2) The best interests of the entire denomination
- (3) The best long-range approach, that is, the one which will be the least costly and which will effect the greatest savings.

III. PLANNING FOR WHAT?

We must plan for what we are and what we must become. We have now a four-year, liberal arts college, with its roots deep in the Christian Reformed denomination. This we must keep if we are to be of best service to our constituency and fulfill our mission as a college. This

is not pleading for structural and organizational rigidity. Variations can easily be accommodated. And, of course, we must and do take cognizance of the junior college movement. We must assess its potential worth, recognize and take into account its place in the educational pattern, but not abandon ourselves to it. Calvin must remain a Four-Year Liberal Arts College but, of course, must also become more than that.

Our Seminary gives a three-year theological course for the training of Christian Reformed ministers. Perhaps the traditional three-year course should be augmented so as to extend over four years. And the Seminary ought not merely to train men for the practical work of the ministry but should increasingly become a center of theological learning.

We have long passed comfortable use of our present facilities, however, and therefore we must take a stern look at what we must and/or shall become, that is, at our aspirations as well as at our enrollment.

We must strengthen our senior college work which now, in terms of course offerings, registration in these courses, and careful direction sustains an underprivileged position. However, we cannot strengthen the upper division by weakening the lower.

We want a well-rounded program of undergraduate studies, but we must also look forward to a program of graduate work. The ideal of a Calvin Graduate Center must be developed. This aspiration need not forever remain an unrealizable ideal. It can and must grow naturally, out of our situation.

Among many others, two factors in our "situation" are indispensable. First, the College and Seminary should remain closely united. This union is here thought of on managerial and physical proximity levels. Anything which would tend to separate the College and Seminary physically will hamper the natural growth of our institutions into a Graduate Center. Secondly, we need the concentration of scholars in the four-year College and the Seminary, made possible by a concentration of students, for in this concentration lies an inherent potential for natural development in depth. A greater variety of faculty specialized qualifications and of student curriculum programs results. Senior college courses, seminary electives, and graduate offerings will become possible through such centralization of academic effort.

A Graduate Center need not entail extensive physical facilities. However, sufficient flexibility in space utilization should be provided for possible later developments.

Provision should also be made in our planning for expanded services, whether that be on the graduate or undergraduate level. Though not now clearly appearing in our planning, experimental services in education, psychology, and the sciences (narrowly defined) might well demand extensive facilities. Long-range thinking demands that we do not now shut off irrevocably such possible developments.

In the context of these academic considerations is thrust the rising tide of student enrollment in both the Seminary and the College. The President of the Seminary estimates that in providing for the needs of the Seminary, when a new building is constructed, we should use a potential student population of 250 as our working basis. In a report to Synod in 1952, the College Registrar cited his projected enrollment for 1955 as 1400 students. In that year we enrolled 1541 students. With more exact data on hand, our Registrar gives another projection, in which he predicts conservatively an enrollment of 2600 students by 1970. The accompanying table (Exhibit C) and explanation furnish the data on which this "guesstimate" is based.

Add up all the factors which we have thus far presented:

- (1) Synod long ago approved several facilities which we have not yet constructed
- (2) Our facilities now are not adequate for our present program
- (3) Our aspirations, which call for development in depth, will demand flexibility for future development
- (4) An enrollment prospect of 2600-3000 within the next 10-15 years in the College, and a potential enrollment of 250 graduate and undergraduate students in the Seminary, demand expansion of facilities.

Translate these into building needs.

IV. PROJECTED NEEDS TRANSLATED INTO BUILDINGS AND SPACE REQUIRED

A. SEMINARY FACILITIES

The President of the Seminary and his faculty have given consideration to this matter and present the following digest of needs, in which the Long-Range Planning Committee concurs:

1. *Size of Building*

The new Seminary Building should be planned to accommodate a student body of not less than 250, with sufficient land provided for future expansion of the Seminary.

2. *Building Facilities*

The following facilities should be provided:

a. *Classrooms:*

- (1) Three classrooms with a capacity of sixty students
- (2) Four classrooms with a capacity of fifty students
- (3) Three seminar rooms
- (4) An audio-visual room with amphitheater arrangement of seats

b. *Assembly Room:*

(1) An Assembly Room, similar to the present Assembly Room, with a seating capacity of 250; this room should be convertible into a dining room

(2) Kitchen facilities attached to the Assembly Room

c. *Library Facilities:*

(1) A Reading Room

(2) Stack space to accommodate a theological library of 30,000 works (Proximity to Calvin College Library must determine whether more stack space is required.)

(3) Librarian's office, workroom, carrels, and stackdesks for students

d. *A Chapel to seat 250*

e. *Office Space:*

(1) An office for the President

(2) An office for the Registrar

(3) An office for the director of field work

(4) A stenographer's office and information center

(5) A reception or waiting room

(6) Office space for each Seminary department

f. *A Spacious and Well-Appointed Faculty Room*

g. *Additional Facilities:*

(1) A Student Lounge and a recreation room

(2) Storage and maintenance space

B. COLLEGE CLASSROOMS

Including the mechanical drawing room, we have a total of 26 classrooms in our Administration and Science Buildings, with a total room capacity of 1384, exclusive of "music rooms" and laboratories. To achieve greater flexibility in assigning classrooms, with our present enrollment, we really need now 10 more classrooms. This would permit us to eliminate Saturday classes. Some relief is found in use of the 6 classrooms in the Seminary Building, but noninterference with Seminary schedules is difficult to achieve.

To take care of an enrollment of 2500-3000 students, we should have approximately twice as many classrooms as we now have, unless we greatly increase the size of some classes. Even so, we would have to have at least a total of 45 to 50 classrooms to take care of so heavy an enrollment.

C. COLLEGE SCIENCE FACILITIES

We are, of course, in a much better position in supplying our needs here than elsewhere. With rearrangement of schedules—morning "labs"—we could make our facilities do for an enrollment of 2500-3000 students. There is a growing demand, however, for adequate research laboratories as our science staff increases.

D. LIBRARY

Our present library book-housing plan is sufficiently flexible to provide adequate space for 150,000 volumes, with room to expand. There will be no difficulty in circulating all books which are housed. However, it is in the area of study-hall space and reading-room facilities that we are now already embarrassed.

We are not now equipped to deal adequately with a greatly expanded service other than book circulation. As we develop in depth, as well as horizontally, we shall not be able to meet the demands with our present facilities.

E. ADMINISTRATIVE FACILITIES

Our academic and business office accommodations for the present staff and present student enrollment are adequate. However, office space for faculty members does not even exist. We should provide this type of space for better faculty and student performance. In this area our needs will increase as the number of staff members increases. At the present time we should have at least 16 departmental offices plus smaller offices for members of the department, with two or three persons sharing one office. At present the science faculty and the physical education department have such facilities.

Other office accommodations which need expansion and re-designing are stock and office supply space, bookstore, and student publications. The Health Service is at present adequate and rather well located.

F. MUSIC DEPARTMENT

To say that we have no adequate music facilities would be an understatement. Such facilities can be provided acceptably in a remodeled Seminary Building, but adequately only in a specially designed building. Included in this need are classrooms, practice rooms, rehearsal rooms, studios, and music-library facilities.

G. PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Here the need has been long recognized, and a building has been approved by Synod. We need a physical education building large enough to provide class space for men and women classes, running concurrently, as well as for a well-rounded intramural program and student recreational facilities. Outdoor collegiate and intramural athletic facilities should be planned and provision for an adjoining automobile parking area should not be overlooked.

H. COMMONS BUILDING

The Commons Building is now barely adequate. Dining rooms in the residence halls will relieve the pressure. There is a great need for conference and specialized activities rooms in the Student Commons.

I. HEATING PLANT AND MAINTENANCE

A central heating plant can be provided for the new construction on the East Campus. It can be made to supply the buildings on the old campus only at great expense. This building should also include a capacious work- and storeroom area for the maintenance department. At present, the maintenance department has no headquarters.

J. PARKING FACILITIES

The limited available automobile parking space, both on the campus and in the surrounding area, has produced an endless series of problems and difficulties. Rigid limitations placed on automobile ownership and operation have given some relief, but only in a small degree. Added parking space must be provided no matter which of the three campus plans prevails.

K. CHAPEL

Our planning should also include a chapel, with a seating capacity of approximately 2,000 persons. Music and speech facilities could be provided in such a building if a chapel would receive a priority of construction over either a new music building or a remodeled Seminary Building.

L. RESIDENCE HALLS FOR MEN AND WOMEN

At present we are providing for 70 young men in the Dorm and for 130 young women in the nine guild houses. If we assume that 50% of our students are from out of town and that 75% of that number should be in college-operated facilities, the need for the next years is as follows:

YEAR	ENROLLMENT	OUT OF TOWN STUDENTS	NUMBER NEEDING COLLEGE HOUSING
1955	1541	770	576
1960	1786	893	669
1965	2246	1123	840
1970	2618	1309	981

The system of guild halls which we have established as an emergency measure is working very well. The guild halls are a valuable case-study of what can be done with small housing units. However, their operation is expensive.

To acquire the 52 pieces of property now located between the two campuses and to operate them as guild halls on a self-liquidating basis would necessitate either high rents or long years (40 years) of operation. If we wish to continue to enjoy the advantages of the small housing units, which are always more expensive to operate than large units, we can secure this less expensively by employing new construction than old.

(See Plot Plan of Calvin Area—Exhibit D) (See page 314)

SUMMARY

Translated into needs, the following units should be considered:

1. A Centennial Memorial Seminary, which the Church has designated as a fitting memorial. When a Seminary Building is built, the old building can be used for a music building, if the college remains on the present campus.
2. Men's and Women's Residence Halls — The number needed depends upon the size of each unit to be built.
3. A music building designed from the ground up for this purpose will be far more suitable than a remodeled job costing approximately \$100,000 (architect's estimate).
4. A physical education building, which already has the approval of Synod. Also, outdoor collegiate and intramural athletic facilities are needed.
5. Additional college classroom and administration building facilities for
 - (a) Classrooms over the next several years
 - (b) Faculty offices immediately, and more administrative offices soon
 - (c) Stock room, auxiliary services and student publications space
6. Library study-hall facilities
7. Enlargements of the Commons Building facilities
8. Central heating plant and maintenance building
9. A College Chapel

This is a rigid list, dictated by the hard fact of enrollment prospects. Facilities to satisfy our academic aspirations, alluded to under the rubric "Planning for What?", and for which room should be left in our planning, go far beyond this list.

How can we satisfy these needs in the cheapest way and to the best interests of our College and Seminary and the Church at large? There are three possibilities from which to choose. These have been previously named, "The Present-Campus Plan," "The Split-Campus Plan," and "The New-Campus Plan."

V. WHICH PLAN?

A. THE PRESENT-CAMPUS PLAN

The Present-Campus Plan has the advantage of entrenchment and sentiment. Initially, this was the only plan to which the Long-Range Planning Committee dared to address itself. The following reasons drove the committee to a broader vision, however.

1. Over the years the pinch of cramped quarters would multiply rather than diminish.
2. The 52 pieces of property which we would have to acquire, plus the two which we already own, represent approximately one million

dollars worth of real estate. Since we are not interested in the houses as such, but merely in the land, this additional ten acres of land would cost \$100,000 an acre. To demolish perfectly good dwellings, and at such an enormous cost, is a program few of us would buy. Businessmen, with realtors among them, have discouraged this course, for, in addition to ultimate costs, there would undoubtedly be "hold-outs" and consequent lengthy court battles. Even if this land were secured, we would still have a total area of only 27½ acres. Additional blocks of dwellings would have to be razed and all this in an area in which real estate values might well slip in the next generation after we have made our acquisition.

B. THE SPLIT-CAMPUS PLAN

This plan has some of the advantages of the Present-Campus Plan. However, to operate the college with its facilities widely dispersed would prove too expensive and disadvantageous in the long run. Permanent transportation facilities would have to be provided. Zoning battles would have to be fought in the courts, and acquisition of inexpensive property in the suburbs would be difficult. In other words, it would be costly, would present a permanent discommodity for school administration, and would suffer from all the ill effects of a decentralized campus.

C. THE NEW-CAMPUS PLAN

It goes without saying that this does not call for an abandonment of our investment in our present beautiful campus. It does mean the purchase of a new, large campus of at least 100 acres, located at a not-too-inconvenient distance from our present campus. On this tract of land the Seminary shall establish its own distinct, self-contained campus. The new Centennial Memorial Seminary shall be built on this new Seminary campus. The service and physical education buildings of the College shall be built on the new College campus. A split campus would then be operated until our present College buildings could be sold.

Although the sale of our campus would represent a gigantic undertaking, it would not be an impossible one. At this very moment, interest in our holdings has been evinced. The very beauty of our grounds, the newness and excellent repair of our buildings, and the compactness of our campus make it saleable now.

As far as possible the College instructional units would remain on the present campus until it could be sold. How long would we have to maintain the inconvenience and expense of a split campus? We hope not long—but at least it will not be so long as if a permanently split-campus were adopted! The cost of transportation involved in operating a temporarily split-campus will vary, of course, depending upon the location of the new campus. Should busses be needed, a charter service

can be secured for approximately \$13,000 a year, with busses on hand five hours a day.

The advantages of the New-Campus Plan over the Present-Campus Plan and the Split-Campus Plan are the following:

1. It will be practically impossible to purchase, in the present area, sufficient land to satisfy our needs.
2. Even if 10 additional acres could be bought in the present area, the cost would be well-nigh prohibitive and we would then still have only a small, inadequate campus.
3. A permanently split campus would not be desirable from the point of view of cost of operation and problems of administration which would continue to harass us.
4. The development of a new campus would provide all new buildings, adequate land, sufficient expansion potential, and a thoroughly organized and integrated campus.
5. The expense of a new campus would be no more costly—and could be less costly—than either of the other plans, depending on the selling price realized on the present campus.

VI. HOW MUCH WILL IT COST AND WHAT WILL WE GET?

Any expansion that takes place is going to entail large expenditures. That holds true for any one of the three plans. Income from the Needs-of-Today Campaign will not be, and is not now, adequate for our necessary capital outlay. "Today" was 1952, when the Campaign was conducted. Exhibit E—"Cost Comparisons on Developing a Campus"—gives a "guesstimate" of costs involved. This is a rough estimate only.

VII. HOW DO WE PAY FOR THIS?

Whatever plan is adopted, the question of paying for expansion must be faced. Proceeding on the proposition that the present facilities will not be duplicated until they have been sold at a reasonable price, expansion on a new site should actually require a smaller outlay of new capital than would expansion in the present area.

The Board of Trustees instructed the Long-Range Planning Committee to come to its May meeting with a specific plan for financing the proposed expansion of Calvin College and Seminary. Based on preliminary thinking, the Committee feels that the solution to this problem of financing will not be as difficult as might first be surmised.

ONE of the SUGGESTIONS that has been made as a possible outline is the following:

1. Balance expected from our present campaign.....	\$ 300,000
2. Cash and Investments on Hand.....	250,000
3. Centennial Gift for Seminary Building.....	750,000
4. A Ten-year Alumni and Special Gifts Project.....	1,000,000
5. Foundation Grants	1,000,000
6. Quota for Capital Expenditures:	
\$2.50 per year for 10 years.....	1,000,000
7. Borrow from available sources for Dormitories and Commons	2,000,000
	\$6,300,000
8. The Balance needed should be more than covered by the sale of the present campus.	

VIII. CONCLUSION

Competent counsel urges us in the direction of a new campus. This judgment is based on the tremendous cost of expansion in our present area, with a continued, permanent cramping of all facilities. To develop a new campus while still holding the present one demands the best that is in us and will, in time, we believe, be accepted as the obvious solution. No forward move was ever made without the boldness of faith. Using the talents of judgment which God has given us, resorting much to prayer, and enjoying the confidence of our constituency, we can and must be daring.

