

1888

[1888] Synodale Handelingen der Holl. Christ. Geref. Kerk in Amerika, gehouden te Grand Rapids, Mich., den 13 Juni, e.v.d., 1888.

TRANSLATION:

**ACTS OF SYNOD
OF THE
CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH**

ASSEMBLED AT GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN

June 13, ff., 1888

Note to the reader: This translation has not been corrected and will be found to be inaccurate in some instances. The reader should consult the original Dutch editions before quoting from this volume.

The Acts of the Synod of the Holland Christian Reformed Church
Held at Grand Rapids, Michigan, On June 13, 1888, and following days.

June 1.

The retiring President has asked the Rev. Prof. G. E. Boer to deliver the Synodical Sermon, due to the indisposition of the President. The Professor in his discourse deals with Acts 15:6.

The Synod is called to order by the Rev. L. Rietdijk, the retiring President, who reads the seventeenth chapter of John, and asks the Assembly to sing Ps. 147:4, 6.

He addresses the Synod: My dear Brothers, I consider myself fortunate to be present here, since I was incapable of carrying out my task of delivering the Synodical Sermon, at the opening services of last evening. The Rev. Boer is to be thanked for taking my place and for his willingness to do so.

Casting a backward glance, we must confess that we have not done as we should. The blood of Christ is our refuge: The Father forgive us for the sake of Christ.

When we consider the blessings of the Lord for both soul and body, then we must confess, "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name be the glory and the honor."

When we consider the difficulties in our ecclesiastical existence, and the extended growth of our Church; then God's care for us becomes so evident, that it leads to this confession, "Through thy grace, O Lord, we are what we are."

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If we consider the weighty problems with which we have to cope—just cast a glance at the Agenda—then we involuntarily exclaim, "Who is capable of carrying all this out?" For we are not assembled to solve the world's problems, but those rather which pertain to the Kingdom. If we recall those things we heard in the sermon of last evening, then we can understand the importance of these Sessions.

If we attempt to gaze into the future, and if there is much to discourage us; then we should remember that there is much more to be of comfort to us: God's love in Christ, and a glorified Christ at the Father's right hand; these are powerful forces, a compassionate Priest, and a dependable Saviour, who will surrender to us all we need.

In the Name of the Lord, I greet you and bid you welcome, and now let us pray for the things we need.

Art. 1. Mandates are read and the following delegates are present. (The listing of the delegates is of no importance in the Translation, and is thus omitted.)

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The Rev. H. Iserman and the Rev. J. C. Voorhis, as alternate are the representatives from the T.R.P.D. Church in the East. Some Churches have sent no delegates. The Mandates of all the delegates are accepted, with the understanding, however,

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that the protest of the Rev. W. R. Smidt as a delegate, be considered after the officers are chosen who will preside over the Sessions of this Synod.

Art. 2. The officers are as follows:

The Rev. E. Bos, Pres.

The Rev. P. Schut, Clerk

" " J. Noordewier, V.P.

" " J. Post, Asst. Clerk

Art. 3. The retiring President thanks the Synod for the confidence of the delegates in him as the President of the previous Session, and also of the co-operation shown him at that time, and with this he surrenders the Chair to the Rev. Bos. The Rev. Bos takes the Chair, and thus begins his work, thoroughly convinced of the importance of his task. He asks for the co-operation of the delegates in the maintenance of good order, and that they also pray for him as he undertakes his work.

After this he thanks the retiring President, keeping his recent indisposition in mind and then offers a prayer.

Art. 4. The Reverend then requests the delegates to arise and to listen to the reading of the Articles of Agreement and to the forms of unity, with the exception of Art. 28, which will be discussed later.

Devotions and Intermission.

Art. 6. The President now asks the Vice President to welcome the new Ministers who are present at the Sessions for the first time: the Rev. B. Sevensma, recently from the Netherlands, as also the Revs. A. Keizer, J. Keizer, O. Stuit, M. J. Marcusse, H. Huizing, J. B. Hoekstra, G. D. de Jong, and M. Van Vessem, all now engaged in the services of our Church, as well as the Rev. J. Y. de Baun....

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the first Minister in our Church, who will conduct services in the English Language. These Brothers are all welcomed in a fitting manner.

The Rev. L. Rietdijk welcomes the delegates from the T.R.P.D. Church, to which greeting the Rev. Iserman replies and with these words, which are translated by the Rev. Riemersma.

Mr. President and my dear Brothers:

I consider it both an honor and a duty to be present at this Synod as a delegate from the T.R.P.D. Church.

For many years now we have sent and received delegates, and I trust the only reason for this was thereby to spread the glorious Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ for his honor and glory, and for the salvation of souls.

The relation of your Church to ours is very close, the bonds holding us together are strong. It truly is a bond of Truth and Christian intercourse. This is always true as far as principle is concerned; in doctrine, discipline, and in service; in theory and practice, a complete unity; and in agreement with the rules of our Fathers at the Synod of Dordt, 1618-1619, we can be one Church. Therefore it must be our aim to foster the unity of both Churches, and this in accordance with the prayer of the Saviour, "That they all be one."

In connection with this unity, I hope I am clearly understood. I do not desire it as one in general would desire it at this time, where one opens the arms of friendship and the doors of union so wide, that both the righteous and the unrighteous can find a place, for how can two persons walk together unless they are agreed?

It is very evident to me that a fundamental union exists between us, and the best proof of this is the presence of the Rev. J. de Baun, who in God's providence has left us, although we thought we could not miss him. Yet he felt it his calling to go to labor with us in the interests of the Church of God. He is very much at home in your circles, preaching the same Gospel, observing the same rules of discipline, as he did for a quarter of a century, in the Church which I now represent.

Another proof of our attachment is the presence of my co-laborer, Brother J. C. Voorhis, who really knows you better than I do, and with whom many of you have experienced Christian fellowship. The presence of Brother Westerveld, from New York,

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is additional proof of the presence of Christian love and unity. Our actions and our attitudes toward each other, point to the fact that we not only have a relationship in thought and in feeling, but in reality are already one.

Because of the difference in language, it is best that each keep his own name, as well

as the order of worship. Notwithstanding, we wish to support you in your project of the Theological School, as well as your Home and Foreign Mission Work. Therefore, since the harvest is great and the laborers are few, let us pray and work in the strength of the Lord.

Art. 7. The Synod returns to the representation of the Rev. W.R. Smidt, from Rotterdam, Kansas. There was some doubt as to the authenticity of the Reverend's office as a Pastor of the Church. The Rev. Bode was requested to investigate the matter in regard to the re-instatement of the Reverend, and he reads from the Book of Minutes of Classis Iowa what had been taken down in regard to this matter.

Art. 8. The Assembly returns to Article 28 of the Rules of Order. It was decided that this Article should read thus: a/ The Professors of the Theological School shall be seated as delegates, with no deciding votes.

b/ Delegates from Sister Churches and guests who are members of the Chr. Ref. Church may be permitted to give advice.

Art. 9. Letters are read from other Churches:

1/ from the Synodical Committee of the Chr. Ref. Church of the Netherlands.

2/ from the Reformed Church in South Africa.

(For these see the Supplements, Supp. III)

Art. 10. A committee is appointed to consider the Protests which have been received, the Revs. Kuiper and Sevensma, and Elder De Wit, and to report on them at a later session.

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Art. 11. Additional letters are read from those Congregations who have sent no delegates. All express regrets at their inability to send delegates and these letters are accepted.

Art. 12. The Congregation from Fulton, Illinois requests that an offering be taken by all the Churches for the purpose of aiding them financially in their work. After information and advice from the brothers, it was decided to accept this request in Christian love.

Art. 13. Requests from Rotterdam, Kansas and from Sayville, N.Y. and from other Churches, are referred to the Home Mission Board for later reports.

Art. 14. The Rev. J.Y. de Baun requests the presence of the delegates at the services in his Church at 8:00 P.M. on the following day. Received as information.