Respectfully submitted,
Long-Range Planning Committee

REV. JOHN VANDER PLOEG, *Chairman*
EARL STRIKWERDA, *Secretary*
GORDON BUTER
H. G. DEKKER
DANIEL DE VRIES, M.D.
HENRY DE WIT
REV. JACOB HOOGSTRA
R. B. KUIPER
WILLIAM SPOELHOF
BENJAMIN STAAL
REV. WILLIAM VAN REES
SYDNEY YOUNGSMAS

THE SECOND PHASE OF CAMPUS DEVELOPMENT

Building or Property Acquisition or Plans Proposed	Year	SYNODICAL ACTION (1941-1956) TAKEN IN THE YEARS LISTED	Present Status
SCIENCE BUILDING	1941	Synod approves Board proposal that it take action to make plants, raise money, and take other steps to procure Science Bldg. (Acts 1941, Art. 97, p. 96)	
	1942	Board reports to Synod that its study committee considered a science wing (N.E.) and a music wing (N.W.) to be added to the Adm. Bldg. Board informs Synod this proposal not acceptable. (Acts 1942, p. 166)	
	1943	Synod approves reappointment of Mr. Hendrikse and also approves his plan to raise \$300,000 to supply in part funds for Science Bldg. Also Synod approves erection of Science Bldg. as soon as conditions permit and funds are raised. (Acst 1943, Arts. 96, 97, 98, pp. 56-57)	
	1944	Synod's action on Board's report of progress on \$300,000 for Science Bldg. and Memorial Hall is to urge both churches and individuals to support Expansion Plan. (Acts 1944, Art. 35, p. 15)	
	1945	Approval given to Board of Trustees to complete all preliminary steps to build the Science Bldg. [on the N.W. corner of campus.] (Acts 1945, Art. 28, p. 14)	
	1947	Science Bldg. mentioned in connection with "Forward in Faith" Campaign: "The Science Building to be erected soon." (Acts 1947, Art. 156, p. 88)	
	1948	Synod takes note that Science Building is under construction. (Acts 1948, p. 185)	

EXHIBIT B

Building or Property Acquisition or Plans Proposed	Year	SYNODICAL ACTION (1941-1956) TAKEN IN THE YEARS LISTED	Present Status
MEN'S AND WOMEN'S RESIDENCE HALLS "Calvin Hall"	1949	Board informs Synod as to progress on Science Bldg. (Acts 1949, p. 129)	1950 Synod informed that Science Bldg. was completed for use just before beginning of 2nd sem (Acts 1950, p. 254)
	1950	* * * * *	
	1942	Synod approves purchase of Calvin Hall for \$5,500 since continued rental of the property seems to be endangered. (Acts 1942, pp. 166-167, and Art. 44, p. 26)	
* * * * *		* * * * *	
A Second Guild Hall "Grace Hall" "College Hall"	1943	Synod authorizes purchase of a second coöp house (Acts 1943, Art. 98c, p. 57)	Grace Hall still in operation as a Guild Hall. (13 occupants) College Hall still in operation as a Guild Hall. (15 occupants)
	1944	Board informs Synod that a second coöp has not yet been purchased. (Acts 1944, p. 129)	
	1945	Synod urges Board to secure a second coöp house. (Acts 1945, Art. 28-H, p. 14)	
	1947	The fact that Grace Hall and College Hall were purchased was first reported to Synod in 1947. (Acts 1947, p. 322)	
	* * * * *		
Men's Dormitory used by Women Students	1944	Board reports its intention that the Dormitory will be used for women residents during the coming year. (Acts 1944, p. 129)	1953 — Dorm returned to use of men residents (75 occupants)

EXHIBIT B

Building or Property Acquisition or Plans Proposed	Year	SYNODICAL ACTION (1941-1956) TAKEN IN THE YEARS LISTED	Present Status
* * * * *	1953	Board reports return of Dorm. to use by men residents.	* * * * *
Alexander Lodge	1947	* * * * *	* * * * *
	1947	Eight rooms at Alexander School leased in June, 1946. Housed 70 men students. (Acts 1947, p. 322)	
* * * * *	1948	Board reports use of Alexander Lodge discontinued. (Acts 1948, p. 184)	Use discontinued after 2 years.
Women's Residence Hall	1945	* * * * *	* * * * *
	1945	Synod instructs committee to study feasibility of Girls' Dorm. (Acts 1945, Art. 28-H, p. 14)	
	1946	Synod instructs Board to plan for a Dorm, to be ready for occupancy by Sept. 1947. (Acts 1946, Art. 89, I, p. 66)	
	1948	Synod is vitally concerned with proper housing of men students and therefore urges action on a proposed new girls' dorm as soon as possible so that the old Dorm can be returned to the men (Acts 1948, Art. 84, p. 47)	
	1949	Synod approves giving priority to Student Commons [rather than to Girls' Dorm]. (Acts 1949, Art. 72, C, p. 26)	
	1952	Girls' Dorm named in connection with the Needs-of-Today Campaign. (Acts 1952, p. 471)	
	1954	Board informs Synod that Exec. Comm. has been empowered to receive bids and award contracts. (Acts 1954, p. 62)	
* * * * *	1955	Synod approves halting of all construction [pending a complete long-range plan]. (Acts 1955, Art. 137, p. 94)	Neither Women's nor Men's Residence Halls have been started.
		* * * * *	

EXHIBIT B

Building or Property Acquisition or Plans Proposed	Year	SYNODICAL ACTION (1941-1956) TAKEN IN THE YEARS LISTED	Present Status
LAND AND LAND AREA	1948	Board reports purchase of East Campus, 7½ acres, for \$75,000. (Acts 1948, p. 185)	We still own the 7½ acres, of which part is used for parking.
	1950	Synod approves Board's proposal to buy an additional 5 acres from Clark Estate at \$10,000 an acre. (Acts 1950, Art. 112, p. 41)	Many attempts have been made to purchase additional, but the owners firmly refuse to sell.
	1953	Synod receives for information the Board's plan to acquire all properties between the two campuses. (Acts 1953, Art. 90, p. 61)	Two houses have been purchased. One is being rented and the other is being used as a Guild Hall. 52 pieces of property remain.
* * * * *		* * * * *	* * * * *
LIBRARY EXPANSION	1945	Synod instructs Board to present plans for enlargement of the Library (Acts 1945, p. 14)	
	1947	Library enlargement mentioned in connection with the "Forward in Faith" Campaign endorsed by Synod. (Acts 1947, Art. 156, p. 87)	
	1948	Board reports that the next building project will be in the library (Acts 1948, p. 186)	
	1949	Board informs Synod that final plans have been approved (Acts 1949, p. 129)	
	1950	Board reports building in progress and cornerstone to be unveiled in presence of Synodical delegates (Acts 1950, p. 254 and Art. 7)	Library completed in 1950.
			* * * * *

Building or Property Acquisition or Plans Proposed	Year	SYNODICAL ACTION (1941-1956) TAKEN IN THE YEARS LISTED	Present Status
PHYSICAL EDUCATION BUILDING	1943	Upon request of President of Synod, President Schultze calls attention to the need of facilities in Science and Physical Education. (Acts 1943, Art. 97, p. 56)	
	1943	Synod approved Board plan to interest young people's organization in Calvin Memorial Hall, an assembly hall and gymnasium. (Acts 1943, Art. 98, p. 57)	
	1944	Synod urges churches and individuals to support Expansion Program which includes a Memorial Hall. (Acts 1944, Art. 35, p. 15)	
	1947	Physical Education Building mentioned in the "Forward in Faith" Campaign, endorsed by Synod. (Acts 1947, Art. 156, p. 87)	
	1952	Named in the "Needs of Today" Campaign. (Acts 1952, pp. 472-473)	
***** MUSIC BUILDING	1942	A Board committee recommended building a northwest wing to Administration Bldg. for music but this recommendation was not approved (Acts 1942, p. 166). Preliminary plans still available.	Not yet started *****
	1950	Music Department needs reported to Synod again. (Acts 1950, p. 261)	
	1952	Music Department needs named in connection with the "Needs of Today" Campaign. (Acts 1952, p. 471)	
	*****	Need has been reported frequently but no provision has yet been made. *****	

EXHIBIT B

Building or Property Acquisition or Plans Proposed	Year	SYNODICAL ACTION (1941-1956) TAKEN IN THE YEARS LISTED	Present Status
STUDENT COMMONS	1949	Synod approved giving priority to Student Commons rather than Girls' Dorm. (Acts 1949, Art. 72-B; also pp. 129-130) Synod grants Board of Trustees power to act. (Acts 1949, Art. 72, C, p. 26)	
	1950	Board reports that plans for a Commons are under way. (Acts 1950, p. 254)	
	1951	Board reports that construction will begin presently. (Act 1951, pp. 225-226)	
	1952	Board reports that Commons Bldg. is under construction. (Acts 1952, p. 439)	Completed in 1952.
*****		*****	*****
FINANCIAL CAMPAIGN & LOANS Mr. Hendrikse's \$300,000 campaign (1/3 through personal solicitation) (1/3 through the churches) (1/3 from "youth of our church")	1943	Synod approved appointment of Mr. Hendrikse (1942) and his plan to raise \$300,000. Young people's organization should be contacted for gifts to "Calvin Memorial Hall." (Acts 1943, Arts. 97, 98, pp. 56, 57)	Amounts which could be attributed to this campaign total \$197,665.84.
"Grand Rapids and Vicinity" Campaign	1944		\$68,054.00.
"Forward in Faith" Campaign	1947	Synod approved the "Forward in Faith" Campaign for \$1,000,000. (Acts 1947, Art. 156, p. 88), the campaign to begin in Nov. 1946 and continue for three years.	Completed in 1950. Total receipts: \$1,130,729.15.

EXHIBIT B

Building or Property Acquisition or Plans Proposed	Year	SYNODICAL ACTION (1941-1956) TAKEN IN THE YEARS LISTED	Present Status
Another Campaign Proposed	1950	The Board proposed the continuation for the following year of the "Forward in Faith" Campaign for a second \$1,000,000, to be held in connection with the Diamond Jubilee. This was not approved by Synod (Acts 1950, Art. 157, 36, p. 92)	Not approved; however Diamond Jubilee Collections in 1951 amounted to \$14,474.47.
"Needs of Today" Campaign	1951	Synod approves the "Needs of Today" Campaign, to run for five years for an approximate total sum of \$2,000,000.	Campaign still in progress; in its 4th year. Total collected to date (Jan. 1956): \$905,035.18.
Loans	1954	Application for a government-secured loan for building dormitories was dropped by the Board of Trustees owing to open-bid stipulation. (Acts 1954, Art. 120, p. 62)	
	1954	Synod approved Board's instruction to Executive Committee to borrow funds for a 2-unit Girls' Dorm and a central heating plant. (Acts 1954, Art. 120, p. 62)	
	1954	Synod adopts the second of proposed methods of financing girls' dormitories, i.e., interest and principal amortization payments on loans made for the erection of a new dorm or dorms, to be placed in institutional budget even though this may involve an increase in quota for the following year (Acts 1954, Art. 120, H, 5, p. 62)	
	1954	Synod decides that the same financial plan be followed in case of central heating plant on East Campus. (Acts 1954, Art. 120, H, 6, p. 62)	
	1954	Synod decided that interest and principal amortization on loans for central heating plant be placed in general budget. (Acts 1954, Art. 120, H, 7)	

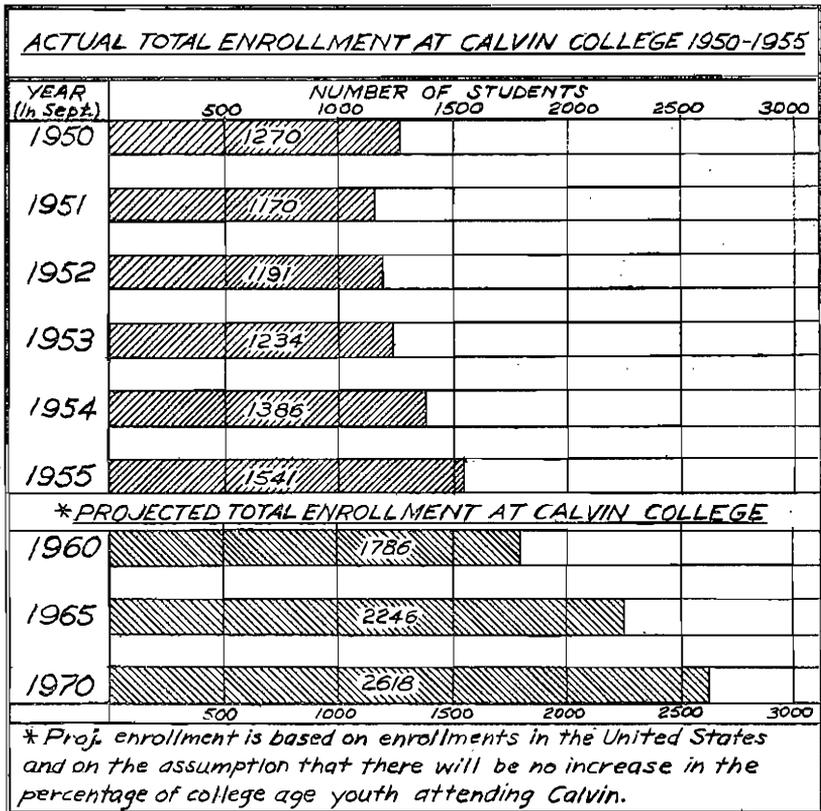
EXHIBIT B

Building or Property Acquisition or Plans Proposed	Year	SYNODICAL ACTION (1941-1956) TAKEN IN THE YEARS LISTED	Present Status
* * * * *	1955	Synod approved placing \$1.50 in the institutional quota for Buildings Needs. (Acts 1955(Art. 126, IV)	\$1.50 was placed in quota for 1956.
CLASSROOM AND OFFICE SPACE AND MAINTENANCE	1952	Named in connection with the "Needs of Today" Campaign. (Acts 1952, p. 470)	Academic and Business Offices remodeled in Adm. Bldg. Three classrooms added, with loss of one. Health Service provided. No faculty offices yet available.
CENTRAL HEATING PLANT	1954	Synod authorizes construction of a central heating plant on East Campus. (Acts 1954, Art. 120) Method of financing — See material on page 310 under Loans.	Nothing further done with this.
PLANNING COMMITTEE	1948	Planning was always the function of the Building and Grounds Committee until 1948.	
	1949	While Science Building was under construction Synod urges appointment of the Building Planning Committee as recommended by Board. (Acts 1948, Art. 84)	
	1949	Synod approves appointment to Long-Range Planning Committee of three faculty representatives. (Acts 1949, Art. 72, p. 25)	1955 Long-Range Planning Comm. organization was streamlined and is functioning to date.

EXHIBIT C

Correlation Between Total College Enrollments in the United States and at Calvin College, Including Projections

Year	Total Enrollment in U. S.	Percentage of Increase	Total Enrollment at Calvin	Percentage of Increase
1950	2,439,910		1,270	
1951	2,244,718	- 8.0	1,170	- 7.8
1952	2,278,388	+ 1.5	1,191	+ 1.8
1953	2,250,701	+ 3.1	1,234	+ 3.6
1954	2,499,750	+11.1	1,386	+12.3
1955	2,714,730	+ 8.6	1,541	+11.2
1960	2,874,678	+16.4 over 1954	1,786	+16.0 over 1955
1965	3,617,684	+25.8 over 1960	2,246	+25.8 over 1960
1970	4,219,047	+16.6 over 1965	2,618	+16.6 over 1965



EXPLANATION OF ENROLLMENT STATISTICS

EXHIBIT C

Surveys and investigations relative to future enrollments have been made by numerous agencies, both on the national and state levels. The results of these studies have been published in various educational journals and in brochures in the form of articles, statistical tables, and graphs. Use of such published statistics has been made in our own predictions pertaining to future enrollments at Calvin College.

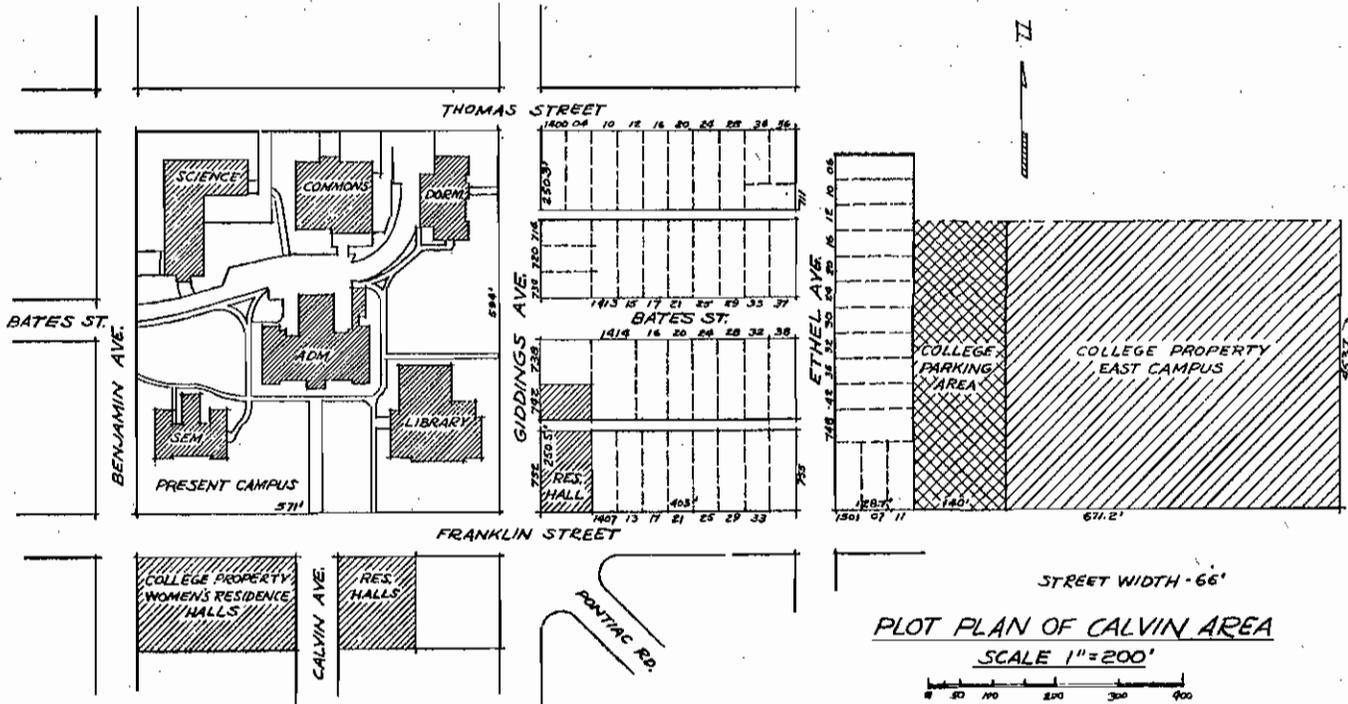
Predictions Based on College Attendance

A graphical illustration of our enrollments from 1950 to 1955 and of our projected enrollments up to 1970 is given on page 312. These enrollments figures are based both on total enrollments in colleges and universities in the continental United States and on the assumption that there will be no increase over 31% in the percentage of college-age youth (18 to 24 years) attending Calvin College during the next fifteen years. The figures do not take into consideration any losses in enrollment which may take place in the future because of the establishment of new junior colleges, nor any gains that may result from increased interest on the part of our people in higher education. Furthermore, it is assumed in arriving at the figures that economic and social forces remain uncharged.

Predictions Based on Birth Rates

Babies born in 1937 are now entering college; those born in 1952 will enter in or about 1970. According to the national statistics, the percentage of increase in births in the United States in 1952 compared with 1937 was approximately 75%. For the state of Michigan, which has had a large increase in population due to expansion of industries, the percent of increase for that period was 90%. If we take the figure of 500 for an average number of freshmen entering Calvin College during the years 1951-1953, then the number of freshmen entering in 1970 will be 75% more, according to United States birth rates, or 875. This would mean a probable total enrollment at Calvin College of 2300. Should we calculate our future enrollment on the increase of births in Michigan, namely, a high 90%, then our projected enrollment in 1970 would be 2600.

It appears that our projected enrollment for 1970, whether calculated on the basis of birth rates or of total college enrollment statistics, will be not less than, and possibly over, 2600 by 1970. Such estimates do, indeed, emphasize the need at Calvin College for immediate expansion and, if possible, for some method of restricting freshman admission.