Art. 15. A Committee is chosen which is to review the previous Minutes for any unfinished business that needs further attention by the Synod.

The Revs. E.v.d. Vries, W. Greve, and Elder J. Housma are chosen.

Art. 16. It is decided to examine the Schedule of the Theological School and the Committee which functioned in 1886 will take care of this matter. (Committee not listed in Trans.)

Art. 17. Intermission.

Art. 18. The Minutes are read and approved with a few corrections.

Art. 19. The Rev. W.T. Meloy, D.D. from the Presbyterian Church of Chicago, a delegate from the General Assembly of the United Presbyterian Church, is introduced by the Rev. J.Y. de Baun. He is given permission to address the Assembly:

Mr. President and My dear Brothers:

It gives me much pleasure to be here, and I am sorry not to be able to address you in the language which you use; that in which you and your Children serve and worship the Lord.

May I convey the Greetings from our General Assembly, and the proof of the love of our Church. We have very much in common, differing only in small matters such as the language, the form of Confession, and the Order of Worship. But we have one faith, one hope, one baptism, one God, the Father of us all.

I need not mention that we love the Holland people. There is such a close connection between Holland and Scotland. Both countries experienced the same struggle for freedom of the mind and freedom against tyranny. We stood amazed at Prince William of Orange and his heroic efforts. The history of your Church is similar to ours. As yet we are not one, and yet we hope to be so speedily. The day on which that takes place shall be one of the happiest days of our ecclesiastical existence. At first such a union will create difficulties, but in short time our descendants will stand at our graves upholding the Truth and speaking one language.

We need each other. We should be one in body as we are one in principle. You oppose Free Masonry, as do we. You sing the Psalms; we also. You cling to the Heidelberg Catechism; we have the Westminster, in essence the same.

I would gladly complete the union of these two Churches and that at once, but I have not the authority to do so. Our Assembly has named a Committee for this purpose, and it asks your Synod to appoint one, so that they can meet and effect the desired union.

You could refrain from the consummation of a union on one point and that on Church Music. You are very friendly toward Church Music. We.....

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opposed this very much formerly. Now this is all changed. Organs are now permitted in our churches.

I repeat it once more, we are so closely united that we should soon be completely so. May I say this, We are not to be confused with the Presbyterian Church of America. We are the old Scottish Church. We may have been called stragglers and accused of not being able to keep up with the streams of time. This may be true, at least we are not denying it.

I also wish to mention that some of the Brethren seceded from our Church formerly, and that over the question of Slavery. These Brothers are in the South. Now that Slavery has been abolished, and that it will never exist again, causes this reason to fall away. For the rest they are one with us, and there are many brothers on both sides who are very desirous of a reunion. I often think if the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church in the South, the United Presbyterian Church in the middle, and your Church here in the North, were once united, that we could fill the land from the gulf of Mexico to the Great Plains with the reverberations of the true principles, and lay them at the feet of Christ.

That you may know something about the statistics of our Church, may I state this: we have 10 Synods, 61 Presbyteries, 907 Congregations, 98,982 Communicants, 680 installed Ministers, 3580 elders, 9515 Sunday School teachers, with a total of 86,460 persons attending the Sunday Schools. The offerings in the Sunday Schools alone amounted to \$86,545.00 Salaries for our Ministers totalled for the last year \$497,384.00 Our Church had a remarkable thing happen last year. Each Church fund ended the year with a favorable balance. We are seeking more workers in both our Home and Foreign Mission fields. Our Church has actually taken Egypt over for Mission endeavor. We are the only Church active in that area, and our efforts are being blessed. We are also at work in Northern British India. There were 2045 adult baptisms, and 3995 children.

I now thank you for your kind attention, and I pray the Lord for a blessing on your gathering.

At the end of his address, many questions were put to the Rev. Meloy, which were answered with candor, centering his replies on doctrine, discipline, and service.

The President asks the Rev. J. Vander Werp to express our gratitude for the delegation from his Church, and for the pleasure of his presence at our Sessions.

The Rev. Meloy, with a final word states that he, with our permission, will convey our greetings to the General Assembly of the United Presbyterian Church.

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It is decided to appoint a Committee to meet with the Committee appointed by the United Presbyterian Church, over a possible union of the two Churches. The Committee: Dr. G. Vos, Rev. J. Y. De Baun, Rev. L. Rietdijk, Rev. G. Hemkes, Prof. G. Boer, Rev. O. Stuit.

pt. 20. The Committee for the inspection of the previous Minutes for unfinished business reports that it has found the Minutes in excellent order, and it thus expresses its thanks

to the Clerk of the previous Synod for his very good work, at the same time presenting the President with a list of Articles which need further attention.

Art 21. The matter of Home Missions is brought up before the Synod. The President surrenders his Chair to the Rev. Rietdijk, and then proceeds to give the report of the Home Mission Committee, and after that the Treasurer's Report of Home Mission Fund. Both reports are accepted by the Committee. The Rev. Rietdijk, President, pro tem, thanks the Reverend for his report, which is found in Supplement II, at the end of the Minutes.

The Rev. J. Marcusse now reports on his work. He states that he had not considered a formal report necessary at this time, since the Consistories reported regularly thru the medium of our Church publication, the "Wächter." But during the two years ~~that~~ he had serviced thirteen Congregations, omitting the enumeration of those in whose churches he had served only for one service. House visitation had included 345 families, and approximately 225 persons, young and old, were brought into the Church, either by confession or baptism. He also stated that all the congregations which he had contacted had more or less a chance for growth. There should be more work among these Congregations. In some instances, conversions were apparent. I have been present in person at the organization of one Congregation, and eleven new Congregations have been added to the Church since the work was begun. The Consistories have stated the above facts in the "Wächter" and how the work has been carried on. I shall keep silent.

The President thanks the Rev. Marcusse for his report, and expresses his appreciation for the progress that has been made. It is a cause for much joy to the Synod that he has found strength and enjoyment in his work, and their wish is that the blessing of the Lord be on the continuation of his work and on the Reverend in performing it.

Art. 22. It is proposed that members of the Home Mission Board be chosen at this time, and also that the Classis Grand Rapids be divided into two Classes.

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The Congregations of 1st and 2nd Muskegon, 1st and 2nd Spring Lake, Grand Haven, Montague, New Era, Fremont Center, Richland, Vogel Center, will become Classis Muskegon, and those Congregations remaining will constitute Classis Grand Rapids.

Art. 23. The Treasurer of the Bible Distribution Fund reports that he has received the sum of \$28.79 for this purpose during the year. He shall forward this amount to the Netherlands.

Art. 24. In regard to a preaching service during the Sessions of Synod by the minister most recently arrived from the Netherlands, this task now falls upon the Rev. S.B. Sevensma. He will do so on the following Tuesday evening in the Church where the Sessions are being held.

Art. 25. The question is put to the Synod if another Yearbook is desired and the Synod answers in the affirmative, as this is now the custom.

Art. 26. The Committee in regard to English Services, Article 49, Acts of 1886, reports that it was unable to do anything, since the appointee asked for a year's delay in accepting the call. This seemed too long a period for delay for the Committee, and they approached various Consistories on this matter who advised them to go to the Classes.

Devotions and an intermission.

Art. 27. The various Classes, now in session in the afternoon, now appoint the Committee members for the Home Mission Committees, according to Art. 43 of the Acts of 1886. The members chosen are not of importance to the Translation, and thus are omitted.

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Art. 28. Two gentlemen present themselves as delegates from the particular Synod of the Reformed Church in Chicago, the Revs. H. Vander Ploeg and P. Lepeltak, and they present a letter to our Synod. It is decided to appoint a Committee to treat with these delegates. The Revs. Kuiper, Smidt, and Douwstra, will act on this Committee and these Brothers are excused so that they may begin their Committee work.

Art. 29. Article 50, Synod 1886. Choosing a third Professor for our Theological School, The Curators report: We have completed our Mandate, we have called Dr. Vos; he was given an extension, has accepted the Call, and he is now present.

Now the decision is, as a result of a motion by the Curators:

- 1/ that the Rev. Vos shall be ordained as a Minister, and that this ordination shall be the duty of Classis Grand Rapids, with the assistance of Classes Holland and Muskegon,
- 2/ The Curators will see to the installation of the Reverend Vos as a Professor of the Theological School,
- 3/ to place him on the same footing with the other Professors,
- 4/ the instruction in the English language is left to the judgment of the Curators.

Art. 30. Treasurers of the various funds are appointed: The Rev. Noordewier will continue to function as the General Treasurer; Elder P. Heyboer, as Comptroller; Elder Gelock, as Treasurer of the Student and the Emeritus Funds, with Elder S.S. Postma as alternate for Elder Gelock.

Art. 31. Appointments to the Synodical Committee: The Revs. J.H. Vos and W.H. Frieling have ended their terms on the Committee, and the latter asks not to be reappointed. A vote shows the Revs. J.H. Vos and L.J. Hulst to be the new Committee members.

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Art. 32. Elder K. Lahuis, being indisposed, asks to be excused from the Sessions. This is granted and his alternate will replace him.

Art. 33. The Committee on Protests, Art. 10. now reports:

1/ The first protest deals with the members of the first Muskegon Church. This protest hinges on a protest by the Reverend Hoeksema, which was not taken care of before his departure. The members would gladly see that the Rev. Hoeksema withdraw his protest, since by so doing the protest of the members would be voided, and that the members be admonished to live in peace.

The Synod accepts this, and it now requests the Rev. Hoeksema to withdraw his protest, that the peace of the Church may be preserved.

The Reverend replies that he had left no protest behind in Muskegon, but rather a matter of unfinished business. "My interference would not foster peace in this matter, nor change the conditions which prevail in Muskegon, and thus I can retract nothing."

2/ A request for Emeritation is entered by the Revs. J. Stadt, and W. Coelingh. The Committee would rather have the Synod refer this to a committee to be chosen to give consideration to this request. A Committee is chosen.

3/ Concerning a protest from a certain H. Langhout at Le Mars over the refusal of the Consistory of the Cincinnati Church to grant him and his family a certificate of Membership from that Church to the LeMars Church. The Committee requests more information on this from the Rev. Frieling

After the information is obtained from various parties, it is decided that the Consistory of Cincinnati must give the protestant a release, valid from the time he left the Church and even during the period of difficulty.

Art. 34. Because of the expense of the Synodical Sessions, it is proposed that the manner of delegation be changed. The Assembly, however decides for the time being, to remain by the present method. It is time for intermission.

Friday, June 15. There are a few changes in the delegates.

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Art. 35. The Minutes of the previous session are read and approved.

Art. 36. The Agenda, Art. 57, Synod 1886. If the bringing of corpses into the Churches for funeral services, is a minor matter, has the Consistory not the right to refuse such a practice if in its own judgment it considers a refusal the best thing to do?
The decision: The Consistory has the right in this matter.

rt. 37. The General Treasurer submits a n invoice to the Synod amounting to \$1000.00 for the expenses connected with the Synodical Sessions. It also lists the amount each congregation is to pay.

rt. 38. The report of the Heathen Missions is given for which see Supplement II. This report weighty, and full of valuable suggestions is accepted by the Synod, and the Assembly decides to discuss Foreign Mission matters at once.

Elder J.A.Peijster leads the Synod in a word of prayer. The duty of the Treasurer is at an end, as he requests a release from his task, and the Synod prepares to appoint a committee of three ministers and two elders, who are to function as the Heathen Mission committee. The Committee and the alternates are chosen.

Age 15.

Devotions and Intermission.

rt. 40. The committee which was chosen to meet with the Reformed Ministers present at the sessions, (Art. 28) now reports. The Rev. H. Vander Ploeg, the chairman, takes the floor and explains the reasons for the Committees presence. The proposal is as follows: That both denominations in their ecclesiastical life respect each other, and where we are not yet one and the question is whether we shall ever be one again, nevertheless we live under one ecclesiastical roof, and therefore should not be too "churchy" and pay more attention to the funds for the cause of the Kingdom. Especially in the organization of new Congregations more attention should be paid to the question whether a community can support two Churches. The Censure of both denominations should be recognized by each, likewise a co-operation in matters pertaining to the Kingdom of our Lord.

Brother Lepeltak now adds a few remarks, and then our Committee speaks: It is stated that this can be done without the violation of any principles on our part, but with us, our principles are thus at stake, and therefore we can not grant this request.

The Committee now advises that this reply be given: The Synod judges that the request of the particular Synod of the Reformed Church cannot be sanctioned, but will make it a point that in all field work, all reason shall be taken into account, and as to Church censure, in accepting Church members, after a proper hearing, the rights of both Churches shall be respected. Signed: The Comm. Kuiper, Douwstra.

After a discussion and after the delegates have been heard on this again, the report is accepted and approved.

As a result of the foregoing, the following is decided: The SYNOD of the Holland Christian Reformed Church speaks out in this as her firm conviction, that those who, with us, share in a common conviction of Christ of God, and have access to his throne, have a claim to our esteem, and acknowledge it in such a way; that we from the heart encourage all attempts, for a closer ecclesiastical approach, and that it be a constant prayer that our God unite what which should be united. Yet in our opinion, there can be no thought of a union or of co-operation, as long as our brothers remain

Age 16.

in the Reformed Church, and thus we earnestly request that they bring it to the Lord in prayer, that he may give them the courage and the self denial to throw of their yoke. The Clerk is mandated to place a copy of this in the "Wachter" and to forward copies of this publication to the Holland Classes of the Reformed Church.

rt. 41. The report of the Treasurer of the Dollar Fund states that there is \$1683.14 in the treasury, and that the audit found this to be correct. The Rev. Rietdijk asks to be relieved from his task as treasurer of this fund and the Rev. Riemersma is chosen.

rt. 42. The Synod adjourns until Monday morning, when the first Session will begin at 8:00 A.M.

rt. 43. The roll call of delegates takes place and some changed in delegqttes are noted.

rt. 44. The Synod has received a communication from Orange City, from the Rev. Guelker, in which he explained the reason for his absence. He was obliged to go to Europe for reasons of health, causing an extended absence from his Congregation, and an indefinite Convalescence.

While he was in the Netherlands, he was mandated by the old Reformed Church in Germany to represent it at our Synod, and to speak in behalf of their Theological School. He asks that the Rev. W.R. Smidt speak for him. His is accepted as information.

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Art. 45. The East St. Congregation requests the Synod to petition the City officials and asks them to refrain from using the Street as a thoroughfare for a train to Sherman St. and Reeds Lake. The Synod will petition the city.

Art. 46. The Minutes of the Friday Sessions are read and approved.

Art. 47. The Report of the Synodical Committee is up for discussion. (See Art. 38) It contains a communication regarding a Diepering Langerais.

The Rev. Rietdijk explains that there is at Pterson a Free Holland Reformed Church of which Church the above mentioned person is a Minister, and after hearing all the information on this, it is decided to permit Classis Hudson to treat with the Reverend and his Congregation, observing the rules of Church Order in all their dealing with them.

Art. 48. In connection with a proposed objection that by the acceptance of Art. 28 of the Rules of Order (See 8b, of the Acts of this Synod) the delegates of the T.R.P.D. Church would be deprived of what was previously given them, namely the right of a deciding vote; it is decided: 1/ to remain with Art. 5. Synod of 1886, which gives the Brothers that right.
2/ to mandate Classis Hudson to complete the union with Classis Hackensack as soon as possible.

Art. 49. The delegates from South Holland thank the Synod for the offering taken for their congregation.