STREET WIDTH - 66'
 PLOT PLAN OF CALVIN AREA
 SCALE 1" = 200'

(EXHIBIT D)

"GUESSTIMATE" COST COMPARISONS ON DEVELOPING THE CAMPUS PLANS

EXHIBIT E

HOLDINGS	COST TO DEVELOP AND WHAT WE SHALL GET					
	Present Campus Plan		Split Campus Plan		New Campus Plan	
Seminary	\$750,000	New	\$750,000	New	\$ 750,000	New, in Separate Area
College Classrooms	250,000	Present Plus Some New	250,000	Present Plus Some New	1,250,000	New
Science Building		Fairly Adequate		Fairly Adequate	1,250,000	New Adequate
Library	150,000	Present Plus Addition	150,000	Present Plus Addition	750,000	New Adequate
Adminis- tration	25,000	Remodel in Present Building	25,000	Remodel in Present Building		In New Classroom Building
Music	100,000	Seminary Remodeled	100,000	Seminary Remodeled	250,000	New Adequate
Physical Education	400,000	New	400,000	New Away	400,000	New on Campus
Commons	50,000	Present Remodeled	50,000	Present Remodeled	750,000	New Larger
Heating & Maintenance	250,000	Present and New on E. Campus	450,000	Present and Two New	300,000	New One
Chapel	750,000	New	750,000	New	750,000	New
Faculty Offices	50,000	In Re-modeled Adm. Bldg.	50,000	In Re-modeled Adm. Bldg.		In New Classroom Building
Dorms	2,500,000	New With Dining Room	2,500,000	New With Dining Room	2,250,000	New With Less Dining Room Space Required
Land	1,000,000	27 1/2 Acres	100,000	40 Acres	250,000	100 Acres
TOTAL	\$6,275,000	In addition to our investment in present holdings	\$5,575,000	In addition to our investment in present holdings	\$8,950,000	Less amount realized from the sale of our present holding

COLLOQUIUM DOCTUM PROBLEM

*To the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church, 1956
Grand Rapids, Michigan*

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

The Synod of 1955 had before it three communications from De Deputaten van de Generale Synode van de Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland voor Correspondentie met Buitenlandse Kerken. Those communications requested Synod to declare that a minister of de Gereformeerde Kerken who has accepted a call from one of our churches shall not be subjected to a colloquium doctum as a prerequisite for installation as a Christian Reformed minister. In support of that request it was argued that the two denominations concerned carry on correspondence with each other in the narrow sense of that term and that de Gereformeerde Kerken have officially taken the position that a minister of our church, on accepting the call of a particular church in their communion, is to be installed without a preceding colloquium doctum.

The Classes Eastern Ontario and Hamilton forwarded to the 1955 Synod letters from De Deputaten voor Emigratie van de Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland. Those letters dealt only indirectly with the matter of colloquia docta and directly with the financial consequence of insistence on colloquia docta for immigrant ministers. Synod reached a solution of that problem.

In its report to the 1955 Synod the Committee on Ecumenicity and Interchurch Correspondence dealt with the problem before us. It distinguished between "sister" churches and "corresponding" churches, placed de Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland under the former of those heads, and advised Synod "to declare that any one duly called from a sister church, upon acceptance, shall be installed without submitting to a colloquium doctum, provided that said acceptance implies agreement with the practices of our denomination." It went on to say: "Such a declaration will make a colloquium doctum void, and will prevent a distasteful experience, especially should such a colloquium be confused with a *peremptoir* examination" (Acts of Synod, 1955, p. 266).

It may be added that Dr. P. G. Kunst, Fraternal Delegate of de Gereformeerde Kerken, in his address to the 1955 Synod pleaded for the abolition of colloquia docta for ministers of that denomination who

have accepted a call to the Christian Reformed Church (Acts of Synod, 1955, p. 255).

Synod's Advisory Committee recommended the adoption of the aforementioned advice of the Committee on Ecumenicity and Interchurch Correspondence on the following grounds: (1) "The concept 'sister church' implies such close unity of doctrine as to make unnecessary an examination." (2) "Synod has adopted a rule instructing calling churches how to deal with differences of practice" (Acts of Synod, 1955, pp. 97f.).

In the interest of clarity and completeness it must be stated that the rule referred to in the second of these grounds was adopted by the 1955 Synod on the advice of the Advisory Committee on Matters of Church Order and reads as follows: "Churches which extend calls to ministers from the Netherlands — regardless to which denomination such brethren belong — should inform said ministers regarding the explanatory doctrinal statements which our Synods of 1881, 1908, and 1924 have adopted, informing the brethren that these decisions are still in force" (Acts of Synod, 1955, p. 43).

The 1955 Synod tabled the proposal to discontinue colloquia docta for ministers coming to us from de Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland and referred the matter to a special study committee for recommendations to the Synod of 1956 (Acts of Synod, 1955, p. 98).

That committee is hereby presenting its report.

A HISTORICAL SURVEY

It seems proper that we should indicate briefly what has been our policy regarding the reception of ministers from de Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland and what has been their policy in receiving ministers from the Christian Reformed Church.

Two of our Synods that have dealt seriously with the problem of correspondence with other denominations are those of 1898 and 1944. The former insisted emphatically on correspondence with other Reformed churches (Acts of Synod, 1898, pp. 51ff.). The latter Synod did likewise but went further and took the position that Reformed churches have a responsibility not only to each other but also to non-Reformed churches (Acts of Synod, 1944, pp. 83ff, 310ff.). The 1944 Synod had before it a lengthy and thorough report on An Ecumenical Council of Reformed Churches and Correspondence with other Churches. That report spoke in strong language of correspondence with such a denomination as de Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland. With evident reference to that denomination it spoke of "churches as are denominationally separate from us because they are geographically far distant and speak another language than we have by this time generally adopted, but would at once merge with us and we with them, if the

aforesaid hindrances did not obtain." Commenting on Article 48 of the Church Order, it said: "We should feel, as did the particular synods of the Dutch church after Dort, that we are virtually one church." And the 1944 Synod expressed itself as being in substantial agreement with the position that Reformed churches which are separated by barriers of geographical distance and difference of language should engage in so-called correspondence in the spirit of Article 48, provided they are in agreement in respect to doctrine, polity, and liturgy. However, neither the 1898 Synod nor the 1944 Synod stated explicitly that the Christian Reformed Church and de Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland should receive one another's ministers without any sort of examination.

Until less than a decade ago it seems not to have occurred to us to subject to a colloquium doctum ministers coming to us from de Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland. If their membership certificates and ministerial credentials were in order, they were received and installed without examinations, as were ministers of our own denomination who removed from one Classis to another. More recently, however, our Classes have dealt with ministers coming to us from de Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland as we have long dealt with ministers coming from other denominations, in that we required that they pass a colloquium doctum as a condition for installation.

To account authoritatively for this change in our practice is admittedly difficult. We question whether a thoroughly authenticated explanation is possible. Yet one factor that beyond doubt has contributed to the change may be named. In the course of history two Reformed denominations existing on different continents will inevitably confront different problems. In consequence, no matter how strikingly similar they may once have been, differences of emphasis will from time to time occur. It would not be strange if differences of both insight and practice should eventually ensue. And such differences might well give rise to the question whether a minister in good standing in one of those denominations would in every instance prove congenial to the other denomination and compatible with it. As a check on that matter, which certainly is not inconsequential, a colloquium doctum might well be deemed useful.

Let us become more concrete. Very early in its history our church took the position that membership in oath-bound secret societies is incompatible with membership in Christ's Church. The Christian Reformed Church has passed through a controversy on the doctrine of common grace, and the Synod of 1924 made significant deliverances on that subject. Our Synod of 1928 took certain positions on the matter of so-called worldly amusements, and those positions were reviewed by the Synod of 1951. De Gereformeerde Kerken in Neder-

land were in recent decades torn by controversy on the relationship of the children of believers to the covenant of grace, and the outcome was a synodical declaration on that subject which elaborates the Utrecht Conclusions of 1905. Each of the instances just named represents a development within either our church or de Gereformeerde Kerken by which the other was affected but slightly, if indeed at all. To this may be added that de Gereformeerde Kerken have taken a position on certain aspects of the divorce problem which the Christian Reformed Church has until now been unwilling to take, and that men prominent in the councils of de Gereformeerde Kerken openly favor membership in the World Council of Churches, something which to the best of our knowledge has no parallel in the Christian Reformed Church. Matters of that nature have, no doubt, contributed to our recent practice of subjecting ministers of de Gereformeerde Kerken to a colloquium doctum prior to their installation in our churches.

If the Christian Reformed Church has of late moved toward the requiring of a colloquium doctum, de Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland have in recent years moved in the opposite direction. The Synod of Dordrecht, 1893, adopted the following rule: "Predikers uit Gereformeerde Kerken buiten Nederland, hebben bewijs over te leggen aangaande hunne beroeping tot den dienst, belijdenis en wandel. Zij hebben voorts zich te onderwerpen aan een colloquium doctum aangaande leer en wetenschap, dat eenzelfde graad van ontwikkeling vereischt als het praeparatoir en peremptoir examen der door de Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland toegelatenen. Indien zij echter voorheen door deze kerken waren toegelaten, zal men eenvoudig een onderzoek instellen of zij, wat de leer aangaat, dezelfden zijn gebleven." In harmony with that rule some of our ministers who had accepted calls to de Gereformeerde Kerken — The Reverend Van Reenen, for instance — were subjected to a colloquium doctum. However, the 1949-50 Synod decided as follows: "De generale synode besluit in de correspondentie met buitenlandse kerken te onderscheiden tussen een correspondentie in engere en in ruimere zin; de eerste zal insluiten de wederkerige afgifte en aanvaarding van attestaties en de wederkerige toelating tot de bediening van het Woord en de Sacramenten, en zal uitsluitend kunnen worden aangegaan en onderhouden met die kerken van gereformeerde belijdenis en kerkregering welke deze ook beslist handhaven; de tweede zal alleen bestaan in het over en weer zenden van afgevaardigden naar kerkelijke vergaderingen, en zal kunnen aangegaan en onderhouden met kerken die aan de voor de eerste vorm van correspondentie gestelde eis niet ten volle voldoen." According to the communications before our 1955 Synod from De Deputaten voor Correspondentie met Buitenlandse Kerken the Christian Reformed Church falls into the former of those categories.

The question arises what accounts for this change of practice on the part of de Gereformeerde Kerken. Beyond reasonable doubt, a resolution adopted by the First Reformed Ecumenical Synod, 1946, had a direct bearing on the matter. After saying: "It is also advisable for Reformed Churches to carry on church correspondence in a wider sense with churches which deviate more or less from the Reformed standards by sending fraternal delegates to their Synods in case mutual consultation will tend to mutual profit," the Ecumenical Synod proceeded: "For church correspondence in the narrow sense, to wit, such church correspondence as involves that Churches open their pulpits to one another, recognize as valid one another's certificates of membership, admit one another's members to the sacrament of Holy Communion and send delegates to one another's Synods with the understanding that these delegates are to be given advisory vote, it is requisite that Churches are at one in church polity and discipline as well as in creed" (Acts of the First Reformed Ecumenical Synod, 1946, p. 59).

De Generale Synode of 1949-50 felt that it was acting in harmony with that resolution when it ruled as it did concerning correspondence in the narrow sense of that term. However, we are of the opinion that there could be a considerable difference between "opening their pulpits to one another," which was recommended by the First Reformed Ecumenical Synod, and "reciprocal admission to the administration of the Word and Sacraments," which was approved by the General Synod of 1949-50. To say the very least, the former does not necessarily imply the latter. The Ecumenical Synod may have had in mind merely an *occasional* opening of pulpits to one another. It should also be observed that our Synods have taken no specific action on this recommendation of the First Reformed Ecumenical Synod. (Cf. Acts of Synod, 1947, p. 93)

We conclude this historical sketch with the observation that, while an earlier Synod of de Gereformeerde Kerken ruled that our ministers, on accepting a call from that denomination, should submit to a colloquium doctum and a more recent Synod ruled that they need not, our Synods have never ruled that ministers of de Gereformeerde Kerken, on accepting a call from one of our churches, should or should not submit to a colloquium doctum.

PRINCIPLES TO BE OBSERVED

In the search for a solution of the problem under consideration two principles require consideration. They concern, on the one hand, the need of maintaining the purity and unity of one's denomination and, on the other hand, the demands of ecumenicity in the mutual relationships of Reformed churches.

Nothing is more important for a church than insistence on purity of doctrine and life for its members, particularly for its ministers.

And to demand these of all its members and ministers alike is obviously conducive to unity. Incidentally, it may be remarked that this insistence may not be carried to the extreme of complete uniformity.

In order to assure itself of denominational purity and unity a church has the inherent right, and even the solemn duty, to make sure that ministers coming from other denominations are in substantial agreement with its beliefs and practices. And if, in order to gain that assurance, it deems an examination necessary, or merely helpful, it has the indisputable right to insist on an examination. De Generale Synode van de Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland, 1893, had a right to rule that ministers coming from foreign lands, not only had to present the proper credentials, but also had to submit to a colloquium doctum. The Presbyterian Church in the United States of America is on good ground when it rules in its Constitution: "Ministers connected with other denominations applying for membership in a presbytery shall . . . be examined in theology, and at the discretion of presbytery in other subjects" (Form of Government, Chapter V, Article XVI). The Orthodox Presbyterian Church is on equally good ground when it insists: "When an ordained minister of another denomination seeks admission to the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, the presbytery to which he applies shall require him to give evidence of possessing the qualifications, in regard to piety, faith and learning, which are demanded of candidates for admission as given above, provided, however, that in no case shall an examination in theology on the floor of the presbytery be waived" (Form of Government, Chapter V, Article 16). Likewise the Constitution of the Reformed Church in America properly rules: "It shall be the duty of the Classis, when any application is made for the admission of a candidate or minister from another denomination, to subject him to such examination as shall enable it to proceed with freedom in his case" (Section 23).

It might be argued that the only barriers to complete unity of the Christian Reformed Church and de Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland are those of distance and language and that, therefore, we should receive their ministers without any examination as we are wont to receive our own ministers when they remove from one Classis to another. However, it is a fact that the report on An Ecumenical Council of Reformed Churches and Correspondence with Other Churches, submitted to our 1944 Synod, which spoke in that vein of the two denominations concerned, did not draw that explicit conclusion. Besides, the question may be raised whether, in case the barriers of distance and language should be deemed insignificant — which might well be done — de Gereformeerde Kerken and the Christian Reformed Church would forthwith merge. The aforementioned differences of emphasis, insight and practice that have in the course of time arisen would,

we think, demand serious consideration prior to the effecting of a merger. To be sure, we should be careful not to exaggerate those differences, but neither would it serve a good purpose to belittle them.

Still further, it must be said that from our custom not to examine a minister who removes from one Classis to another it may not be deduced that in such instances an examination is always out of order. In case the receiving Classis should be of the opinion that it has good reason to question the veracity of the credentials of the minister concerned, or if, since the issuance of his credentials, circumstances should have arisen reflecting unfavorably upon his doctrine or life, the Classis would most certainly have the right to subject him to questioning. As a matter of fact there are cases on record in which a Classis in a Reformed church and a Presbytery in a Presbyterian church have exercised that right. (Cf. Van Dellen and Monsma, *The Church Order Commentary*, p. 30)

We conclude that the right of a Classis to require a colloquium doctum of a minister coming to us from de Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland is unassailable. However, whether that right should be exercised in every instance is another matter. On that question the demands of ecumenicity have a direct bearing.

Ours is an age of ecumenicity, rather *the* age of ecumenicity. Never before in the history of the Christian church has the need of unity been stressed as it is being stressed today. Many clamor for unity at the expense of truth. Theirs is a false ecumenicity. But it does not rule out a Scriptural ecumenicity. From the one church of the apostolic age to the well nigh countless denominations of the present is indeed a far cry. Christians the world over confess that they believe a holy catholic church. There is but one such church, the *una sancta*. And since the visible church should manifest the attributes of the invisible church, with the sole exception of invisibility, we may never lose sight of the ideal of a united church. The fact that in all probability that ideal will not be realized before Christ's return may not deter us from striving toward it.

The principle just stated calls for a measure of correspondence of our church with all those churches which it can truthfully acknowledge as Christian, and it demands a larger measure of correspondence of our church with other truly Reformed churches. In the performance of that colossal task it is, to quote from the aforementioned report submitted to the Synod of 1944, "the part of wisdom to *begin* from Jerusalem and to work out toward the circumference of the ecclesiastical circle progressively, as time and strength and opportunity permit" (Acts of Synod 1944, pp. 359f.).

The Christian Reformed Church has long regarded de Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland as a "sister church". To give a precise definition

of that term is admittedly difficult. In fact its correctness may well be questioned. The report just cited rejected it. De Deputaten van de Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland voor Correspondentie met Buitenlandse Kerken and the First Reformed Ecumenical Synod prefer to speak of correspondence in a narrower, in distinction from a broader, sense. Paradoxical though it may at first blush seem, what they denominate correspondence in a narrower sense your committee prefers to describe as full ecclesiastical fellowship, and what they denominate correspondence in a broader sense we prefer to describe as restricted ecclesiastical fellowship. Be that as it may, the connotation of the term "sister church" and some of its implications are evident. The Christian Reformed Church and de Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland have the same Forms of Unity. Like ours, the Dutch denomination is Reformed not only in name, but in reality. Both strive seriously to remain Reformed in doctrine, government and worship. In short, it seems safe to say that there is not another denomination which resembles the Christian Reformed Church as closely as do de Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland. If the barriers of distance and language were removed, the consolidation of the two might not follow as a matter of course, but would, no doubt, be seriously considered. Therefore the Christian Reformed Church, in its dealing with de Gereformeerde Kerken should proceed, just as far as its concern for its own purity and unity permits, from the assumption that the two denominations are one. And certainly it should, if at all possible, take as gracious and generous an attitude to them as they do to it.

In relation to the aforementioned principle a practical matter merits consideration. In recent years it has been our custom to require a colloquium doctum of a minister of de Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland after he had accepted a call from one of our churches and had actually arrived on this continent with his family — if he had one. That practice put both the minister concerned and the receiving Classis in a difficult position. Almost inevitably it brought both into temptation. The minister was tempted to slant toward the wishes of the Classis his answers to the questions put in the colloquium, and the Classis was tempted to approve the colloquium even if it were not satisfactory. To be sure, such temptations are always present in an examination, but in the instance under consideration they could hardly help being augmented by the attendant circumstances. True ecumenicity, not to say ecclesiastical comity, requires that, if at all possible, that situation be remedied.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In view of the aforementioned historical considerations and the foregoing discussion of principles, we recommend that Synod make the following declarations:

(1) When one of our churches has decided to call a minister of de Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland, it shall with the letter of call forward to him a transcript — to be prepared by the Stated Clerk of Synod — of the following deliverances of our Synods; the position taken in the General Rules of 1881 and by the Synod of 1867 regarding membership in oath-bound secret societies, the Conclusions of Utrecht adopted by our Synod of 1908, the synodical resolutions of 1928 and 1951 on worldly amusements, the three points adopted by the Synod of 1924 concerning the doctrine of common grace; and it shall inform him that acceptance of the call will be understood to imply his promise to abide by those deliverances in his exercise of the ministerial office in the Christian Reformed Church.