Art. 50. From the report of the Synodical Committee, the Classis Iowa informs the Synod that it is not prepared with the Formulas of Unity nor the liturgy for the German Congregation. Various sections have been prepared, but it requests that a more qualified group make the work in hand, which has been begun and bring it to a successful conclusion.

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The Synod appoints a Committee to complete the work and to submit it to the Synod upon the completion of the task.

Art. 51. Concerning the correspondence with other Churches: The Rev. Smidt refers to the matter of the Rev. Guelker (Art. 44) and he proposes that it would be both appropriate and expedient, for the existence of the Theological School of the Old Reformed Church in Germany as well as a necessity if it received our support.

The Rev. Vos then announces that the sum of \$366.19 has been collected for this purpose since the last Session of the Synod in 1886. The Synod now recommends that another offering be taken by the Churches for this purpose.

Prayer and devotions.

Art. 52. The Committee on Emeritation reports: (Art. 33)

1/ To grant the Rev. W. Coelingh his emeritation with honor and with an annual stipend of \$100.00 for the remaining years of his life.

2/ To grant emeritation to the Rev. J. Stadt with honor and in addition an annual stipend of \$200.00, until the following Session of Synod, with a request that the Home Mission Committee care for any unpaid salary, which matter they dared not decide, but leave to the discretion of the Synod. The Comm: v.d. Bosch and Fles.

This report is accepted, and it was decided to pay the Rev. Stadt the amount of \$50.00 from the Home Mission Treasury, for which the Classis Iowa holds itself responsible.

Art. 53. A request from Classis Iowa: The Synod empower the Home Mission Committee to act immediately in case of a Classical request for financial assistance. Accepted.

Art. 54. A problem in discipline: Classis Grand Rapids asks how to deal with members if they as members of a union, are barred from one place in the Church, but accepted in another? Classis is referred to Art. 90, Acts 1886.

Art. 55. At a request of Classis Illinois to change Art. 90, of the Acts of 1886, Synod decides to leave it as it is.

Art. 56. The Ninth Street Church in Holland, Mich. asks Synod's opinion on the organization known as the "Grand Army of the Republic" Synod again refers them to Art. 90; Acts 1886.

Art. 57. Baptism: The question is asked if a Consistory may accept anyone as a member of the Church who denies and opposes infant Baptism. The answer is in the negative.

2. A second question: How to deal with Church members who for reasons of conscience, are afraid to bring their children to be baptized?

The answer: Such parents must be instructed in all meekness, and also be warned, and if this does not produce the desired effect, then the proper steps should be taken.

Art. 58. An objection from the Second Church in Grand Haven, concerning Art. 56 of the General Rules of the Church: The Church judges that if a member under censure cancels his membership in the Church, it can do no more in his case.

The Synod decides to leave this Article as it is.

Art. 59. The Minutes of the Sessions on Monday are read and, with a few improvements, are approved.

Art. 60. The Report of the Home Mission Committee is read and accepted.

The Home Mission Committee brings to the Synod's attention the following:

Point 1/ The following Congregations are listed for Church help in the amounts of \$50.00 to \$200.00.

(Churches are not important in the translation)

The support of the Churches mentioned is sanctioned by the Synod. South Holland and Rotterdam, Kansas will each receive \$150.00. Rotterdam will receive the amount requested for the period of two years, and Richland will receive \$200.00 when she follows the advice of her Classis in regard to the Church building.

Point 2/ Concerning the Calling of a second Missionary Pastor, the Committee taking into account the present status of the treasury, cannot be encouraged to advise this; and yet on the other hand, recognizing the great need for same, it decides to sanction such a step, since it would save much travelling expense.

This suggestion is accepted by the Synod and it is decided that the person to be called be capable of preaching in both Dutch and English.

Therefore, the Home Mission Committee will make a Nomination, which is to be presented to the Synod on the following day, so that a choice may be made.

Point 3/ Concerning a statement in the Agenda: "That a Missionary pastor shall not be called while he is functioning as a Miss. Pastor" The Committee advises: The Synod shall decide whether a Miss. Pastor should not be called during his period of work, by any Congregation, unless extraordinary circumstances and previous considerations are taken into account. The decision: It is decided that neither a Congregation nor a Missionary Pastor be curtailed in this matter.

Art. 61 It is proposed that the Home Mission Committee place the Seminary students in the following Churches for summer work.

1. Friesland, Overiesel, Platt Creek
2. Charles Mix, Dak. New Holland, Douglas County,
3. Pipestone, Reiderland, Prinsburg, Minn.

This is accepted.

Art 62. Agenda, IV. The Theological School: The Synod will outline a three- year course for the Seminary, and include in this, that no student may be permitted to take charge of worship services, before he enters the second year of Seminary work.

This is satisfactory and the Professors are to give the students freedom in this matter.

Art. 63. The Synod will decide by what rules Churches are to abide in the case of students or candidates who wish to preach in our Churches, who have not studied at our School, nor taken the Examinations. The Synod: Such persons are referred to the Classis of the Church in which the student desires to preach.

Intermission.

Art. 64. The Heathen Mission Committee gives its report, and the Committee states that it has formulated a set of rules and the desire is that the Synod pass judgment on this.

This Constitution is read to the Synod and it receives the sanction of the Synod.

See Supplement III for the entire Constitution.

Art. 65. A Mr. J. Kruidenier has presented a letter to the Synod, in which he expresses a strong desire to become a Missionary, and he asks if the Synod cannot find a way to send him to Egypt, and under the support of the Church, and when there to labor in conjunction with the United Presbyterian Church

Page 22. After a prolonged discussion on this, it was decided;

1/ Our Church can scarcely support its own Mission field, and it shall attempt to find a Mission area in this country, as per the Constitution of the Heathen Mission Committee.

2/ To persuade Mr. Kruidenier very strongly to consider a field in this country.

Art. 66. Agenda, 6, as follows: The Synod make a new ruling for the E.B.P.Fund, i.e. one Classis alone or two Classes combined, having one fund. A Committee from this set-up will issue invitations to young men to prepare for the Ministry, and from those who apply suitable applicants be chosen to take the preliminary examinations in Grand Rapids. This can be the rule in all Classes. This is accepted and a Committee is chosen to work out a plan of operation, and to report on this later before the Synod.

Art. 67. Agenda, VII, 2. A request: The Synod reconsider Art. 108, Acts 1886 and give earnest consideration to Christian Education.

The Rev. Kuiper reports on the progress in Holland, Mich, and the Rev. Ekster, on the progress Grand Rapids has made. The last report states that no suitable religious Readers have been found, and as far as can be ascertained, the Sanders "Readers and Spellers" and the Wilson "Readers" seemed to be the best under the circumstances.

Decided: To approve the above named publications as most suitable, and to stir up the Holland population at the present time to control the Schools and to insist on Bible reading in them.

The Synod adjourns.

Wednesday, June 20.

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Art. 68. The Rev. Hulst reports to the Synod that the Rev. Professor A. Brummelkamp, of the Netherlands has passed away.

The Synod decides to express its sympathy with the following resolution:

Since the Synod of the Holland Christian Reformed Church, assembled in Grand Rapids, on the thirteenth of June, and the days following, that

1/ Father Brummelkamp has passed on to his eternal rest, prepared for God's people,
2/ And since Father Brummelkamp was one of the leaders of the Mother Church, from the Reformed Organization,

3/ and since this Father served the Church for 54 years, 34 of which were used in training the youthful ministers, and that by his passing, a "Mighty one in Israel has fallen, the Synod has thus decided:

1/ That they as representatives of the Holland Christian Reformed Church, along with the Mother Church in the Netherlands, and with the children of the deceased, take part in this loss,

2/ That the expression of our grief be taken up in the "Wachter" and a copy be sent to the grieving relatives, and that in addition both the "Trumpet" and the "Call" be requested to insert the expressions of sympathy in their publications.

Art. 69. The Minutes of the Sessions of Tuesday are read and accepted.

Art. 70. Concerning the keeping of the Sabbath Day, and doing necessary labor on that day, it is decided to add nothing to the Church Order of Dordt, Art. 76, or to Art. 6. of the General Regulations.

Art. 71. The Committee on Home Missions reports on the nominations it has made. The Revs. Bode, Groeneveld, and Van Vessum, and the Committee propose that one of these be chosen. The Rev. Groeneveld states that for various reasons he must withdraw his name, and he thus declines.

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The Assembly accepts this and the Committee is given a ten minute respite to place another name on the nomination. The name of the Rev. J. Guelker is chosen to fill out the trio, and the nominees depart for the time being as the Synod goes into executive session. Each candidate is discussed and after a prayer is offered a vote is taken. The Rev. Van Vessum is chosen. The call of the Rev. Van Vessum is referred to the Home Mission Committee which is informed to choose and call a Missionary Pastor as soon as possible.

Art. 72. Agenda VII, 6. A request: The Synod decide to cancel Articles 60, 61, of the General Regulations, concerning the matter of who is to answer the questions asked at Baptism, and if baptized Members be accepted.

The decision: This is not to be changed for the time being.

Art. 73. Agenda VII, 6, The Synod will investigate the case of Mr. J.J. Dragt, an Elder from the Church at Borculo, who desires to be examined according to Article 8 of the Church Order.

Since Brother Dragt is not present, this matter is referred to Classis Holland.

Art. 74. Intermission.

Art. 75. The Report on the Theological School.

To the Synod of the Holland Chr. Ref. Church, held at Grand Rapids. June 13, 1888.

Honorable Brothers: In a spirit of meekness, we wish to inform you that during the past year, the School has again been blessed by the Lord.

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Our student population numbered 21 during the School year, all of whom remained in good physical condition, and this included the Faculty also; so that instruction in all subjects could be carried on without interruption.

Student Colijn, who had prepared to take his final examinations in Latin and Greek, was suddenly called home, because of illness there. Nevertheless he wishes to resume his work in September.

Besides the instruction in the usual subjects, the teaching of English Grammar and English Literature were added to the Course, thru the efforts of the Synod, and the instruction by the Rev. De Baun.

One of our younger students, forced to leave because of youthful exuberance, etc. was reinstated after a confession of guilt, at the beginning of the year, and his prospects are very favorable.

Three students are prepared to take examinations in Theology, Section B, and if they are successful, will be eligible for calls.

One student desired to take part of his examinations in Section B, and after that transfer to Xenia, Ohio, to the Theological Seminary of the United Presbyterian Church, so that upon the completion of his work there he may be able to preach in the English Language. Then he plans to return here, complete his work, take his final examinations, and entertain a Call from our Church.

In addition there are four students who desire to be examined under Section A, three who desire to take their final Examinations under Section A. Then there are three others who can complete some of their subjects under Section A.

The School was also pleased to receive both books and money for the Library, and these were needed badly.

When Students come to the Theological Schools in Germany or in Campen, they not only possess a knowledge of the German Language, but the whole knowledge of German research is at their command; but when students come to our Theological School, then all that knowledge is foreign to them since they do not know the German Language. Therefore, two years ago, we began to instruct students in German, in addition to our regular subjects, from which they received both much benefit and enjoyment. Now however we wish Synod to stipulate two periods of German in the Curriculum....

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And the more so since the opportunity for this has increased by the addition of a third Professor.

We end our report with gratitude to you, and we also thank you at this time for your confidence in us.

Yours affectionately,

Professors: De Boer, Hemken, De Baun.

This report is approved and accepted by the Synod, and it thanks the Professors for their untiring efforts.

Art. 76. The Rev. J.C.Voorhis, from the T.R.P.D.Church asks if it is possible to accept students from their Church, since according to a previous decision, there would be instruction in English by the third Professor. This matter is referred to the Curators.

Art. 77. At the request from the Brothers from the T.R.P.D.Church, Agenda VII, 13 is brought up for discussion, and Brother Voorhis motions that the Sunday School Lessons in the "Wachter" be printed in both English and Dutch.

The Decision: Brother Voorhis will write the Lessons in English and then send them on to the Rev. Prof. Boer, who will check them and translate them in to Dutch and then have them printed.

Art. 78. Agenda: The Synod define the rights and the duties of the Classical Committee.
Answer: The Committee carries out the orders entrusted to it by the Classis.

Art. 79. The Spring St. Church enters a protest against Classis Grand Rapids, in regard to the organization of the Fourth Holland Chr. Ref. Church, (English speaking) After a discussion of this: The Synod judges that in the organization of this Church, the good order was not observed, but considering the circumstances in which it was done, the Synod

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will recognize the organization, and it requests Spring St. and other Congregations to transfer Certificates of Membership to this Church in a proper way, and as is done in other Churches.

Art. 80 The Synod, upon being informed of the departure of the Brothers from Classis Hackensack, now gives these Brothers the floor, and they express their happiness and trust in the fact that the Synod with painstaking zeal upheld the Truth, and that both in Theory and in Practice. They sincerely hoped that the union between us and them would continually grow closer, and that the differences and the inconvenience in Languages might soon be done away.

The Rev. De Baun answers to the remarks by the Brothers, and he wishes them "Godspeed" and he asks that each pray for the other, and that all join in the common struggle for the one and only true Doctrine, once delivered to the Saints.

Art. 81. It is decided to print forms for Letters of Transfer and for Mandates at the expense of the General Fund. The Revs. Bos, Sevenema, and Elder Van Zanten will report on this at tomorrow's Sessions.

Art. 82. Adjournment

Thursday, June 21,

Art. 83. The Minutes are read and accepted.

Art. 84 Agenda, Point VII, 17. It reads: The Synod send one or two delegates to the Synod of the Chr. Ref. Church in the Netherlands, where important matters are to be discussed. We should continue to enjoy the communion of the Saints with the Mother Church.

This is sanctioned by the Synod and it appoints the Rev. Bos, who plans to go to the Netherlands during the summer, to be the official delegate from our Church. He will be given a Mandate and power to act on behalf of the Synod.

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The Reverend Bos is given \$50.00 toward his trip. The Vice President and the Clerk will see to it that the necessary papers are prepared.

Art. 85. The Synod state what the Church boundaries should be: It is well nigh impossible to set the boundaries of a Church, in connection with their location, so that all disagreements can be settled. And where problems exist, let them be settled by persons in authority.

Art. 86. The Committee on the regulation of the E.B.P. Fund reports: Rev. Boer, Pres.; Rev. Vos, Clerk. They advise:

1/ All the present students supported by the E.B.P. Fund are to be under the jurisdiction of Classes Holland, Grand Rapids, and Muskegon.

2/ Classis Hudson will decide at its first Classical Session, whether it will support one of the present students, or whether it will work in co-operation with the three above named Classes.

3/ Classis Illinois and Classis Iowa will each work independently, and at the earliest opportunity will invite interested persons to apply for permission to take the entrance Examinations as the others do.

4/ Three or four Classes will now receive for those students whom they now support:

a) All the balance above \$1000.00 in the Dollar Fund.

b) all the monies now on hand.

c) The offerings held in the Classes for this Fund.

d) All the monies returned to this fund by those who borrowed from the Fund.

5/ This arrangement shall remain in effect until all the present students who receive support, have completed their studies, unless a decision by the Synod should change it.

This is accepted and approved.

Art. 87. A sample form for the Certification of Membership is read and approved, and 10,000 copies will be printed. A form for Mandates is also approved, and 1000. copies of these are to be printed. The Committee will function in the printing and the distribution of same according to the membership of the Churches. Each Church will receive the same number of blank forms of the Mandates.

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Art. 88. The "Wachter" is brought up for discussion. The Business Manager reports of the finances. Receipts are \$1526.00, distributions, \$ 1509.89. There is a small obligation amounting to \$300.00, and \$2000.00 in arrears in subscriptions. Two plans are discussed for increasing the size of the publication. This matter is discussed. The decision:

1. Increase the size of the publication.
2. The size shall be that of the Grand Rapids "Standard".
3. Professor Boer and the Curators will be responsible for the publication.
4. The entire matter of publication will be under the control of the Theological Faculty and the Curators.