(2) A minister of de Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland who has accepted a call from one of our churches and comes with satisfactory credentials shall ordinarily not be subjected to a classical colloquium doctum as a prerequisite of installation. Only when, in an exceptional instance, a Classis finds that it cannot in good conscience install such a minister without a prior interview, shall it require that he submit to a colloquium doctum in the presence of the Delegates for Examination.

(3) The foregoing rules shall be applicable to ministers coming to us, not only from de Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland, but from any denomination which the Christian Reformed Church by synodical action shall have received into full ecclesiastical fellowship.

(4) Ministers of denominations with which the Christian Reformed Church has only restricted ecclesiastical fellowship shall, when called by one of our churches, likewise be informed in writing of the aforementioned deliverances of our Synods and told that acceptance of the call will be understood to imply the promise to abide by those deliverances in their exercise of the ministerial office in the Christian Reformed Church, but they shall in no case be installed without a colloquium doctum conducted by Classis in the presence of the Delegates for Examination.

Respectfully submitted,

MARTIN MONSMA, *Chairman*

GERRIT HOEKSEMA

HENRY NUMAN

R. B. KUIPER, *Secretary*

IMMIGRATION COMMITTEE FOR CANADA

ESTEEMED BRETHREN :

THE IMMIGRATION COMMITTEE for Canada herewith submits its report to your honorable body.

PERSONNEL

The membership of the Committee consists of :

1. Rev. P. J. Hoekstra; chairman, Classis Alberta;
2. Mr. J. VanderVliet; sec'y-treasurer, Classis Eastern Ontario;
3. Rev. A. Disselkoen; Classis Minnesota South;
4. Rev. J. Gritter; Classis Chatham, Ont.
5. Mr. A. Kaemingk; Classis Minnesota North;
6. Rev. C. Spoelhof; Classis Hamilton, Ont.
7. Rev. J. M. Vande Kieft; Missionary-at-Large;
8. Mr. J. Vander Velden; Classis Pacific.

The fieldmen are :

- Mr. B. Nieboer; Southern Alberta;
- Mr. T. Polet; Manitoba and North Western Ontario;
- Mr. C. Steenhof; Toronto and district, Ont.
- Mr. J. VanderVliet; Central Ontario;
- Mr. A. DeJonge; Quebec and Eastern Ontario;
- Mr. H. J. Lam; Maritimes.

Part-time fieldmen are employed by your Committee throughout the country.

Since our last report two experienced men: Mr. J. Vellinga and Mr. L. Vanden Berg have left our service and are not being replaced.

SURVEY OF WORK IN 1955.

While the scope of the work was somewhat limited due to a temporary recession of the immigration movement the regular services of our fieldmen continued in all the fields.

During the season 23 boats carrying immigrants arrived in the port of Halifax and 3 in Quebec. One hundred and three planes landed at the Dorval airport. All these ships and planes were met by our fieldmen who helped the immigrants on their way to their destination further inland.

Of the total of approximately 7000 Netherland immigrants close to 30% belonged to the Gereformeerde Kerk in Holland. This percentage is much in excess of the percentage of the Reformed portion of the population in the Netherlands.

During the year in many parts of the country surveys were made by our staff to ascertain placement possibilities, and to search out locations where in the future our people can settle on their own land. Several appraisals of districts were submitted by our fieldmen and will be used when the immigration movement again has gained momentum.

The secretary of the Immigration Committee was allowed to make a trip to Holland for the purpose of making contacts with authorities on emigration in the Netherlands and to supply reliable information on all sections of Canada, and on the work of the Christian Reformed Church.

Under the auspices of the Christelijke Emigratie Centrale he travelled through the country and held meetings in about 50 places. His impressions on the present situation in Holland in regard to immigration in Canada were laid down in a report and were summarized as follows:

1. there is much ignorance about Canada, about its climate, its social securities and about the Canadian way of living;
2. reports from returned immigrants and information from disappointed immigrants in Canada who have seen only a small part of the country, but who present there local troubles as being nation wide are causing doubts in the hearts of many people and are holding them back from emigrating to Canada;
3. keen competition from Australia is noticeable everywhere. The government of that country is more generous with subsidies than Canada. Most of the organizers of the C.E.C. have made a trip to Australia and New Zealand, only two of them visited Canada. Naturally they speak with more enthusiasm about the country they have seen. Transportation expenses to Australia are sometimes lower than to Canada;
4. the employment situation in the Netherlands is better than ever and wages are high, but the cost of living is high too and savings are small. There has been an important industrial expansion and many big works have been undertaken by the government. All surplus workers are taken care of by the government agency D.U.W., hence no visible unemployment;
5. the increase in population now stands a 120,000 per year after the number of immigrants to various countries has been deducted;
6. there is a great shortage of farm lands. Through constant division of properties the average acreage has decreased and at present 70% of all farms in Holland consist of less than 25 acres. Consequently much work is done by hand and more people are used in this process than necessary. The present tendency of the government is to consolidate small holdings into larger farms (verkaveling). This system once it is applied properly will release a large number of farmhands and farmers

sons. The increase from reclaimed lands is almost entirely absorbed by new roads, industrial expansion and by the fast growing towns;

7. in view of the facts mentioned under 5 and 6 the Dutch government favours the continuation of emigration. Large sums of money are made available for their transportation and the immigrants are now allowed to take along what capital they possess;

8. the Canadian Immigration Department has dropped all restrictions as to inadmissible occupations. The result of this new ruling is already noticeable in Holland;

9. the housing situation in Holland, especially in the cities, is particularly bad and young people who want to get married are not able to get living quarters. Many of those would come to Canada if the reports on this country were more favourable;

10. the vulnerable position of a country depending on foreign trade and without natural resources is causing a good deal of concern and consequently business men are expected to emigrate in larger numbers than before, especially now they are allowed to transfer capital to the new country;

11. there is a good deal of appreciation for the work of the Chr. Reformed Church and the Immigration Committee. In general the Dutch people favour Canada above any other nation and our people especially realize that church life is much further advanced here than elsewhere;

12. leading men such as Mr. T. Cnossen, Director of the C.E.C., Mr. H. W. Haveman, Netherlands Government Commissioner for Emigration, and others, expect an increase in the number of immigrants going to Canada in 1956 and following years.

SYNOD'S DIRECTIVE.

We are aware of the instruction, given to us by the Synods of 1954 and 1955, that the Immigration Committee work toward the elimination of the fieldmen as employees of the Church. This instruction proceeds on the assumption that immigration is not properly the work of the Church. However, we call attention to the fact that this immigration work is being done definitely to build the church and to strengthen our church life and is therefore of great importance for the church as a whole. It is practically impossible to separate the immigration work from the spiritual care.

We as Committee after much discussion are not prepared to submit definite proposals as to a reorganization. We need more time to study and to that end a questionnaire is being sent to all Canadian Chr. Ref. consistories in order to find out current opinion on this matter.

PROGRAM FOR 1956.

The Immigration authorities in the Netherlands and in Canada are pointing out that the movement while fluctuating is not only expected to continue but to increase.

The important yearly growth in population of the Dutch nation has made this country the most thickly populated country of the world. Although the intensified program of industrialization makes it possible to support more people in the same area than before yet crowded conditions and the acute housing shortage make it necessary to drain surplusses into large countries, such as Canada where there is ample space for millions to settle.

The Canadian government, painfully aware of the setback suffered after the winter of 1954/1955, in order to regain its front position in immigration is now stimulating the movement by the removal of certain restrictions in the immigration regulations and by a system of supported passage across the ocean. It is therefore expected that the figures on new arrivals in 1956 will show a definite increase over last year.

Our full-time fieldmen stationed in strategic and fast developing centers together with our part-time and contact men are fully prepared to accommodate and to place in various jobs all those who desire to join the Christian Reformed Churches in Canada.

In Eastern Ontario and in the London district where two fieldmen resigned as per January 1st 1956 the work will be carried on by the fieldmen from neighbouring districts, Mr. A. De Jonge and Mr. J. VanderVliet, with the help of local Immigration Societies and contact men from the various existing groups.

FINANCES

As was predicted in our previous report a decline in expenses took place. It is doubtful whether this downward trend can be sustained in 1957 since the outlook for an enlarged immigration program is decidedly expected for that year.

However, with a balance of \$12,798.64 on hand at the beginning of the year and with a larger number of families in our churches the Committee feels that it should propose to Synod to decrease the immigration quota with 10c per family.

RECOMMENDATIONS

We recommend:

1. that Synod continue the Immigration Committee for Canada of the Chr. Reformed Church as duly constituted by the appointment of various classes and approved by Synod. See Acts 1953 page 133;
2. that Synod continue the following appointments:
Mr. B. Nieboer for Southern Alberta;
Mr. T. Polet for Manitoba and North West Ontario;

Mr. C. Steenhof for Toronto and district;
Mr. J. VanderVliet for Central Ontario;
Mr. A. De Jonge for the province of Quebec and Eastern Ontario;
Mr. H. J. Lam for the Maritime provinces.

3. that Synod decrease the immigration quota with 10 cent per family for the year 1957.

CONCLUSION

The postwar influx of immigrants from the Netherlands will soon move into its 10th year. Although started in a small way it has grown into a movement of considerable size. Canadian church membership now almost constitutes 20% of the total membership of the Church. Your Committee is sincerely grateful for the signal blessings God has bestowed upon our labours during the years and for the continued support received from the Churches.

May the Lord give guidance to Synod in all its deliberations and decisions by His Holy Spirit.

P. J. HOEKSTRA, *President*

J. VANDERVLiet, *Secretary-treasurer*

Overtures

- 1.** *Revision of Art. 44 of the Church Order.*
Classis Zeeland overtures Synod to revise Article 44 of the Church Order so that the performance of church visiting be not required every year but rather so that Classes will be permitted to do so alternate years if in their judgment this is sufficient.

Grounds:

1. Such circumstances as those which at least in a measure, called for the existing stipulations no longer prevail, e.g., "Those who advocated the introduction of church visitation said that many of the churches in the provinces showed little regard for denominational unity and that many ministers lacked the necessary training and therefore needed some supervision and control" "Perhaps the turmoil and harm caused by the Arminian errors had convinced this Synod (Dordt 1618-19) that mutual censure, properly conducted, is highly necessary." Van Dellen and Monsma, "The Church Order Commentary" page 194.
2. It is not proper that church visiting be carried on less often than once a year (as some Classes do) without a revision of the article mentioned.
3. Church visitors remain on call in the interim even now so that they can be called if their attention or assistance is required.
4. Important elements of this visiting now come to the attention of Classes at every meeting via Article 41.
5. It is difficult to keep this visiting from becoming a mere form when conducted every year without special need.

Classis Zeeland
H. J. Kuizema, S.C.

- 2.** *Request to Defray Incorporation Fees.*
Classis Eastern Ontario asks Synod to empower its Synodical treasurer to pay the expense connected with the incorporation of the Christian Reformed Church in the Province of Quebec. This may cost between \$1600 and \$2000. Yet such incorporation is essential, since without it the minister has no right to marry people nor administer the sacrament of Holy Baptism.

Classis Eastern Ontario
Cornelius Witt, S.C.

- 3.** *Sunday School Graded Workbooks.*
Classis Hackensack overtures Synod to request its Sunday School materials committee to continue revision of these materials by the addition of graded pupil workbooks at the appropriate levels.

Grounds:

- (1) The present revisions are a good beginning and ought to be continued

so that our own Sunday School papers can be employed with the greatest benefit in the teaching of Scripture.

- (2) Pupil workbooks insure a far greater degree of pupil participation than any other method, requiring written preparation at home.
- (3) Past experience in centers of evangelism especially with materials other than Christian Reformed confirms the value of such workbooks.

Classis Hackensack
D. Van Halsema, S.C.

4. *New Campus Plan.*

Classis California overtures the Synod of 1956 that it does not act hastily in the Board of Trustees of Calvin College and Seminary's proposed "New Campus Plan", but rather appoint a committee to study the whole matter carefully in all its ramifications, giving special attention to the present possibility of severing the College's ecclesiastical connections.

Classis California
Henry Radius, S.C.

5. *Rules Governing Seminary Appointments.*

Classis Grand Rapids East overtures Synod to change the rules which govern the Board of Trustees "in the appointment of members for the instructional staff of the Seminary" adopted by the Synod of 1953 Acts of Synod 1953, Art. 94, pp. 60-68 so that the same rules be made to apply for the appointment of an instructor that now apply for the appointment of professor or associate professor.

Grounds:

1. The appointment of an instructor is in actuality a step towards a more permanent appointment.
2. The present rules do not give the churches opportunity to express possible objections.
3. The rules so modified would still permit the appointment of a lecturer in an emergency situation.

Classis Grand Rapids East
Morris H. Faber, S.C.

6. *Examination of Candidates.*

Classis Grand Rapids East overtures Synod to appoint a study committee to review the present method of examining candidates for the ministry, with special attention to be given to two matters, namely, (1) improvement of the preparatory examination now conducted by Synod, and (2) reinstatement of the exegesis of the Old and New Testaments in the original languages as part of the preparatory examination.

Grounds:

1. Due to its heavy schedule of work Synod is unable to give adequate time to this highly important matter.
2. Relative to the examining body in the preparatory examination it is doubtful that this examination must necessarily be conducted by Synod under the terms of Article 30 of the Church Order.
3. In the present system there is no examination in the exegesis of The old and New Testaments in the original languages of the Scrip-

tures, an omission which is hardly in accord with the high value placed by our church on such sound biblical scholarship.

4. There are significant evidences of dissatisfaction with our present system, especially with the examination now conducted by Synod. See "The Banner," Dec. 30, 1955, pp. 1573 and "Torch and Trumpet," Dec. 1955, pp. 17.
5. Churches closely akin to ours (the Gereformeerde Kerken of the Netherlands and the Orthodox Presbyterian Church) have different systems of examination which are worthy of study.

Classis Grand Rapids East
Morris H. Faber, S.C.

7. *South India Mission Field.*

The LaGrave Consistory respectfully overtures Synod to appoint its Mission Board, or another representative committee or body, to study again the possibility of assuming the South Indian field for Mission responsibility and to report its finding and recommendations to the Synod of 1957.

Grounds:

1. Without seeking to fix blame for our unsuccessful first attempt, or even to disturb the embers of the controversy, it seems to us that total abandonment of a field selected so carefully and after so much prayer for guidance of the Holy Spirit, simply because the initial attempt created some annoying and vexing problems, is quite out of harmony with the Spirit of a militant Church, eager to fulfill the great commission of bringing the gospel to all nations. We were never promised an easy road; we were promised a reward for perseverance. The Church originally responded solemnly to a call from India and our abrupt departure can give the impression that we have turned back from the plow.
2. Many foreign fields are being closed to Mission endeavor by non-native Churches, whereas we still have an opportunity to enter South India to work with and to strengthen existing Churches.
3. The number of American missionaries needed will be small, but their influence, if channeled properly, can be a mighty force, under God's blessing, to combat the encroachment of Communistic influence and to establish a Reformed witness in a country of teeming millions.
4. A reappraisal of the field at this time will do much to satisfy those who have felt aggrieved with Synod's decision of 1954 to abandon the field.

Rev. Jacob D. Eppinga, President
John A. Swets, Clerk

8. *Re-alignment of Classes in Ontario.*

Classes Hamilton and Eastern Ontario come with a joint overture asking for synodical approval upon their plan for the re-alignment of these two classes to the end that a third may be organized, composed of a number of congregations of each, in accordance with the following line-up.

CLASSIS EASTERN ONTARIO		CLASSIS HAMILTON		CLASSIS "X"	
1. Athens	43	1. Brantford	75	1. Acton	60
2. Belleville	53	2. Burlington	58	2. Alliston	20
3. Belmont	18	3. Drayton	73	3. Barrie	55
4. Bloomfield	66	4. Fruitland	125	4. Brampton	160
5. Bowmanville	140	5. Greensville	44	5. Clarkson	117
6. Brockville	110	6. Guelph	40	6. Cochrane and New Liskeard ..	33
7. Campbellford	23	7. Hamilton	218	7. Collingwood	20
8. Charlottetown	15	8. Jarvis	139	8. Holland Marsh ..	87
9. Cornwall	50	9. Kitchener	70	9. New Market	30
10. Cobourg	20	10. Listowel	25	10. Orangeville	16
11. Kingston	75	11. Mt. Hamilton	125	11. Orillia	27
12. Lindsay	26	12. St. Catherines	185	12. Owen Sound	65
13. Montreal	25	13. Stamford	32	13. Springdale	62
14. Oshawa	50	14. Stratford	14	14. Toronto I	131
15. Ottawa	68	15. Wellandport	90	15. Toronto II and Weston	151
16. Pembroke	33		1323		
17. Petersborough ..	33				
18. Port William ..	15				
19. Renfrew	28				
20. Trenton	140				
21. Williamsburg ..	46				
					1034

1077

NOTE — Figures are largely from the 1955 yearbook.

Each Classis will number more than 1,000 families.

The grounds for our recommendation are these:

1. Smaller classical meetings, being less unwieldy, can operate more efficiently.
2. Since increase in the number of congregations may still be expected, the need for reducing the size of our classes will continue. There is no object in waiting until the situation becomes acute.
3. The suggested re-alignment will make the three classes more equal in size with the majority of our classes.
4. The ministerial leadership in each of the proposed groups is sufficient for efficient operation.

Classis Hamilton

E. Kooistra, Stated Clerk

Classis Eastern Ontario

C. Witt, Stated Clerk

9. Classification of Accredited Causes.

Classis California overtures the Synod of 1956 to adopt the following classifications of accredited causes recommended for support:

I. QUOTAS

II. CAUSES RECOMMENDED FOR FINANCIAL SUPPORT

A. Benevolence Causes: for example:

Christian Seaman's and Immigrants' Home; Relief for unordained Mission Workers; Bethesda Sanatorium; Christian Sanatorium (Goffle Hill); Pine Rest Christian Association; Bethany Christian Home; Elim Christian Training School; Korean Material Relief; Canadian Relief Fund.