Art. 89. The Committee appointed to take care of the Protestants reports;

1/ A communication is received from a member of the Church of Kalamazoo asking the Synod that the Consistory of the Kalamazoo Church direct a communication to the Consistory of the Grand Rapids Church, so that they may come to Kalamazoo to investigate certain matters which need attention. The Committee advises that this be done. This is done.

2/ A communication from three Church members of the Church at Muskegon, in which they stated that they saw an article in the "Standard" in which it was decided (which showed that the Synod had acted wrongly) the protest of Rev. Heekema be not discussed, but that the wrong in this connection which should have been punished was not. Your Committee notes however that Classis Grand Rapids had dealt with this matter at Muskegon, and understood that all things were in order, and that both parties rested in the matter. Therefore the Committee advises the Synod to remain by its former decision and not to reconsider the matter.

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3/ A protest was received from a Church member, who registers a complaint about a Certificate of Membership, with added remarks, a matter which Classis Grand Rapids had already considered. The Committee accepted the decision of the Classis. After a discussion of this, it comes to light that the protesting party had something else in mind, and that that matter had not been discussed by the Classis as yet. This brother is directed to go to the Classis.

4/ Concerning a brother accused of perjury, which proved to be false, after a thorough investigation, although he had refrained from telling all the truth in the matter. The Committee decides, although the party refrained from telling the whole truth, he was not guilty of perjury because of that - and certainly not in the matter under discussion and thus the Synod can accept the decision of the Committee of Classis Iowa, and also of the Consistory. After more light on this matter, it was accepted.

Intermission.

Art. 90. With an eye to the expense of Railroad travel for delegates, Ministers, and for Missionary Pastors, the Secretary contacts various Railroad Companies to see that

- a) Delegates get permission to ride at half fare.
- b) Missionaries ride free.
- c) Students going to their Summer Charges ride at half-fare.

This is accepted.

Art. 91. It is decided that the Treasurers of the various E. B. F. Funds bring in their reports to the Treasurer of the School, Brother Gelock.

Art. 92. Choosing Trustees for the School.

- a) the retiring members are all chosen to serve again, Elder Gelock, the Revs. Kuiper, Vos, Post.
- b) Curators: The retiring members are reappointed, the Revs. Vos, Post.

It is also decided that those Curators whose terms of office expire in 1890, serve until the next Synod convenes.

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Art. 93. A new Committee is appointed for the Emeritus Fund, Kuiper, Vanster Werp, Gelock.

Art. 94. Committees not having Constitutions are mandated to formulate some, and then submit them to the Curators and the Trustees of the School.

Art. 95. Brothers Riemersma, Rietdijk, and Beeuwkes are to convey the greetings of the Synod to Classis Hackensack.

Art. 96. The Committee appointed to arrange the Psalm-Book, Forms of unity, and the Liturgy in the German Language now report:

- 1/ They have begun their work but have not completed it.
 - 2/ That all the material that the Committee has revised, i.e. the Formula for Baptism, the Form for the installation for Elders and deacons, has been altered to conform with those used in our Churches in the Holland Language.
 - 3/ The Committee advises the Synod to concur with what the Rev. Plesscher now uses at the present time.
- The Committee reports that it would like to continue with its work and to report again at the next Session of Synod. This is accepted.

Art. 97. Since the General Treasury in in the "red" and since some of the Congregations have failed to make their contributions; the Classical Correspondents are reminded to take care of this matter, and send their funds on to the Rev. Noordewier.

Art. 98. The Minutes are read and accepted, and the Synod adjourns until 1890.

Art. 99. The President addresses the Synod :

My dear Brothers:

May I at this time thank you for the trust you have placed in me in choosing me as your President over these sessions now completed. This has given me much enjoyment, when one considers how difficult it is to control a large group of persons. We have worked in peace for seven long days, although we differ in character, insight, and desires. My work was accomplished in weakness but it was, nevertheless tolerated by you. My thanks to the Faculty for their good and timely advise when things seemed to be at a standstill. The Committee receives my thanks for their efforts and the carefully worked out reports to the Synod.

We request Brother Vos and the other brothers in the city, to act as our messengers and to convey to all who made our stay here most enjoyable our heartfelt thanks. I am also indebted to this Synod for appointing me as a delegate to the Mother Church in the Netherlands. I feel very unsuited for that task; support me with your prayers, even while I am enroute. The Lord make us faithful to his great Truth.

May the blessing of the Lord rest upon all the Brothers, Delegates. May he bring you safely back to your dear ones, and your earthly dwellings, and one day home to the heavenly mansions. We are still a small group. But the Lord has scattered us. He will strengthen that which is weak. Therefore, let us work in his strength.

After the other officers of the Synod are thanked for their efforts, the Vice-President takes the floor, and he on behalf of the Synod expresses their thanks to him, and promises that his journey will be a matter of the prayers of all and the Synod wishes him well on his journey. The President now closes the Meeting with prayer and the delegates depart.

Signed: The Officers, (The Rev.) Bos, Pres.

" Noordewier, V.P.
Schut, Clerk
Post, Asst. Clerk.

The Report of the Synodical Committee.

Honored Brothers:

The Synodical Committee is very pleased to present a short report concerning its work since the last session of the Synod.

The Rev. Frielang acted as President, the Rev. Kulper as the Assistant, with the Rev. Vos as the Clerk.

The first task of the Committee was the appointment of the Rev. Drukker and Elder Beeuwkes as delegates to the T.R.P.D. Church, in the East, which task they gladly undertook, and for their request for instructions they were referred to Art. 8 of the General Regulations.

On October 27, 1886, we received a request from South Holland, Ill. asking that an offering might be taken in the Churches for their Church, since in the departure of the Rev. Meinders, they had lost their Church also. Without financial assistance, they would be unable to rebuild. Since the need for this was very apparent, many of the Churches did this very willingly.

On December 13, 1886, the Committee received a communication from the Rev. Tempel concerning a request that the Committee make its decision known on the status of the Rev. W.R. Smidt, who had left our Congregation some time before and had now been reinstated. This was done by Classis Iowa. The question was whether he might be placed on a nomination for a call. The Committee replied that it would be pleased to see the Reverend's name on a trio for a call, for in this matter the Church thus speaks through its Synod.

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It judges that the Reverend has given offense to the whole Church by his recent departure, and that by his reacceptance, the Church can express a need, and thus speak out concerning the previously binding privileges.

On March 4, 1887 an opportunity was given us to judge a German Book of Psalms:

1/ No remarks can be made concerning the rhyming of the Psalms. They are accurate and can be used very nicely in the German Congregations.

2/ With the Formularies however, the decision was otherwise:

a) they are incomplete and the matter of discipline is entirely lacking.

b) there are omissions in the Formulary of Baptism, and changes have been made

which our Church could not tolerate.

Our opinion therefore is that that the use of these as they are found in the back of the German Psalm Books, are not to be recommended; and that we request all the Consistories of the German Churches to conduct all their services according to the Reformed Church Order, just as it occurs in all of our Holland Christian Reformed Churches. The use of the German language merits no changes. If the necessary Formularies are lacking, then those in use in the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands, and those used by us here in America, should be literally translated and with consent of the Classis be used from now on. Later they should have Synodical approval, and then inserted in the German Psalm Books.

And likewise the 37 Articles of the Confession and those of Dordt, so that our German Brothers become acquainted with them, and they become a part of the Church.

If it is possible to begin this work tentatively, a distinct service would be performed for the Synod, and thus these matters could be speedily completed.