- B. Evangelism Causes: for example:
Korean Reformed Spiritual Relief; Back to God Television Program; American Bible Society; British and Foreign Bible Society; Faith, Prayer and Tract League; National Christian Association; The Gideons.
 - C. Educational Causes: for example:
Sponsorship of Foreign Students; Mid-West Junior Colleges; National Association of Christian Schools; Reformed Bible Institute; Westminster Seminary; Sokie Christian School in Japan.
 - D. Miscellaneous Causes: for example:
Soldier's Fund; Christian Labor Association; Young Calvinist Servicemen's Fund; Calvinist Cadet Corps.
- III. CAUSES RECOMMENDED FOR MORAL SUPPORT — for example:
American Federation of Reformed Young Women's Societies; Young Calvinist Federation; Lord's Day Alliance; Synodical Tract Committee.

Grounds:

1. The present list is non-descriptive in that it features financial support with but slight distinctions.
2. The present listing is faulty in that it gives the impression that only the two funds, viz: Korean and Canadian Relief — are proper for Deaconal support. Moreover it lists causes for moral support which are not recommended for financial contributions and therefore ought to be omitted from this particular roster.
3. The causes ought to be featured according to the Kingdom service being rendered. This makes for a proper identification of the various enterprises.
4. This proposed classification challenges Deaconates especially to use their funds for the varied Benevolence Causes. Institutions of mercy are specifically mentioned in C. O. Article 26 as rightfully laying claim to diaconal aid, and by grouping them together deaconates have a practical guide to so proportion their disbursements.

Classis California

Henry Radius, Stated Clerk

10. *Synodical Decisions re Labor Unions.*

Dear Brethren,

After very serious consideration it is my conviction that I must, as a member of the Church of Christ upon who also rests the responsibility to guard the purity of the Church, bring certain matters to your attention, with the request that they be studied and acted upon by the Synod.

PART I.

I request the Synod of 1956 to give an explanation of what is meant by the principles set forth in regard to labor union membership as adopted by the Synod of 1943, (Acts 1943, Article 172, B. 1, 2, 3, and 5). There is much misunderstanding about these decisions, and erroneous conclusions are drawn from them.

That is the case especially in connection with the statement that membership in a neutral union is not incompatible with membership in the Church if such union "gives no constitutional warrant to sins, nor shows in its regular activities that it champions sin." That quotation is used more often than any other Synodical pronouncement, to justify membership in-

so-called neutral unions, and also to justify such membership while serving in an holy office in the Church. It is used as a shield even when it is admitted that certain unions are guilty of practices that cannot be squared with Christian principles. The question asked is then, but is this organization guilty of giving "constitutional warrant to sin" and does it in its "regular activities champion sin"?

The question then is, what did Synod mean by giving "constitutional warrant to sin"? Did it mean that the constitution would have to say in so many words that permission is given to engage in certain unchristian practices, such as for instance, using violence on the picket line, or destroying property, or intimidating people, or to slander, or to arouse hatred against employers, or to disregard conscientious convictions, and many other sins of which practically all "neutral" unions are guilty? If that was the intention, then, of course, the qualification is quite meaningless. No union will put that in its constitution. Such outright permission to perform sinful acts will not be found even in the Constitution of a Communist organization. Yet that is the interpretation that is being given of that synodical phrase. And thus it has become, not a qualification that will prevent Christians from joining certain unions, but a handy excuse for justifying such membership.

However, if Synod meant to say that a union "gives constitutional warrant to sin" if its constitution is devoid of any reference to recognition of divine authority and by such omission recognizes no authority but its own; or, if by "warrant" is meant that its members are free to do whatever is not prohibited in its constitution, then the matter becomes somewhat different, entirely so in fact. My contention is that unions must be judged by their practices, and if these practices are encouraged and condoned, and those who commit them, whether a local or members of a local, are not in any way disciplined, then such an organization must find, in the broad statements which it sets forth in its constitution, some constitutional warrant for them. No one ever hears of punishment or even rebuke being administered because of the practice of such sins as mentioned above, or for holding meetings on Sunday, or other sins, simply because these are considered to be within the permitted conduct of these unions. The constitution does not prohibit them, hence they have constitutional warrant to commit them, all in the interest of the promotion of the welfare of the workers. I believe that it was the intention of the Synod of 1943, and later Synods, to view it in that light.

And then there is the further qualification: "nor shows in its regular activities that it champions sin." One would think that if the former did not state it clearly enough, then surely this latter one would be enough. But it is not. In the second qualification the key words have become "regular" and "champion". What are regular activities? I thought that that would include all that such unions engage in, their program to gain their objectives, to maintain their membership, to win strikes, whether justified or not, etc. But, I find that such an interpretation is considered to be much too inclusive. Strikes are not daily occurrences, and therefore not "regular". Neither is violence used always, nor molestation of people, nor do they always arouse animosity, nor do they meet regularly on Sunday, etc. Nor are the activities of the national organization, including Sunday desecration, giving support to the use of strong-arm methods to win strikes, etc., to be considered as part of the regular activities of such unions.

And then there is the word "champion". Does a union champion sin when it peacefully engages in unchristian activity because no one challenges

it? May it be said that a union champions sin when it pursues a program, and uses means to attain it, which conflict with the instructions set forth in the Word of God? That is my opinion. But that is not the interpretation being given today.

When in 1946 a committee of which I was a member, appointed to formulate grounds for the position of 1943, brought its report, it very clearly indicated that it did not mean that these qualifications should be thus broadly interpreted and robbed of their meaning. I quote from its report: (Page 265, Acts of 1946) "Synod did not say: that church membership is compatible with membership in unions which reject Christ and cast aside the fundamental principles of justice contained in His Word." Is not refusal to recognize the authority of Christ rejection of Him? And are not respect for the Word of God and the laws of God, respect for and love of fellowman, fundamental principles of justice? Again, I quote: "Neither did the Synod of 1943 say: that an individual can be neutral in his relation to Christ. Synod did not in any sense deny the fact that a person is either for Christ or against Him, and that his personal relationship must and will become evident in every sphere of life." These statements were not officially adopted, but the recommendations which were adopted should be interpreted in that light. That Committee also pointed to Scriptural passages to support the position that association with non-Christians in organizations that have not rejected Christ and that were not guilty of sinful practices is not condemned since, if that were so Christians would have to be taken out of this world. But, the committee certainly did not mean to give support to the idea that a Christian — in order to be able to live in this world — is justified in maintaining membership in an organization that has rejected Christ, refuses to be bound by divine authority, and engages in practices that cannot stand the test of the principles of life set forth in the Word of God.

I well remember that at the end of the final meeting, upon adoption of the report, the Chairman of the Committee, Dr. Clarence Bouma, said: "En nu wou ik wel eens weten waar er zulk een werklieden organisatie is, die aan die voorwaarden voldoet. Ik ken er geen een." The other members of the committee gave silent assent to that comment.

If my interpretation of the intent of the Committee of 1946 is wrong, and it did indeed intend to give license to membership in all kinds of so-called neutral unions, through meaningless, broad terminology, then, even at this late date, I repudiate it, and give notice that I withdraw my signature from that document.

I am therefore requesting Synod to give an interpretation of the decisions of 1943 and 1946, in the light of the decisions on corporate responsibility and other synodical pronouncements on the whole problem. These questions beg for an answer: Just what is meant by "giving constitutional warrant to sin"? Does that mean that permission to engage in sinful practices must be given, in so many words, in the written document called the constitution? Or can it also mean, failure to prohibit such activities? Or may it also mean that in the absence of failure to forbid, or to reprove, or to punish, warrant for such sins is given in the unwritten constitution or program of such organizations? And what is *regular* activity? Does it exclude the abuse of the strike weapon, violence, maintaining a recreation center that caters to unchristian entertainment and is open on Sunday, violation of the sanctity of the Lord's Day? When does a union "champion" sin and when doesn't it? Is the pursuance of a program that violates Christian principles of

love, championing sin? Are the imposition of unfair labor conditions, production standards, etc., that are not fought by the employer because he passes on the added cost to the consumer, to be considered as "championing" sin? I say, yes. The answer generally given, either spoken or by consent, is No. Our people need instruction in this.

PART II.

I am requesting Synod to give a thorough explanation of the decision set forth in Article 157 of the Acts of the Synod of 1947, part 4. Two brethren had asked the Synod to adopt a rule that membership in the AFL and CIO shall be incompatible with membership in a consistory in our churches. The request was occasioned by an experience of these men, who had been forced off a job because of refusal to join the AFL. Their problem was that they had to worship with members of that union on Sunday and that members of that union and also the CIO were allowed to serve in the Consistory, men who on the one hand refused to work with them and on the other hand administered the means of grace to them. The story of these men can be multiplied hundreds of times in the churches.

The Synod of 1947 refused to adopt the requested rule, taking the position that consistories have sufficient guidance in the decisions on corporate responsibility, which were referred to and quoted in part, and then stating that the requested rule would be in violation of the synodical decision that membership in a neutral labor organization is not per se actionable.

My point is this: that when the decision of 1947 is referred to it is always the last statement, to the effect that membership in a neutral union is not per se actionable, and the interpretation given is usually that such membership is per se **not** actionable, which is something quite different. What did Synod intend to say? My contention is that by stating first of all that consistories have sufficient guidance in the decisions on corporate responsibility in such matters, and by referring to such decisions which stress co-responsibility in the sins of an organization, if one remains passive, the Synod did intend to say that those who are guilty of co-responsibility in the sins of such unions ought not to be allowed to serve in the holy offices in the Church. If that was not intended there was no point in quoting these decisions of 1954. And, secondly, I contend that when Synod said that such membership is not per se actionable, it meant to say only that it does not automatically without any further question, disqualify a man from serving in the offices. Synod did mean that before such members are to be placed on nominations the organizations of which they are members should be thoroughly investigated, and if found to be guilty of unchristian practices, then those who are co-responsible because of passivity or continued membership, should not be nominated for the holy offices. The reasons for that were clearly highlighted by the brethren who brought the matter to the 1947 Synod.

I am asking that this decision of 1947 be given an explanation. Am I correct in my interpretation? What is meant by "per se" as used by the Synod in that decision? Is it right to use the argument that the refusal of the Synod to pass a general, blanket rule, is tantamount to the placing of Synod's blessing upon membership in the AFL and CIO?

PART III.

I request that the Synod of 1956, reconsider the decision contained in Article 56 (I) of the Acts of 1955. It deals with a protest of two brethren against the decision of the Synod of 1954 in regard to labor policy on

denominational building projects, both as to the procedure that was followed, when the President of the Synod ruled that the report of the one minority member of a Study Committee, and his recommendation, had to have preference over the report and recommendations of the majority of the Study Committee which was unanimously supported by the Advisory committee, and also against the material aspect of the decision in which, according to the brethren, the real issue, that of denominational authority to control its projects, etc., was not answered. The protestants thought that the President of the Synod had erred, a position for which they found strong support from Prof. M. Monsma, who is an authority on such matters. The vote on the matter too had been very close, having been decided by a majority of only four votes.

But the Synod of 1955 did not sustain them. Here, again, is a classical example of what can happen when protestants' appeals or protests are not read to the Synod as a whole but submitted to a committee constituted of less than 10% of the Synod's members. The Synod of 1955 decided not to sustain the brethren upon advice of the Advisory committee. The committee's ground for upholding the President of the Synod of 1954 in his ruling that the majority report had preference was especially that the procedure was in harmony with past practice when there were a majority and a minority report. I have searched through the Acts of previous Synods and have not been able to find one such precedent, where a minority report and recommendation was given preference over the combined unanimous recommendation of the majority of the study committee and the entire Advisory Committee. I am asking this Synod to point to such precedents. The Synod of 1955 apparently simply accepted that statement of the Advisory Committee without any question as to its correctness.

Then there was the material aspect of the matter. The protesting brethren claimed that the real issue had been buried under a barrage of considerations that were only indirectly connected with it. The Advisory Committee denied that, and again recommended that the protest of the brethren be not sustained. The grounds for its advice are: that the claim of the protestants that the minority recommendation was based on a wrong conception of the issue *was not supported by the facts. Now, in order to prove that the Advisory Committee should have quoted from the minority report, or have otherwise substantiated its claim, on the basis of that report. But, it did not. For proof of its claim that the minority report had not missed the real point, it goes to the majority report, and states that it dealt with exactly these matters which were asserted by the protestants to have been the real issue.* Hence, so it says, we cannot sustain the claim of the protestants that the issue was camouflaged, etc. What kind of proof is that? The protestants were well satisfied with the majority report, but disagreed with the minority report. And in order to prove them wrong, that the minority report did not miss the real point, the Committee calls on the majority report. How could Synod let that pass? The only explanation can be that it was not sufficiently acquainted with the content of the protest of these brethren and therefore thoughtlessly accepted the illogical reasoning of the Advisory Committee.

And then there was another interesting development. Between the Synods of 1954 and 1955 there was much discussion about the manner in which the labor policy matter had been handled, especially about the procedure. So, almost immediately when the Synod of 1955 convened there was unofficial discussion about the need of a rule that would prevent re-

occurrence of a procedure that was generally agreed to have been wrong. And, as a result we find in Article 95 of the Acts of 1955 that Synod, upon recommendation of its officers, adopted the following rule in regard to procedure to be followed when both a majority and minority report are submitted to a Synod:

"The report of the majority shall be considered the report of the committee. After the committee's report has been read and the motion to adopt has been made and seconded, the minority report shall be read and received as information."

That is very interesting. Note that there is no mention of an amendment to a former rule covering such matters, so that it cannot be said that the procedure of 1954 in the labor policy matter was based on an established Synodical rule. There is in this decision of 1955 a tacit admission that the procedure of 1954 was wrong. But, two days earlier the Synod by adopting the recommendations of the Advisory Committee had decided that it had been right! Now I appreciate that it is difficult to make a decision retroactive, and that the Synod two days earlier had made a decision based on grounds advanced by the Advisory Committee, which it accepted without questioning their correctness, but, I still maintain, that when a wrong has been done it is never too late to correct it, and that in the Church of Christ correction is always demanded, and that on the basis of rules of justice and fairness taught in the Word of God it would have been entirely ethical and wholly right to have admitted the mistake of 1954 and to have rescinded the decision which followed from it.

I request, therefore, that Synod look into this matter, and if it is evident that the procedure of the 1954 Synod, followed upon a ruling by its President, was incorrect, that then the decision on the labor policy matter be rescinded, and the report of the Advisory Committee and its recommendations be taken up again, or according to the new ruling the report of the majority of the study committee be read first, and after a motion to adopt has been seconded, the minority report to be read and accepted as information.

PART IV.

I am requesting that Synod adopt a rule to the effect that all protests, appeals and overtures that come to Synod must be read in full to the Synod in official session, and that those who have sent such protests, appeals or overtures be given the privilege of the floor when the matter is taken up.

My reasons for this request are sufficiently obvious. I do not believe that those who bring matters to Synod are given a fair hearing. Their material is in most cases never read by all the members of Synod, in most cases 90% do not know what the contents of the appeal or protest or overture are. The Synod depends entirely upon a capsule form of a resume presented by the Advisory Committee and upon its recommendations which — as I have pointed out also in this overture — may be based on grounds that are faulty. The interested parties do not have the privilege of the floor if present; in most cases they are not even present because they do not know when their case is coming up during the ten or more days of the Synod's meetings.

I am of the opinion that such treatment is not in keeping with the high principles of love and justice which must be observed in the Church of Christ. And it tends to lower the respect which the members ought to have for ecclesiastical meetings. These remarks pertain to meetings of Classes as well. In some respects also to consistories. Let Synod set the

example, by doing all within its power to accord every member of the Church the exercise of the rights and privileges which are his by virtue of his membership in the Church.

May God grant to you the guidance of the Spirit in all these matters!

Yours respectfully,

Joe Gritter

Member of the Boston Square Christian Reformed Church of Grand Rapids, Michigan.

11. *Membership Status of Divorced and Remarried Persons.*

Esteemed Brethren:

Classis Hackensack feels constrained to address Synod with respect to what she considers a critical situation in the Christian Reformed Church. It concerns our position on the membership status of people divorced and remarried. The particular occasion for this address is the experience of frustration and distress which *Classis Hackensack* has suffered on this account during the past year. We take the liberty of giving you a statement of the experience which led to the resolution to make an address to Synod on the question at issue.

At the meeting of *Classis Hackensack* held April 19, 1955, one of the member churches of *Classis* made oral request for Classical approval to admit to membership a man and wife previously divorced on unbiblical grounds and remarried. It was the conviction of the Consistory that these people should be admitted, since both were truly repentant for their past sins and are now living a sincere and consecrated Christian life. After having heard full explanation, and after considerable discussion, it clearly appeared to be the almost unanimous judgment of *Classis* that these people should be admitted to the membership of the Church. A motion that *Classis* so express herself was made and seconded, but was finally tabled until the next meeting of *Classis*; and the congregation in question was instructed to present its request and a full statement of the case in writing to the next session of *Classis*. There were two considerations which moved *Classis* to take this action. For one thing, it was observed that an existing rule of Synod forbids the admission of people divorced on unbiblical grounds and remarried, unless they show repentance by ceasing to live in their new marriage relationship. Even though the members of *Classis* were persuaded this is not a Scriptural position, *Classis* was reluctant to rule in a specific case in direct opposition to this position adopted by Synod. Secondly, *Classis* considered it the policy of wisdom to wait for the action of the Synod of 1955, since it was believed that this Synod, having had before it for more than a year the report of its own Study Committee and the advice of the Reformed Ecumenical Synod, would surely come to a more definitive position on this moot question. *Classis* therefore tabled the motion referred to above until the September session.

When the *Classis* met again on September 20, 1955, it was known that Synod had made no further pronouncements on the question, but had postponed judgment on the question until the Synod of 1956. The matter came to *Classis* again by way of a written document on the same case from the same congregation. The case concerns a man and wife who began to worship with this church in 1953. They were so much interested that the man resigned his position as Treasurer in the church with which he had been affiliated. They desired to become members of our church. It was

learned that he was a member of the Masonic Order and she of the Eastern Star. When this matter was discussed with them, they were eventually persuaded, and out of conviction gave up their lodge membership. It was then learned that the man had been divorced.