In July, 1887, we received a communication from the Committee of Classis Hudson, asking how to deal with the Rev. Diepering Langerèis, who came from the Netherlands and now serves as a Pastor in a Paterson, N.J. Church. It is his wish to join the Christian Reformed Church along with the entire Congregation. This is the answer:

Dear Brothers:

We received your communication concerning the Rev. D. Langerèis. It is rather difficult to advise you in this matter, since we know very little concerning the man or the Congregation, and since we have not received the information which Brother Rietdijk was to send on to us, since the Reverend was unable to attend the Meeting.

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Our opinion is however that there should be no hurry in accepting him and his Congregation into our Church. An effort should be made to get all the information on the Rev. Langerèis from the Netherlands, where we hear that he was a member of the Chr. Ref. Church.,

Here he attempted to become a Reformed Minister, later however, leaving the Church and then becoming the Minister of a "Free" Church.

The thought comes to mind, if it were not a good idea that such persons abide for a time in our ecclesiastical circles, before they serve as Pastors. If it is your desire to advance these ideas, the Rev. Kuiper is prepared to assist you in this cause. This occurred. And then in a later letter, (Dec.) this was received, Postpone this matter until the next Synod, since we wish to have this matter decided by the next Synod: whether we accept Ministers from other Churches or Societies, with whom we have no relations, into our Church.

At one of the later meetings of the Committee, (Aug!87) the Editor of the "Wachter" brought a matter to the Committee concerning some Articles which he had received concerning the reception of the Rev. Smidt back into the Church, and these presented by Classis Iowa. The Classis had sent them to the Editor for publication. The Rev. Hulst wished to have them published if the Synodical Comm. would take the responsibility for their publication. The Committee, however, refused to do this, since the Committee did not feel that this was one of its duties, but also for the reason that it intended to remain by a previously expressed opinion.

Sending invitations to Sister Churches was also discussed. It was decided to contact the following:

- 1/ The Christian Reformed Church in the Netherlands
- 2/ The Old Reformed Church in Bentheim, Oostfriesland
- 3/ The Reformed Church in South Africa
- 4/ The True Ref. Prot. Dutch Church in the East.

We received a very heartwarming and fraternal greeting from the first and third mentioned Churches, and from the last we have a delegation present, but we have received no word from the second mentioned Church.

On March 20, 1888, we met once more. (See Art. 84a, Synod of 1886) This was in connection with the enlarging of the "Wachter". At this meeting the Editor, the Rev. Hulst, the printer, W. Benjaminse, and the Business Manager, A. Pleune, were present. And after much discussion, it was decided that:

- a) Enlarging the publication was a necessary move,
- b) to propose two plans out of three to the printer for further consideration and connected with this a decision on the exact increase in the size, and that a Committee be appointed to complete this matter.

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c) to appoint the Revs. Hulst and Vos to serve on this Committee, and these men were to study the matter as thoroughly as possible and to report their recommendations to the next Synod.

Finally a communication was received from a certain Mr. Langhout, from the Church in Le-Mars, Iowa. It contained a protest against the Consistory of the Church in Cincinnati, Ohio who had hesitated to give him a Certificate of Membership, and against Classis Illinois, which had not considered his rights in connection with the Consistory at Cincinnati, and also against Classis Iowa, which Classis could not accept him and his family and in addition would not baptize his children. He was advised to take this matter up with the next Synod.

Now, in closing, we thank the Synod for the confidence in us, and we pray for the necessary light and wisdom for them, that they may find solutions to problems that we could not, and to bring those matters into order, which were beyond our ability, and that this may occur to the honor and glory of God, and for a blessing to the Church.

The Comm. Revs. Frieling, Kuiper, Vos.

Supplement II.

Report of the Committee on Home Missions

To the Synod meeting in Grand Rapids, June 13, 1888,

Honorable Brothers,

The Home Mission Committee has passed thru two more years of work. Shortly after the Synodical Sessions our industrious Secretary-Treasurer left for Paterson, N.J., and thus was obliged to discontinue his work.

And while it was continuing with its work, and carrying out the mandates of Synod, the work of the Committee was again upset by the sudden departure of the Rev. Duiker,

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the President of the Committee, who surprised us with a sudden departure to the Reformed Church. The vacancy was filled in the choice of the Rev. Noordwier from Fremont as the new President.

Now it was also necessary to appoint a new Secretary-Treasurer, as the undersigned, due to much work, and his anticipated trip to the Netherlands, could not continue in this.

The matters occupying the attention of the Committee were weighty, and needed earnest consideration.

The Rev. M.J. Marcusse, who works as a Missionary-Pastor, has travelled thru the land from East to West and he will report.

The Rev. J. Stadt, who in part worked under Mission support at Ridott, Ill. has left for the Dakotas, and is now inactive.

The stipulated amount of money for the Rev. W. Coelingh is to be sent to him in March, 1888 although his activities have been curtailed, due to illness.

Richland has received the money promised to it. At the advise of the Synodical Committee, a bonus of \$25.00 is paid to the Rev. Stadt, then still at Ridott, and to the Rev. Mollema, a like amount, the Reverend being at Lafayette, Indiana.

At the advise of the Committee, our brother, Student Van den Berge visited the various Churches in the Dakotas. The Congregations receiving aid from the Mission funds for the partial support of their Ministers are Ridott, Lafayette, Ackley, Harrison, Cauer City, Kansas; and Clymer, N.Y.

All requests for financial assistance must be brought up before the next session of the Synod.

My dear Brothers, the Lord grant you wisdom in regard to the weighty matters you will need to discuss. MAY all your decisions be such that they may redound to the honor of God and to the establishment of the Church.

With our respect and goodwill,

The Home Mission Committee,

E. Bos, Clerk.

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The Report of the Treasurer of the Heathen Mission Fund

(The financial report is not translated, nevertheless the fund shows a balance of \$4587.56 for Heathen Missions.

This is a large amount of money, and much good could be done with this for the advancement of Mission work in the Kingdom, if we only knew how this could be brought about.

The Synod earmarked \$400.00 as the final gift to the Mother Church in the Netherlands, and then forgot to stipulate how these funds were to be used for Mission work, although it did tell the Treasurer to do something about it.

We have not rested quietly. The Committee with others met and discussed the matter, and decided that Brother E. Vanden Berge gain all the information he could on where and how Mission work could be carried on most suitably in our land, and find out how it could be begun among the Indians, and how it could be carried on most successfully.

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Perhaps the President and the Brothers J. Riemersma and E. Vande Vries can furnish us with more information as they were two of the brothers present at the discussion.

Later we had the opportunity and the pleasure of receiving very interesting information from a worker already among the Indians, the widow of the Rev. K. Neerken, the Reverend laboring among the Indians as a Missionary Pastor, in Indian Territory, and now the wife and the daughter of the Reverend were still there as teachers.

We received much information, but also became aware of the many difficulties in connection with Indian Mission work. This lead us to be cautious.

We received mor information and light on the matter by the Brother, C. Bode, concerning a suitable field and prospective workers. We also received an invitation to visit the field from Brother Bode, and make an attempt to find a pair of suitable young Indian

men of good reputation, and to prepare them for Indian Mission work.

Because of the extension of time given to our Professor elect, and since the School was not equipped to train Missionary students at this time, the invitation of Brother Bode was not followed up, and thus little more was accomplished.

We were often stirred up here at home and advised to begin doing something about Missions but when we questioned those persons urging it by "how, where" they could give no answer, nor could we.

This is the present state of affairs, my brothers, but matters should not remain there.

I now propose that I be relieved of my duties at once, as the Treasurer, and that a Committee of five or six persons be appointed from this assembly to foster the cause of Missions. This Committee should draw up a Constitution and have this prepared by Tuesday, next, and after this is accepted by the Synod, the Synod then state where Mission work is to be promoted, and the Committee should be urged to make progress in this matter, and with all diligence to bring an active Mission into being, and also stir up the Congregations to support the actions of the Committee with a concerted effort.

May the Lord, the King of the Church lead us to a favorable decision, and may he crown all our efforts, and especially those connected with Heathen Missions with his indispensable blessing.