He had been divorced on grounds of incompatibility. It was further learned that the wife had also been divorced by her husband, who had deserted her and some time later, without her knowledge, obtained a divorce in another State. Both the man and his wife confess the sinfulness of his divorce and remarriage, and of her marriage to him. They profess and show true repentance. Their sincerity is attested to by the fact that they have made the sacrifice involved in giving up their lodge membership. They do not believe, however — and the Consistory agrees with them — that it would be right for them to break up their present happy home. Although they have no children, separation would cause great hardship and practical difficulties.

The Consistory, in its address to Classis, concludes: "Not wishing to ignore or break the rule of Synod, and yet quite convinced that these are penitent Christians, and as such should not be kept from the Lord's Supper and church membership, we ask your consent to receiving them. Else, please advise us what to do. If we tell them they must separate, break up their marriage, they may be lost at once to our church's ministry. Should they even then remain with us, while we serve them with 'as much spiritual care as possible' (from latest divorce committee report to Synod) we shall be having fellowship even with those living in continual adultery (such interpretation being right). If we take no action, awaiting further light from Synod, it would seem that we tacitly accuse them of impenitence, which we do not believe is true."

Upon presentation of this document and its request, the motion of the April meeting — to approve admission into the membership of the church of the married couple in question — was lifted from the table and placed before Classis. There was a long, earnest, and intense discussion. Again Classis was of the virtually unanimous conviction that these persons should be received into the full communion of the Church of Christ, and that there was no known Scriptural consideration which would forbid such admission. But again Classis was loathe to make a ruling in opposition to an existing rule of Synod. Finally, the chairman of Classis ruled that the "motion is out of order because Synod has a ruling which forbids the action requested," and the Classis sustained the chair's ruling.

Classis Hackensack, however, was greatly distressed for having had to take this position. She recognized that in doing so she was acting contrary to her own conscience on the question concerning the membership of those divorced and remarried. She was the more distressed because the only obstacle to her acting in keeping with her convictions was the rule held by Synod without (on Synod's own admission) confirmed Scriptural ground. It was decided, therefore, that an overture should be prepared in reference to this matter for presentation to the Synod of 1956. Meanwhile, expression was given to Classis' sympathy with the problem of the congregation in question, "assuring them of our interest and prayers and that Classis will continue its efforts to bring about a satisfactory solution to their problem."

This is not the first such instance that has come to the attention of Classis. And Classis is fully aware of the fact that there are many other people and churches in our denomination caught up in the same situation. People who are, in their own consciences and in the judgment of others, sincerely repentant and believing Christians, are being told that unless

they fulfill an unScriptural and inhuman demand they shall be considered unrepentant sinners living in continual adultery. Consistories unable to believe that this is true of many of the people with whom they deal, are placed in the position of having to tell these people that they cannot be received into the membership of the church *because of the position now being held by the Christian Reformed Synod*. Meanwhile, Synod herself is not certain that her position has adequate and convincing Scriptural grounding, and has appointed a Study Committee to seek such Scriptural support, or, failing to find it, propose a revision in the stand of the Christian Reformed Church. The consciences of church members and consistories are therefore expected to wait for the completion of such a search by a committee and eventual judgment upon their findings by another Synod. This binding of the conscience, against the convictions of those who have good ground for their own beliefs, and without Scriptural warrant, produces a situation which Classis Hackensack firmly believes ought not to exist. In order, therefore, to relieve her own distress of conscience, and in hopes of helping to bring about a resolution of the difficulty which burdens the aforementioned church of Classis Hackensack and many other churches, Classis Hackensack presents to the Synod of 1956 the following requests:

I. Classis Hackensack overtures the Synod of 1956 to declare that:

The ruling of the Synod of 1952 (Cf. Acts 1952, Art. 84, A, p. 22)—that *any person divorced on unbiblical grounds and subsequently remarried* cannot be a member of the church while the former partner is living unless he shows repentance by ceasing to live in the marriage relationship with his present spouse, — is without convincing Scriptural basis and warrant, and therefore cannot be maintained as a Synodical ruling binding the churches in such cases.

(It should be noted in this connection that the present position of the Christian Reformed Church stands or falls with the tenability or untenability of the "thesis that the marriage of any person who has obtained an unbiblical divorce . . . is a continual living in adultery." This is acknowledged by the Synod of 1952, which calls for abandonment of this position if there is no conclusive substantiation on the basis of Scripture "for the contention that a second marriage after unbiblical divorce is a living in continual adultery" (Cf. Acts 1952, p. 23, B, c). It is the conviction of Classis Hackensack that Scriptural basis is not present, so that our present position on the admittance of those unbiblically divorced and remarried is without convincing Scriptural basis and warrant, and therefore cannot be maintained as a Synodical ruling binding on the churches in such cases).

Grounds:

A. The Scripture heretofore and now being cited in support of the "thesis" of "continual adultery" does not prove or "conclusively substantiate" that thesis. This will appear from a consideration of these Scripture passages.

1. Consideration of Matt. 19:3-9 (Cf. 5:32; Mark 10:11, 12; Luke 16:18).

The Study Committee appointed by the Synod of 1952 takes Matt. 19:3-9 as the key-text in proof of this thesis. In this passage Jesus declares that "whosoever shall put away his wife, except for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery; and he that marrieth her when she is put away committeth adultery." If this is the key-text for the support of the thesis of continual adultery, it must be noted that this is a very weak foundation for the support of so weighty a position.

The Study Committee makes a good deal of the fact that the verbs MOICHATAI (Matt. 5:32; 19:9; Mark. 10:11, 12) and MOICHEUEI

(Luke 16:18), and which are translated "committeth adultery," are present tense verbs, and therefore *may* designate continued action. These verbs are said to "allow," to "leave room for," and not to "prohibit the possibility" of continued action (Agenda 1955, p. 120).

But it is also true that the present tense in Greek may be used to express an action simply punctiliar. The kind of action intended by the present tense form must therefore be determined by the verb-root or by the context in which the verb occurs (Cf. A. T. Robertson, *A Grammar of the Greek New Testament*, pp. 823, 846ff, 879). There is, however, no indication of the durative or linear sense in the basic meaning of either MOICHATAI (from MOICHAO) or MOICHEUEI (from MOICHEUO). Their root meaning is simply "to commit adultery," without any suggestion of a continual action or relationship (cf. the lexica of Thayer and of Liddell and Scott). The action intended by the verbs cited must be determined, therefore, by the context in which they occur.

When we examine the sentence in which these verbs occur, there is nothing to indicate that they must or even may be taken to express continued action. Matthew 19:9 reads: "Whosoever shall put away his wife, except for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery; and he that marrieth her when she is put away committeth adultery." There are really two sentences here, each with two clauses. The last clause in each sentence: "committeth adultery" modifies the first clause in each sentence — i.e., it describes the moral quality of the act which is expressed in the first part of the sentence. Thus: When a man puts away his wife (not for fornication), and marries another, what is the moral quality of that act? Jesus said: It is an act of adultery. Or, When a man marries the woman who is put away, what is the moral quality of that act? Jesus said: It is an act of adultery.

That is all that this statement can rightfully be made to say. Jesus does not expand his teaching to say how long the adultery lasts, how and when the sin comes to an end, what consequences flow from it. He teaches one simple thing: The act of putting away a wife and marrying another is an act of adultery. The act of marrying one so put away is an act of adultery. And even if the verbs MOICHATAI and MOICHEUEI should be taken as linear presents, the statement of Jesus could not be taken to mean anything more than this, that as often as a man puts away his wife and marries another he commits adultery.

This is made quite clear by the larger context in which the statement occurs. Jesus is, in all the passages cited, addressing himself to a prevailing practice among the Jews. The Jews, taking liberty from the legal permission of Moses to divorce a wife, assumed that marriage was the kind of relation that could be dissolved at will — "for every cause." Not so, said Jesus. God intended marriage to be an intimate relation of two becoming one flesh, a relation which should not be broken. And though Moses allowed you to give a bill of divorcement and put away your wife, that does not mean that the act is morally approved. If a man puts away his wife for just any cause and marries another, he defiles marriage; he commits adultery. And if another man treats marriage in the same way by simply picking up a discarded wife and marrying her, he also defiles marriage; he commits adultery.

None of these passages on divorce and remarriage (Matt. 5:32; 19:9; Mark 10:11, 12; Luke 16:18) teach either directly or by implication that a marriage which has come to exist after unbiblical divorce is a continu-

ously adulterous relationship. The Synodical Study Committee does not prove or even endeavor to prove from any of these passages, nor from the context in which they occur, that they set forth the principle of "continual adultery." The thesis of continual adultery is something the Committee tries, rather, to establish by a series of unreasoned and unsupported inferences.

Thus, after quoting Matthew 19:9, the Committee says: ". . . It is the marriage which is the committing of adultery" (Agenda 1955, p. 120). This is quite wrong, and an unwarranted reading into the words of Scripture of a sense that is not there. Jesus did not say — though the Committee tries to make Him say it — that "*the marriage*" is the "committing of adultery." He says: "the *marrying*" (cf. "whosoever shall marry," and "he that *marrieth*") is the "committing of adultery."

After reading its own ideas into Jesus' words, the Committee proceeds to draw from them its conclusions. "The inference is warranted that this is an adulterous marriage . . . an adulterous relationship . . . not just the threshold of the marriage, but the whole of it" (*Ibid.*) We ask: How, by what reasoning, in consideration of what Scriptural data is this tremendous inference warranted? The Committee offers no argument whatsoever. A bald statement of unsupported inference is offered as proof.

The further statement that "what is evil on the first day remains evil on the second" is certainly no proof. If applied to divorce and remarriage it is a begging of the question, since the assertion that an unbiblical remarriage is adulterous every day it is in existence is precisely the matter that needs to be proved. It is no proof to say that the marriage is one of continuous adultery because it is evil every successive day. That is like saying that the marriage is one of continual adultery because the married partners are, by being married, continually committing adultery. But the "proof" thus offered is the very question at issue. The Committee must prove that the marriage is evil every day. It doesn't. It merely asserts.

The Committee's summarizing statement that the thesis of continual adultery "is an inference drawn from the fact that such a person enters an adulterous relationship" (p. 124) also begs the question. Note that what the Committee here calls "fact" was before (p. 120) its own unwarranted "inference." Thus the Committee tries to establish the thesis of continual adultery by *unreasoned inference from a previously unreasoned and unsupported inference*; and though reference is made to Matt. 5:32; 19:9; Mark 10:11, 12; and Luke 16:18, there is no endeavor to show how these passages support either inference.

2. Consideration of Matt. 14:4, and Mark 6:18.

The Committee next refers to Matthew 14:4 and Mark 6:18, where John the Baptist is reported having said to Herod concerning his brother's wife: "It is not lawful for thee to have her." Of this the Committee says: "Herod's relation to his wife is spoken of as if it continues to be sinful." This is cited "in support of the contention that what is sinful on the first day remains sinful on the second. Whether the sin involved was incest or adultery or both has no direct bearing on this point" (Agenda 1955, p. 121).

This is not so, however. The incestuousness of Herod's marriage does make a difference. John speaks of the marriage as sinful *not because it began in sin, but because it was incestuous*. The relationship of Herod with the woman with whom he was living continued to be sinful because of the continuing incest involved. Therefore we cannot prove from this passage that a marriage begun in adultery continues to be adulterous

always. Furthermore, the relationship of Herod and Herodias was a purely licentious exercise of wife-and husband-swapping. Herod was not divorced from his wife, the daughter of Aretas, and of Herodias it is said that she was divorced in violation of her country's laws (Cf. Josephus, Antiquities, XVIII, 5:1, 4).

The fact that John calls so licentious a marriage as Herod's sinful, is no proof at all that one must also designate the marriage of people legally divorced and legally remarried and living after repentance in a new-found consecration to God and to each other, a continuously adulterous relationship. Classis Hackensack considers this Scripture and the use made of it as adding no weight whatsoever toward establishing the thesis of continual adultery.

3. Consideration of Romans 7:23; I Cor. 7:39; I Cor. 7:10-15.

Romans 7:2-3, and I Cor. 7:39 were adduced as proof by the Synod of 1947. The Synodical Study Committee cites them again, and adds to Scriptural proof for the thesis of continual adultery I Cor. 7:10-15.

a. Romans 7:2-3 reads: "For the woman that hath a husband is bound by the law to the husband while he liveth; but if the husband die, she is discharged from the law of the husband. So then if, while the husband liveth, she be joined to another man, she shall be called an adulteress; but if the husband die, she is free from the law, so that she is no adulteress, though she be joined to another man."

Concerning this the Synod of 1947 thought it clear that "if, at any time while her husband is still alive, this woman be living with another man, she is living in adultery even though she has become legally married to this second husband. Only the death of her (first) husband makes her free to marry another" (Acts 1947, p. 67).

This cannot, however, be accepted as proof of the thesis of continual adultery. Paul is here speaking of the normal marriage relationship, and says only that when a woman is married to a husband she is bound to him by law while he is living. If he dies, however, the law no longer applies to that relationship, and she is free to marry another. Paul says nothing here, however, about exceptions. He does not speak of those who are legally divorced (whether on the ground of fornication or otherwise) and therefore not bound any more by law. He says only that every law ceases to apply (whether the law of the first or second marriage) when the husband (whether first or second) dies. The Synod of 1947, in trying to absolutize the statement by saying that "only" death frees one to marry another, was plainly in error. Matthew 5:32; 19:9, and the Church's own position allow that adultery frees one to marry another.

The Study Committee appointed in 1952 felt the weakness of this passage, and does not use it to "conclusively substantiate" the thesis of continual adultery. In fact, it attaches considerably less weight to this passage than did the Synod of 1947. It acknowledges that this provides "no direct and clearcut" evidence for the thesis of continual adultery. Its significance is that it illustrates "the high esteem in which the Word of God holds marriage." This, says the Committee, is also the significance of I Cor. 7:10-15, which has even less reference to the question at issue than Romans 7:2-3. No man in the Christian Reformed Church needs to be persuaded, however, of the high esteem in which the Word of God holds marriage; for which reason the use of these passages in the present question is quite beside the point.

b. As for I Cor. 7:39, it is needless to say anything further about it since it admittedly teaches the same truth concerning marriage as does Romans 7:2-3; and the Synodical Study Committee makes no attempt to base any part of its own argument on it.

4. Though the Committee simply lists Gen. 1:27; 2:24; and and 5:2 in support of the thesis of continual adultery, it makes no attempt to show the relevance of these pasages to the particular question at issue .

Concerning the Scripture proof adduced by the Synod of 1947 and by the Study Committee appointed in 1952 for the thesis of continual adultery, Classis Hackensack is of the conviction that it must be said that no convincing Scriptural basis and warrant has been advanced, so that the present position cannot be maintained.

B. The kind of argumentation employed by the Study Committee appointed in 1952, and the use it makes of Scriptural evidence, is strong witness to the essential weakness of our present position. The Study Committee both admits the weakness of the exegetical foundation heretofore present and now being offered, and throughout its report gives convincing demonstration of the inconclusiveness of its own Scriptural arguments. Note the following:

1. The Committee admits that "no text or texts can be found which directly and clearly support" the thesis of continual adultery. The Committee therefore expects the position to be maintained by the Church on something less than direct and clear support.

2. The Committee speaks of the "kind of evidence" it expects to present and how it expects that evidence "to be received by the church." This evidence is not in any single part "conclusive"; the "proof will therefore be cumulative." And since there are no "direct statements," proof "will of necessity be somewhat inferential." The Committee expects the Church to receive this kind of evidence as conclusive, and to believe "that the above cumulative and inferential argumentation establishes the thesis in question." Classis Hackensack would observe concerning this:

a. That no accumulation of inconclusive considerations provides conclusive support for the weighty position in question. Many poor arguments do not make one great good argument.

b. That in the absence of clear and direct statements for the support of any position, inferential argument is acceptable only if it meets the following absolutely essential requirements: First, that the inference be an inference from a clearly stated and unquestioned truth. Second, that the inference drawn from such a truth be an inference that follows necessarily and without question. There is not a single inferential argument advanced by the Committee which meets those conditions. The Committee's inferential argument starts out from its own questionable assumptions, not from clear and unquestioned truth. Note in the Committee's summarizing of its arguments (Cf. Agenda 1955, p. 124, point 1) that the basic argument from which it makes its inferences is its own assumption. The Committee assumes that Matt. 5:32; 19:9; Mark 10:11, 12; Luke 16:18 teach that a second marriage after unbiblical divorce is an entering into an "adulterous relationship." The Committee calls this basic argument a "warranted inference." From this "inference" it proceeds to "infer" that the relationship is one of continual adultery. The Committee's inferences therefore have no certain basis from which to start, nor can it be shown in any instance that its inferences are necessary conclusions drawn from estab-

lished and unquestioned truth. Its whole inferential argument, therefore, is without value. There is no reason why this inferential reasoning, or the Committee's "cumulative" reasoning, should be accepted by the Church. She must refuse to base her position on such a foundation.

3. Classis Hackensack takes particularly strong exception to the repeated assertion of the Committee that "the burden of proof" rests upon those who deny the "thesis of continual adultery." This judgment is unScriptural, contrary to the Church Order, and in opposition to the whole spirit of Christianity and Protestantism. No church body may bind the consciences of her members or consistories by ecclesiastical resolutions not solidly and conclusively based on the teaching of Scripture. In matters of faith and life the Church has no authority other than the authority of the Word. It is wholly wrong, therefore, to say that "the burden of proof" rests upon those who would disprove a position adopted by a church on the basis of inconclusive and continuously contested Scriptural evidence. The Church must, rather, provide the conclusive Scriptural proof that establishes any official position. This has also been acknowledged by the Synod of 1952, which called for Scriptural findings to "conclusively substantiate the position that a second marriage after unbiblical divorce is a living in continual adultery," and for a new resolution on the matter if this substantiation is not provided.

C. The position now held by our Church finds no support in the *analogia fidei*, since it is a position which recognized Reformed bodies do not share, and with which they are, indeed, in positive disagreement. Our two sister churches — the Gereformeerde Kerken of the Netherlands and of South Africa — have taken a position diametrically opposed to the position we now hold.

1. The Synod of Utrecht, 1923, adopted the conclusions of her study committee with respect to the manner in which the church should deal with those who sin in unbiblical divorce and remarriage (Cf. Acts of the Synod of Utrecht, 1923, Art. 91, p. 88). Among these conclusions were the following (quoted in Agenda of the Synod of the Chr. Ref. Church, 1943, Part II, p. 236):

—"The requirement that those unbiblically divorced and remarried should abstain from every marriage relation does not find sufficient ground in Scripture, would impose too heavy a burden on the consciences, and would open the door to other and still greater sins."

—"When, after committing this sin (unbiblical divorce and remarriage) sorrow is manifest and the guilty ones desire to return to the fellowship of the church, the church — as is the case with every sin — can establish only the requirement that the sin should be confessed and sorrow concerning it should be manifest."

—"There would be reason for the church to doubt the sincerity of such repentance only if the sin of easy divorce and remarriage should thereafter be committed again."

2. The Synod of the South African churches adopted, at the Synod of 1922, the following resolutions on the question at issue (quoted from the Agenda of the Synod of the Chr. Ref. Church, 1934, Part II, pp. 238, 239):

—"When, after illegal divorce as well as in the case of a new marriage following, the guilty persons confess their sins, then the Church must again receive them into its communion when the sins have been con-

fessed and repentance has been shown."

—"The uprightness of such repentance must not consist in this, that the new marriage be annulled, which would be fornication anew, but herein that sorrow is felt on account of the sinful step which had been taken. Doubt concerning repentance may be entertained only when there is persistence in the sin of light-hearted divorce and repeated remarriage."

3. The "ground" advanced by the Synod of 1947 that "this position is in accordance with the official pronouncements of every orthodox denomination in our country which has drawn up resolutions anent this question," is no ground at all. It is unsupported and unevincenced assertion. It means nothing in the face of the evidence that our own sister churches are opposed to that position, and have advised us against it.

* * * * *

Classis Hackensack, moreover, is moved to overture Synod on the following related matters:

- II. Classis Hackensack overtures the Synod of 1956 to declare that: The ruling of the Synod of 1952 (Cf. Acts 1952, Art. 84, A, p. 22) — that any person who was divorced as a result of his own adultery, and who subsequently remarried cannot be a member of the church while the former partner is living unless he shows repentance by ceasing to live in the marriage relationship with his present spouse — is wholly without Scriptural basis and warrant, and therefore cannot be maintained as a Synodical ruling binding churches in such cases.

Grounds:

A. The only official support adopted for this position is that of the Synod of 1908. In answer to the question: "May the husband whom the wife lawfully divorced because he committed adultery, be a member of the church if he remarries while his first wife is living?" the Synod of 1908 answered:

"Such a man cannot be a member of the church, because his adultery freed the wife against whom he sinned but did not free him. He remained, notwithstanding, bound to that wife before God, and his second marriage is therefore a living in adultery" (Acts 1908, p. 39).

Concerning this it may be observed:

1. That no Scriptural support at all is given for the assertion that one who is divorced by his wife on the grounds of adultery still remains bound to that wife and therefore may not remarry. The fact is that the bond is surely severed, with Scriptural approval, when a divorce is obtained, and doubly severed in the event the innocent party remarries.

2. The assertion is not only without Scriptural basis. Especially when the innocent party is divorced and remarried, it is a logical and legal absurdity to say that the guilty party still remains bound to that party. This cannot possibly be considered a ground for the position above indicated.

B. The unScripturalness of this position has already been clearly pointed out by other Synodical committees referring to this matter.

1. In 1934 the Committee consisting of Professors L. Berkhof, D. H. Kromminga, H. Schultze, and the Reverends W. P. Van Wyk, H. Keegstra, and G. Hoeksema, commenting on Matt. 5:32; 19:9; Mark 10:11, 12; Luke 16:18, noted that: A man "may put away his wife, however, for fornication and thus dissolve the original tie, though it be in an abnormal way. But

if he does this, he destroys the former compact, so that this ceases to be binding not only for him but also for his unfaithful spouse. The natural conclusion would seem to be: (1) that he can marry another without being guilty of adultery; (2) that his former wife can marry another without being guilty of adultery; and (3) that others can marry either one of the original parties without the sin of adultery" (Agenda 1934, Part II, p. 244).

2. The Study Committee reporting in 1951 observed: "If a husband is divorced on account of his adultery without remarriage on his part, the original marriage is by the authority of the Word of God wholly severed to such an extent that the innocent party has the right to remarry. This is an accepted position which no one among us calls into question (Matthew 19). If, however, in addition to this divorce on account of adultery the guilty party remarries, then, to be sure, the original marriage is to say the least doubly severed." For that reason the Committee declared that the position of the church pertaining to one divorced on account of his own adultery should be forthwith rescinded, because it is in open conflict with the Word of God and because it substitutes for the Word of God the commandment of men.

C. It should not escape the notice of Synod that the Study Committee which reported in 1954 and again in 1955 does not offer in either of its two reports one single shred of Scriptural evidence, or any other kind of evidence, in support of the position that those divorced on account of their adultery and remarried cannot be members of the church except by ceasing to live in the second marriage. This position is obviously so wholly without Scriptural support of any kind that it ought to be permitted ecclesiastical standing no longer.

* * * * *

III. In view of what has already been said above, Classis Hackensack is persuaded that a new resolution on the matter of divorce and remarriage should be adopted. Classis Hackensack therefore overtures Synod to declare:

That the Christian Reformed Church does not find adequate Scriptural warrant for making a special Synodical ruling which would set up special requirements for the admission or readmission of those who have been guilty of the sins of divorce and remarriage. Scripture clearly enough indicates that these are serious sins, of which those who are guilty must repent and from which they must turn. But the Church does not have Scriptural ground for requiring that any particular form or exceptional evidence of repentance should be present — as, for example, the requirement that those who profess repentance must show it by ceasing to live (in the ordinary marriage relationship) with their present spouses. The Church, staying with the clear teaching of Scripture, is able to declare only: that there must be sincere repentance, that those who so repent should understand the heinousness of such sins and resolve by God's grace not to commit them again, and that the sincerity of such repentance and turning must be evidenced by a godly life in their present marriage and in all the relations in which those persons are Providentially placed. When those conditions are met, the Church, which is the Church of the Merciful and Forgiving Christ, has no alternative but to receive such persons into her communion.

Grounds:

A. It has not been proved that in the instance of the sins of divorce and remarriage, the turning from or forsaking of sins repented of requires a discontinuance of the second marriage as a continually adulterous relationship. In the absence of such indication that this is the meaning of repentance and turning in this case, the Church can demand no more than that the same kind of sins should not be committed again, and that those who repent live henceforth with a new spirit and holy life in their present relationships.

B. Though the Church may not approve the morality of a divorce obtained on other than the ground of fornication, she has no alternative but to recognize a divorce and subsequent marriage sanctioned by the State as valid and legally existing. This is taught by Deut. 24:1-4, which shows that Moses did not invalidate divorce and remarriage but regulated it by law. Jesus, in Matt. 5:32; 19:9; Mark 10:11, 12; and Luke 16:18, was not functioning as a civil Lord, changing the civil law of Moses or disqualifying the law of divorce to which he made reference, but He was the prophet teaching the truth of the morality by which His followers should live in the matters of divorce and remarriage. The Church has both a right and a duty to make moral judgments, and to enunciate Scriptural moral principles for the lives of her members. The Church may not, however, require that her members cease living in the marriage which exists by the legal sanction of the State. She may only, and must, indeed, teach and if necessary discipline her members to live rightly and piously in that relationship. And when there is evidence that her members are repentant for past sins and live a Godly life in that marriage relationship, there is no ground for refusing the admission or readmission into the membership of the church.

C. The position of the above resolution is essentially the same as that taken by our sister churches — the Gereformeerde Kerken of the Netherlands and South Africa — and by them commended to our church some 33 years ago; and it is the position proposed to our church several times by our Study Committees, ever since 1930.

Classis Hackensack,
Dick L. Van Halsema, S.C.

12. *Synodical Reimbursement for Classis Expenses.*

Classis Hackensack overtures Synod of 1956 to assume 80% of the classical expenses incurred by delegates of Florida congregations who travel to meetings of Classis Hackensack, for the following reasons:

1. These churches were organized as a result of denominationally initiated and prosecuted Home Missions efforts, and in response to persuasions from the Executive Committee for Home Missions.
2. These churches are geographically and in other respects without direct relation to Classis Hackensack, and are placed in Classis Hackensack only for administrative reasons, and also for such help and fellowship as Classis may be able to offer.
3. The Florida churches are really denominational projects and responsibilities, for which reason the cost involved in their Classical membership should be borne by the whole denomination and not only by one Classis.

4. Since the traveling costs are considerable because of the great distances, and will increase proportionately as new congregations are added, Classis Hackensack does not feel that she ought to place this additional burden on the churches of the Classis.
5. The assumption of 80% of these expenses by Synod would be an equitable division of costs between Classis and Synod.
6. Synodical assistance in an instance of this kind was given to Classis Pacific in former years.

Classis Hackensack,
D. L. Van Halsema, S.C.

13. *Remuneration for Loss of Salary.*
Classis Wisconsin humbly submits the following overture for your consideration: "The home schedules of many ministers are increasingly heavy, and more and more laymen, capable and with knowledge of the work, are serving on Synodical Boards and Committees. However, more laymen could serve if consideration were given to remuneration for salary loss in travel time and time off spent in the work of the church. We recommend therefore, that Synod approve and instruct its Synodical treasurer to remunerate such laymen, if and when requested, at the rate of \$15.00 per day."

Classis Wisconsin,
N. Jansen, S.C.

14. *Calvin Expansion Program.*
Classis Pacific overtures Synod that in conjunction with the proposal for Calvin's expansion, that it carefully consider the advisability of the establishment of society-operated junior colleges in various areas of our churches, including Grand Rapids, with a view to making Calvin College primarily a senior and graduate institution.

Classis Pacific,
B. T. Haan, S.C.

15. *Colloquium Doctum.*
Classis Pacific overtures Synod to retain the Colloquium Doctum for all ministers who come to our churches from other denominations, with the understanding that the classis will take into account whether or not the transferring minister comes from a sister church.

Grounds:

1. The recent experience of this classis in being compelled to reject a transferring minister from the Hervormde Kerk, in spite of the recommendation of the Synodical deputaten of the Gereformeerde Kerken, has demonstrated the need for retaining this examination.
2. This examination in our only "constitutional" safeguard to protect our churches from unsound or unsuitable ministers who may come to us from other denominations.
3. Conducting such a Colloquium Doctum is in harmony with our practice of classical examination of our own students who have been trained in our own school and previously examined by our

Synod, and it is paralleled by that of other churches of Presbyterian polity which even re-examine ministers who transfer from one presbytery to another within the same denomination.

Classis Pacific,
B. T. Haan, S.C.

16. *Home Mission Song Book.*

Classis Pacific overtures Synod to appoint a committee with the mandate to compile a song book that is particularly adapted for the home mission program of the Christian Reformed Church.

Grounds:

1. The expanding mission program of our denomination demands material that is particularly adapted to mission work.
2. The *Psalter-Hymnal* and the *New Christian Hymnal* are particularly adapted to congregational life and not to the work of Home Missions.
3. Other hymnbooks available that have a measure of appeal to home mission subjects have the Arminian stamp.
4. Such a book could be used as a preparation for using the *Psalter Hymnal*.

Classis Pacific,
B. T. Haan, S.C.

17. *Intermountain Indian School.*

Classis Minnesota North overtures Synod to discontinue our Mission program at the Intermountain Indian School at Brigham City, Utah, under the direction of the Christian Reformed Board of Missions.

Grounds:

1. The work at Brigham City is among students and does not contribute directly to the establishment of the native church, an objective to which we are committed. To establish a new mission post, acquire adequate facilities and maintain a staff of workers, (which eventually would be more than one ordained man) for what is largely work among students, is a departure from our established mission policy.
2. Our work among the Indians already receives the largest share of our mission effort. Further expansion of our work among the Indians is neither wise nor equitable, especially in view of our program of expansion on other fields.
3. The propriety of one of our missionaries working with the National Council of Churches leadership in the Intermountain Indian School is highly questionable.
4. A distinctive Christian Reformed work among the unevangelized Indians on the campus at Intermountain Indian School is not possible because of the government policy of integration of all religious instruction among Protestants. Off-the-campus work would have to be done largely on week-ends because of the heavy schedule of the students during school days. Work of such a limited scope does not justify the establishment of a new post.
5. Since, at the present time, only about 10% of the 2200 students at Intermountain Indian School are registered "Christian Reformed," and since it is estimated that only about one fourth of those registered

"Christian Reformed" are covenant youth, the extent to which we propose to go into what would largely be week-end work for the care of these covenant Indian youth, is not justified.

6. The Christian Reformed Board of Missions ought to limit its work at Intermountain to the spiritual care of the covenant youth.

Charles Terpstra. S.C.

18. *Uniform Observance of Lord's Supper.*

The Consistory of the Second Christian Reformed Church of Denver, Colorado, overtures the Synod of 1956 to adopt a uniform schedule for the observance of the Lord's Supper by all of our congregations, with exceptions being permitted when necessary. For the spiritual welfare of our denomination, and to promote the practice of close communion by our churches, it is proposed:

1. That Holy Communion should be celebrated on the same Sunday by all of the Churches of our denomination. We propose that the following Sundays be observed for Preparatory and Communion Services:
Preparatory Services — the second Sundays in March, June, September, and December.
Communion Services — the third Sundays in March, June, September, and December.
2. That Synod recommend that members who plan to be away from their home congregations on these dates, and partake as guests in other congregations, should obtain a letter from their consistory stating that they are members in good and regular standing.

Grounds:

1. The practice of celebrating Communion Services on the same Sunday would promote an experience of unity of spirit and practice among our congregations — "all with one accord."
2. The proposed schedule would obviate conflicts with church or national holidays in both the United States and Canada.
3. With modern, easy transportation available to all, many of our people are traveling for varied reasons. Such a decision would eliminate present confusion as to the dates of Communion Services in other congregations.
4. Members who are away from home congregations on Communion Sunday, having requested a letter from their Consistory, would feel more free to ask permission to partake at the "host" church.
5. Such a letter from home consistories would remove the unfair responsibility of refusing or granting permission to partake from the pastor and consistory members of the "host" churches, since they often do not know the persons requesting permission.
6. Such a unity of practice among our churches would strengthen our practice of observing close Communion.

Respectfully submitted,
Consistory of the Second Christian
Reformed Church of Denver, Colorado
Clarence Westenburg, Clerk

19. *Calling Ministers From The Netherlands.*
Classis Pacific overtures Synod to appoint an official screening committee for all of Canada for the calling of ministers from the Netherlands.

Classis Pacific
B. T. Haan, S.C.

20. *Editors of Church Papers.*
Classis Alberta overtures Synod to instruct its Publication Committee to allow the two editors-in-chief of our two church papers (The Banner and De Wachter) an annual leave of possibly three or four weeks to visit outlying communities of our denomination — such a tour not to be considered a vacation — in order with preaching and speaking engagements to make contacts with our people. These contacts will be mutually beneficial for our people and for our editors in their work.

Classis Alberta,
Rev. J. Hanenburg, S.C.

21. *Accredited Causes for Financial Support.*
Classis Alberta overtures Synod to include the Christian Labor Association of Canada in the list of accredited causes for financial support and the Lord's Day Alliance of Canada in the list of accredited causes for moral support of our churches.

Grounds:

1. Both organizations perform the same services in Canada as do the Christian Labor Ass'n and the Lord's Day Alliance, which are on the list already, perform in the U. S. A.
2. Adding these causes to the list would be in accordance with a former decision of Synod to recommend the British and Foreign Bible Society for support by Canadian churches only.

Classis Alberta
Rev. J. Hanenburg, S.C.

22. *Canadian Childrens' Allowance for Ministers.*
Classis Alberta overtures Synod that the General Comm. for Home Missions be instructed to discontinue the practice of including the Canadian Government's Family Allowance in computing the Childrens' allowance for ministers of subsidized churches and of home missionaries in Canada, and that this correction be made retroactive for 1956.

Grounds:

1. Synod of 1955 decided that an ecclesiastical body has no authority officially to tax a non-ecclesiastical source of income. (Acts '55, Art. 140, IV.)
2. If Synod wants to continue the practice of including extra-ecclesiastical income in computing the total C. A. of the ministers and home missionaries in Canada, Synod should be consistent and through an investigation committee determine if, and if so, which ministers have other extra-ecclesiastical sources of income, such as, royalties from sales of books; real estate holdings; inheritances; teacher's salaries, etc.

in order to make proper deductions from subsidy allowances of these. The emeriti also should have Old Age and Social Security benefits, if such there be, carefully deducted from their sustenance granted by the Minister's Pension and Relief Administration.

3. The Family Allowances in Canada are not a source of income of the ministers but of mothers and their children.
4. Under the present rule and practice all Canadian mothers receive the benefits of Gov't F.A. except the mothers in the parsonages of needy (subsidized) churches and of the Home Missionaries in service of the Chr. Ref. Church.
5. Although ministers of needy churches in Canada receive \$200 more salary than the ministers of needy churches in the U.S.A. it cannot be denied that the cost of living in Canada is much higher than in the U.S.A. and the difference is not covered by these \$200.
6. The Canadian Gov't pays F. A. from \$60 to \$96 per year per child (depending on age) up to 16 years, but the same government takes back \$40.00 of this amount in the form of Income Tax. For each child not qualified for F.A. an amount of \$400.00 is deductible from the net income but for each child qualified for F.A. only \$150.00 is deductible. The 16% Income Tax from that difference is \$40. If the whole amount of F.A. is deducted from the Children's Allowance of \$125.00 from the Fund of Needy Churches, a minister actually receives only \$85.00 per child.

Classis Alberta

Rev. J. Hanenburg, S.C.

23. *Division of Classis Proposed.*

Classis Alberta overtures Synod to approve the division of Classis Alberta, thus forming another classis, according to the following arrangement of congregations:

One Classis

1. Barrhead-Westlock
2. Beverly
3. Edmonton I
4. Edmonton II
5. Edmonton III
6. Edm. Jasper Place
7. Edson
8. Houston, B. C.
9. Lacombe I
10. Lacombe Bethel
11. La Glace
12. Neerlandia
13. Peers
14. Red Deer
15. Rocky Mt. House
16. Smithers, B. C.
17. Telkwa, B. C.
18. Terrace, B. C.