Your Treasurer,
R. T. Kuiper

Supplement III

Letters from Foreign Churches

To the Synod of the Holland Christian Reformed Church in America

Honored Brothers:

In answer to your very interesting invitation to us that we send delegates to your Synod, June 13, 1888, the following was decided. At our last Synodical gathering it was decided to send no delegates to Scotland, America, Africa, or Germany.

However, should one of our Ministers plan to visit any of the above countries, then a Letter of Credentials would be forth coming from the Synodical Committee for presentation to your Synod. Up to this time we have found no one planning such a trip.

We, therefore use this means of conveying our greetings to your Synodical Committee from our Committee, that of the Christian Reformed Church of the Netherlands,

We pray that the Lord may be with you, and that he lead you by his Holy Spirit in all the discussions you have, and in all the decisions you make.

May your Synod serve mightily to advance the cause of God's Kingdom, and that your work be a blessing to many, and to those who feel themselves connected to us by inner bonds.

My dear Brothers, as more and more brothers and sisters from the Netherlands leave for your country, so much nearer your country seems to become to us. And thus we in our meditations and our thoughts, begin to live more and more in your lives and your activities.

No wonder then that our presence at your Assembly is very tempting to us; it even stirs up the fraternal feeling, to show you the affection that exists between us.

Since we are separated by both land and sea, let us use the means of correspondence to strengthen our relationship, and above all let us strengthen it by means of prayer.

The Synod of the Chr. Ref. Church of the Netherlands,

Kampen

Middelstum May 15, 1888

D. K. Wielenga, Pres.

J. Nederhoed, Clerk

Supplement IV.

A communication from the Church in Africa.

Middelburg, Cape Colony, April 11, 1888.

To the Synod of the Holland Christian Reformed Church in America

Dear Brothers in Christ:

It was very pleasant for the Synod of our Church, while in Session here, to receive a hearty, fraternal communication from your Synodical Committee, and to learn,

although we are far apart, you still consider our Church with affectionate regard, and you request a visit from us. We also wish to convince you of our tender regard for you and we admire your concern for God's Kingdom here on earth. We are also pleased to learn that your Church is continually increasing in size, and that it stands firm in its opposition to all secret organizations. Continue on in the same path and even if the struggle at times seems hopeless as you state, the Gospel of Truth will finally be victorious; for where there is light, darkness must disappear.

Thanks to our Lord and Saviour, we can also inform you of the growth of our Church. From our Synodical decisions, Almanacs, and our monthly bulletins, which are sent to you from time to time, and through our general correspondence, you can readily ascertain the status of our Church and our Theological School.

It grieves us that it is still impossible for us to accept your kind invitation, to send one or more delegates to your Synod; therefore we must be content to send you our fraternal greetings for the present.

We hope that you will soon be so situated that you may be able to send one or more brothers to our Synod, to be present at the Assembly at Rustenburg in the Republic of South Africa, on the third Monday of May, 1891

My dear Brothers, do not wait for an invitation, but if it be at all possible surprise us and gladden our hearts by accepting our invitation.

With the kindest regards, and with love in the Lord Jesus Christ.

we remain your affectionate Brothers,
M.P.A. Coet, Pres. Synod
D. Postma, Jr., Clerk

Page 42.

Supplement IV.

This supplement lists the various funds in connection with the Church. They add nothing to the Translation and are therefore omitted.

Page 43.

Supplement V.

A Constitution set up for the regulation of Heathen Missions by the Holland Christian Reformed Church of America

Art. 1. Following the command of the Lord, Matthew 28:19, "Go forth and teach all peoples" and likewise Mark 16:15, "Preach the Gospel to all Creatures," the Holland Christian Reformed Church deems it of the utmost importance, to advance the work of Missions among the Heathen to the best of its ability.

Art. 2. That in each undertaking, God's blessing only may be expected by walking in his ways and the Committee will so conduct its labors in harmony with God's Holy Word, and with the confessions of the Church, stated in the Netherlands Confession, (the 37 Articles) of the Heidelberg Catechism, and the Synod of Dordt, 1618-1619.

Art. 3. The purpose of this: a/ Making known and glorifying the name of the Lord.
b/ Proclaiming the blessed Gospel of Salvation, where it up to this time it has not been proclaimed, and
c/ working together toward an assembly of lost sinners into the Church of the Lord, which is to be saved, and to the expansion of God's Kingdom which is here on earth.

Art. 4. That all this may be done in good order, the regulation of the work is assigned to a Committee of five persons: three of whom are Ministers of the Gospel, and two of whom act as Elders in the Church. These are chosen by a two thirds majority and by the delegates of the Synod. They are to elect their own officers: President, Secretary, and a Treasurer, unless a change in the rules makes for other arrangements. At the end of the first term of service, the President and two assessors will retire and at the end of the next period, the Secretary and the Treasurer will retire. They may be re-elected.

Art. 5. The duties of each member of the Committee shall be as follows:

- a) The President is the Chairman of the committee. He is to see to it that all matters are conducted in an orderly fashion, and he is also in charge of all activity.
- b) The Secretary will keep a very accurate record of all matters, and record them in a suitable book of Minutes, and in addition carry on all correspondence.
- c) The Treasurer keeps a careful account of all the monies, gifts, legacies, and the receipts are to be published monthly in the "Wächter". He is also responsible for the disbursement of funds, in agreement with the other members on the Board, or at the behest of the Synod.

Art. 6. The Synod has decided that the Mission work be begun among the Indians and other colored peoples in our land, and preferably in those areas where no other Churches nor organizations have ever labored before. But in case an opportunity presents itself for labor elsewhere, even outside of America, and in conjunction with another Church that has a similar Confession and the same Church rule, and whose aim is to spread God's Kingdom, then the Committee with the concurrence of the Synod, shall provide a Missionary and support him on the field.

Art. 7. The Committee will permit no manner of Mission work to be done by any one, either teacher or Evangelist except the support and accept the Confession of our Church.

Art. 8. To accomplish the afore mentioned task, the necessary information shall be on hand, where a suitable Mission area presents itself, and then the erection of schools should be kept in mind, for the youth, and thru the preaching of the Gospel to both young and old the work may be carried out. To begin this task at the earliest possible moment, the Committee will make an effort to obtain a suitable staff, qualified to carry on, or to be readily prepared to undertake the work, and preferably to train young Indians of good disposition, with talent and expectations, as Evangelists among their own people, and that at our own Theological School in Grand Rapids or wherever it may be.

Art. 9. To defray the expenses of carrying out the above task, the Congregations of our Church will be aroused and encouraged to hold monthly prayer services, and that as is now done an offering be taken for the support of Missions, and this in addition to the offering taken at Pentecost. Extra gifts and monies, from offerings, wills, etc. will be gratefully accepted from anyone, wherever he be.

Art. 10. The monies now in the Treasury, and the more than \$4000.00 now out at interest at 7%, and the funds to be collected, if they are not needed at once; may be loaned to our Churches, and under-written by dependable persons, so that the principal, if needed, can be returned in a short time.

Art. 11. The Committee shall meet if necessary to discuss the needs of Missions; the necessary correspondence should be carried on concerning Mission work, and this in relation to other Churches or organizations, and any necessary expense be restored by the Mission fund.

Art. 12. The Committee will report to the Synodical Committee each year, on its income and outgo, and also to the Curators and the Trustees of the Theological School, and finally to the Synod; and as far as necessary also report thru the medium of the "Wächter".

Art. 13. These Articles can be altered or increased by a two thirds vote at a Synodical Session, although the first three Articles shall not be changed.

Art. 14. Done and sanctioned by the Synod of the Holland Christian Reformed Church, on June 13, 1888, in session at that time in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

The Missionary Committee,

E. Bos, Pres.

T.M.v.d. Bosch, Sec.

J.W. Garvelink, Treas.

R. T. Kuiper

J. Gelock