The Other Classis

1. Bellevue
2. Bowness-Montgomery*
3. Brooks
4. Burdett
5. Calgary I
6. Granum
7. High River
8. Iron Springs
9. Lethbridge
10. Medicine Hat
11. Nobleford
12. Regina, Sask.
13. Saskatoon, Sask.
14. Taber
15. Vauxhall

* Bowness-Montgomery will be organized shortly. Is a suburb of Calgary.

Grounds for the proposed division:

1. As at present Classis Alberta is far too big. It numbers 33 churches. Is thus the largest classis of our denomination.
2. This makes for too much work at our classis meetings.
3. The geographic spread is far too great for convenience and efficiency. We now cover an area of 1500 miles from northwest to south-east, and 800 miles from north to south.
4. This matter has been before our consistories for more than a year and is everywhere approved.

Note: We are at present in correspondence with the three Montana churches of the Chr. Ref. Church belonging with Classis Pacific to obtain their consent to join the proposed southern group. Classis Pacific in a recent decision has left the disposition of this matter to the local congregations in question.

Classis Alberta
Rev. J. Hanenburg, S.C.

24. *Examination of Candidates for the Ministry.*
Classis Alberta expresses agreement with an overture of Classis Grand Rapids East regarding the examination of candidates for the ministry.

The overture of Classis Grand Rapids East reads as follows:

Classis asks Synod to appoint a study committee to review the present method of examining candidates for the ministry, with special attention to be given to two matters, namely, (1) improvement of the preparatory examination now conducted by Synod, and (2) re-instatement of the exegesis of the Old and New Testaments in the original languages as part of the preparatory examination.

Grounds:

1. Due to its heavy schedule of work Synod is unable to give adequate time to this highly important matter.
2. Relative to the examining body in the preparatory examination it is doubtful that this examination must necessarily be conducted by Synod under the terms of Article 30 of the Church Order.
3. In the present system there is no examination in the exegesis of the Old and New Testaments in the original languages of the Scriptures, an omission which is hardly in accord with the high value placed by our church on sound Biblical scholarship.
4. There are significant evidences of dissatisfaction with our present system, especially with the examination now conducted by Synod.
5. Churches closely akin to ours (the Gereformeerde Kerken in the Netherlands and the Orthodox Presbyterian Church) have different systems of examination which are worthy of study.

Classis Alberta
Rev. J. Hanenburg, S.C.

25. *Protest Back To God Hour Sermon.*
Upon consideration of an overture from our Neerlandia consistory the substance of which had already been called to the attention of our Radio Committee for the **Back to God Hour** on two occasions, Classis

Alberta has decided to overture the 1956 Synod of the Christian Reformed Church as follows:

(A) To take cognizance of the fact that a sermon entitled "Mary, His Mother" was preached by Dr. George Stob on the **Back to God Hour** broadcast during the 1955 Advent season, and that this sermon contained such statements as:

"We need Mary in our Christmas, because apart from Mary there is no Jesus in our Christmas."

"Ah Mary, how much have you been for the soul of us all, because God made you so."

". . . because Mary was very sister to my mother and yours. Jesus is my very brother and yours."

"No motherhood is so glorious as that of Mary, because no mother was given so much in order to give so much. Mary's motherhood was somewhat the image of the Fatherhood of God Who gave His only Son."

(B) That our protest against the delivery of such a dangerously ambiguous sermon on our denominational broadcast be sustained, and that our request that Synod remind the Radio Committee for the **Back to God Hour** of its responsibility to exercise very careful supervision of the material preached upon its broadcasts be honored.

Grounds:

1. This broadcast is an evangelistic enterprise reaching all types of people on our continent, which demands that sermons delivered over our broadcast be distinctly Reformed in content and unambiguous in style.
2. The **Back to God Hour** is the radio voice of the entire Christian Reformed Church.

(C) That Synod take up the matter of this disputable sermon with the Radio Committee and Dr. George Stob giving a report of the result of this action upon its completion to Classis Alberta.

Grounds:

In this way the reputation of the Church, the Radio Committee and Dr. George Stob is best served.

Classis Alberta
Rev. J. Hanenburg, S.C.

26. *Revision of Psalter Hymnal.* Classis Orange City overtures Synod to postpone final action on the approval of the Psalter-Hymnal revision for at least one year.

Grounds:

1. This revision ought to insure a stable book of praise for many years.
2. There is no urgency for haste.

Classis Orange City,
W. Prince, S.C.

27. *Translation of the Bible.* The Consistory of the Seattle Christian Reformed Church overtures Synod: that the Christian Reformed Church endeavor to join with other conservative churches in sponsoring or facilitating the early produc-

tion of a faithful translation of the Scriptures in the common language of the American people.

Grounds:

1. We do not now have such a translation.
 - a. Versions presently in use among us (the King James and the American Standard Versions) have become antiquated so that they are no longer written in the common language of the people.
 - b. The new Revised Standard Version, presumably written to fill this need for a modern translation has failed to win the approval of our Synod and of other conservative Christians.
2. Such a version is needed:
 - a. To make our own use of God's Word less difficult and therefore more effective.
 - b. To make the Word of God easier for our children to understand.
 - c. To make the Word more readily understandable to those unfamiliar with it as they are confronted with it in missionary and personal work.
3. Our Reformed Faith which is founded on God's Word demands that we use every available, appropriate means to promote the use and study of that Word.

Respectfully submitted,
The Consistory of the Seattle
Christian Reformed Church
Peter De Jong, President
Jacob Einfeld, Clerk

28. *Examination of Candidates by Synod.* Classis Sioux Center overtures Synod to discontinue the examinations of our candidates, and transfer this important matter to some other ecclesiastical body. Our Synods are so overburdened with work that they do not devote the necessary time to this most important matter. As at present conducted, these examinations are inadequate as a basis for responsible judgment about the intellectual and spiritual qualifications. Moreover, they do harm in that they create a serious situation in which one ecclesiastical body is influenced in its decisions by the action of another. In dubious cases Synod passes because the examination is not final, and expects Classes to take the final responsibility. Classes in such cases are reluctant to overrule the judgment of Synod and consider it presumptuous to do so.

Grounds:

1. Synod does not devote the necessary time to it.
 2. The examinations as now conducted are inadequate for responsible judgment.
 3. They create a situation conducive to shifting of responsibility.
- Classis Sioux Center,
Peter Vander Weide, S. C.

29. *Particular Synods.* Classis Sioux Center overtures Synod to reconsider the problem of Particular Synods. There is a definite tendency in the church today towards

smaller Classes. Witness the formation of Classis Cadillac and Rocky Mountain. We may expect the formation of several new classes in the immediate future. This will make our Synodical gatherings so large as to become unwieldy. When formerly ninety delegates composed the Synod, reduction was demanded. One of the reasons was that a body of sixty would be more efficient than ninety. In the foreseeable future our Synods will consist of a hundred and twenty-five delegates. That is not necessary. Also, our synodical meetings are becoming too expensive. For there are not only traveling expenses, but more and more elder delegates will be required to demand reimbursement for the loss of wages. And our synodical treasurer reported in 1954, "Your attention should be called to the fact that the expenditures of synod, including the expenses of its several committees and the delegates ad examina, are becoming exceedingly high . . ." Cf. *Acts*, 1954, p. 565.

In view of the above we overture synod to reconsider the problem of Particular Synods and to appoint a committee to present a blueprint of specific plans for distribution and administration of denominational work.

Grounds:

1. In the interest of efficiency.
2. In the interest of economy.

Classis Sioux Center,
Peter Vander Weide, S. C.

30. *Revision of Psalter Hymnal.* Classis Sioux Center overtures Synod that Synod, even though much time, effort, and money has already been spent relative this matter, seriously reconsider whether or not our church is ready for, and actually needs a Psalter-Hymnal revision, since it is not at all established that our people generally are dissatisfied with our present book of praise, and are ready to receive a change. And, that if Synod, after careful reconsideration, be convinced that a change is necessary, Synod take the necessary steps to maintain within our church the position previously adopted by Synod which gives the psalms greater preference for divine worship than the hymns. That Synod be urged to do this by:

1. Disapproving any addition to the number of hymns in our present song book, allowing only substitutions for present hymns or refinement of present hymns.
2. Maintaining as wide a variety and selection of psalm arrangements as is possible in accordance with good musical taste and the requirements for good congregational singing.
3. Studying ways and means to bring about a sharper distinction between our psalm section and our hymn section so that our people will more readily differentiate between them.

Classis Sioux Center,
Peter Vander Weide, S. C.

31. *Calvin College Long-Range Campus Proposals.* Classis Sioux Center overtures Synod to delay for one year the proposal of the Board of Trustees to sell the entire Calvin College and Seminary campus. That the Synod appoint a committee to meet with the leaders

in various areas both to discuss their higher educational problems in relationship to the proposal, and to become acquainted with other related problems which are present within the church.

Grounds:

1. This will aid the church in coming to a mature judgment.
2. At present too much unrest prevails in view of uncertainties in the minds of our people to bring about a whole-hearted endorsement and support of this proposal.

This committee is to summarize its findings and come to next Synod with recommendations.

Classis Sioux Center,
Peter Vander Weide, S. C.

32. *Sale of Present Campus of Calvin College.*

The undersigned overtures Synod not to follow the suggestion of the long-range planning committee and the Board of Trustees of Calvin College and Seminary to sell the present campus.

Grounds:

1. For the present buildings our people have been giving for more than forty years; they are attached to it.
2. This campus, with her buildings, will do for another forty or fifty years if we take our junior college out, which will have to be done anyway, if our people all over the land put up junior colleges.
3. The junior college students take up the room in our school; in 1954-1955 there were 883 students in the junior college, and only 451 students in the last two years; and in 1955-1956 there are 975 in the junior college and only 504 in the last two years.
4. If in a few more years we get 1000 more students in our school, it will be an unruly crowd, and personal contact with the students by the professors (which is so necessary in a Christian college) will be impossible.
5. Michigan, with its 18,672 families, is well able to start a Junior College, to take care of about 1000 students.

So let Synod decide not to give any instruction for junior college students after 1959 or 1960.

Then our present buildings will be roomy enough for another forty years.

John Ten Harmsel.

33. *Publication of Posters.*

Classis Orange City overtures Synod to request the Tract Committee to study the possibility and advisability of preparing a series of posters depicting the sins of our day, urging men to repent, and inviting them to attend the house of God; which posters shall be fit for placing on billboards and other places.

Reasons:

1. We believe that Americans must be made aware that God's standards do not change.

2. Men must see the evils of drunkenness, immorality, gambling, religious indifference, and must be aroused from their spiritual lethargy.
3. The people of this land must be reminded that "righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people."
4. Many folks will not take time to read a tract, but may be struck by glancing at a thought-provoking poster.

Classis Orange City,
Wesley Prince, S. C.

DELEGATES TO THE 1956 SYNOD

PRIMI DELEGATES

ALTERNATES

Classis Alberta

Ministers Rev. A. De Jager
 Rev. D. J. Scholten
 Elders..... C. Withage
 C. Tuininga

Ministers..... Rev. M. Dornbush
 Rev. P. Hoekstra
 Elders..... N. Greydanus
 J. Vander Velde

Classis Cadillac

Ministers..... Rev. I. Couwenhoven
 Rev. H. Zwaanstra
 Elders..... C. Van Houten
 J. Witt

Ministers..... Rev. H. Vanderaa
 Rev. Wm. Huyser
 Elders..... G. Zuiderveen
 J. Jager

Classis California

Ministers..... Dr. J. Daane
 Rev. H. A. Dykstra
 Elders..... Dr. H. De Jong
 H. Te Velde

Ministers..... Rev. B. Den Ouden
 Rev. E. Tanis
 Elders..... J. Zoetewey
 S. Van Dyken

Classis Chatham

Ministers..... Rev. K. Hart
 Rev. J. C. Verbrugge
 Elders..... R. Koning
 J. W. Bakker

Ministers..... Rev. A. Hofland
 Rev. J. Vande Kieft
 Elders..... C. Van Gorp
 J. Joosse, Sr.

Classis Chicago North

Ministers..... Rev. M. Bolt
 Rev. E. L. Haan
 Elders..... M. Vander Velde
 A. R. Van Dyken

Ministers..... Rev. G. Zylstra
 Rev. H. Leestma
 Elders..... S. Hoving
 J. Kooy

Classis Chicago South

Ministers..... Rev. G. Hoeksema
 Rev. C. De Haan
 Elders..... N. Schoon
 G. De Vries

Ministers..... Rev. T. Versept
 Rev. B. Van Someren
 Elders..... J. Fennema
 C. Bultema

Classis Eastern Ontario

Ministers..... Rev. A. W. Schaafsma
 Rev. C. Witt
 Elders..... J. P. Quartel
 S. Feddema

Ministers..... Rev. L. Van Laar
 Rev. J. Rubingh
 Elders..... J. Louwerse
 L. Vanden Berg

Classis Grand Rapids East

Ministers..... Rev. W. Haverkamp
 Rev. G. D. Vanderhill
 Elders..... A. W. Hulst
 Dr. D. J. Plekker

Ministers..... Rev. J. Hasper
 Rev. N. L. Veltman
 Elders..... G. Zylstra
 R. Haan

PRIMI DELEGATES**Classis Grand Rapids South**

Ministers..... Rev. H. Bel
 Rev. W. Van Peurseem
 Elders..... P. Lamberts
 J. Besteman

Classis Grand Rapids West

Ministers..... Rev. A. Hoogstrate
 Rev. C. Vanden Heuvel
 Elders..... D. Van Vliet
 C. Van Valkenberg

Classis Hackensack

Ministers Dr. G. Stob
 Rev. E. Bradford
 Elders..... Dr. W. Yonker
 P. Wattez

Classis Hamilton

Ministers Rev. W. Van Dyk
 Rev. T. C. Van Kooten
 Elders..... J. Jaarsma
 A. Slothouber

Classis Holland

Ministers..... Rev. M. J. Vander Werp
 Rev. H. Baker
 Elders..... R. Boeve
 C. Volkema

Classis Hudson

Ministers..... Rev. N. J. Monsma
 Dr. O. Holtrop
 Elders..... C. Van Zwoll
 S. Steen

Classis Kalamazoo

Ministers..... Rev. J. O. Bouwsma
 Rev. C. Greenfield
 Elders..... G. Kamp
 C. De Boer

Classis Minnesota North

Ministers..... Rev. C. Terpstra
 Rev. J. L. Bult
 Elders..... J. Vander Veen
 F. Ahrenholz

Classis Minnesota South

Ministers Rev. O. De Groot
 Rev. J. H. Hoeksema
 Elders..... L. Brouwer
 M. Walterstorff

ALTERNATES

Ministers..... Rev. M. Vander Zwaag
 Rev. T. Yff
 Elders..... R. Postma
 I. De Mey

Ministers..... Dr. A. C. De Jong
 Rev. L. Van Drunen
 Elders..... M. Hoogerhyde
 Dr. W. Rooks

Ministers Rev. P. Holtrop
 Dr. L. Smedes
 Elders..... M. Slager
 J. H. Scott

Ministers..... Rev. H. W. Kroeze
 Rev. A. Persenaire
 Elders..... G. J. Kamptjes
 S. P. Runia

Ministers..... Rev. W. P. Brink
 Rev. H. Vander Ark
 Elders..... G. Pothoven
 T. Hulst

Ministers..... Rev. S. J. De Vries
 Rev. S. Van Dyken
 Elders..... L. Bangma
 M. Kooistra

Ministers..... Rev. G. Rientjes
 Rev. G. Vander Kooi
 Elders..... M. Hoekstra
 J. Brussee

Ministers..... Rev. S. Viss
 Rev. M. G. Zylstra
 Elders..... J. Bonnema
 G. Groen

Ministers..... Rev. R. Veldman
 Rev. A. Disselkoen
 Elders..... J. Verbrugge
 J. Tinklenburg

PRIMI DELEGATES

ALTERNATES

Classis Muskegon

Ministers.....Rev. A. Walcott
 Dr. E. H. Palmer
 Elders.....J. Vander Well
 L. Jordan

Ministers.....Rev. G. Holwerda
 Rev. J. C. Scholten
 Elders.....J. Casemier
 J. Schuitema

Classis Orange City

Ministers.....Rev. R. S. De Haan
 Rev. J. B. Hulst
 Elders.....A. Engbers
 L. Meydrech

Ministers.....Rev. H. Minnema
 Rev. J. Riemersma
 Elders.....A. Doctor
 L. Vanden Bosch

Classis Ostfriesland

Ministers.....Rev. J. J. Vanden Hoek
 Rev. J. A. Bandstra
 Elders.....S. Cannegieter
 R. Vander Ploeg

Ministers.....Rev. J. A. Wesseling
 Rev. E. H. Oostendorp
 Elders.....R. Abbas

Classis Pacific

Ministers.....Rev. J. A. Petersen
 Rev. F. Van Houten
 Elders.....H. Vander Ark
 M. Kwantes

Ministers.....Rev. J. Griffioen
 Rev. W. Verwolf
 Elders.....E. Terpstra
 E. Compaan

Classis Pella

Ministers.....Rev. W. Reinsma
 Rev. H. Verduin
 Elders.....G. Rooy
 G. Andringa

Ministers.....Rev. K. Rietema
 Rev. J. Geels
 Elders.....G. De Groot
 C. Groenendyk

Classis Rocky Mountain

Ministers.....Rev. H. N. Erffmeyer
 Rev. M. Ouwinga
 Elders.....Dr. L. Bos
 M. Buikstra

Ministers.....Rev. A. Poel
 Rev. J. Zwaanstra
 Elders.....O. Colzman
 S. Olthoff

Classis Sioux Center

Ministers.....Rev. B. J. Haan
 Rev. H. Petersen
 Elders.....H. J. Van Boven
 J. Terpstra

Ministers.....Rev. G. Vander Plaats
 Rev. L. Bouma
 Elders.....Wm. De Boer
 J. Balkema

Classis Wisconsin

Ministers.....Rev. H. Exoo
 Rev. R. Opperwall
 Elders.....J. Ribbens
 H. Haack

Ministers.....Rev. J. J. Byker
 Rev. J. H. De Haan
 Elders.....C. Jasperse
 H. Redeker

Classis Zeeland

Ministers.....Rev. N. Beute
 Rev. H. J. Kuizema
 Elders.....J. H. Nyenhuis
 J. J. Sturing

Ministers.....Rev. F. M. Huizenga
 Rev. J. C. Medendorp
 Elders.....H. A. Ten Harmsel
 R. Veltema

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NOTIFICATION OF APPEALS

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