

AGENDA

Synod Christian Reformed Church

*To convene June 8, 1938
at Grand Rapids, Mich.*

PART II: RELATED REPORTS & OVERTURES

Office of the Stated Clerk
737 Madison Avenue, S.E.
Grand Rapids, Mich., U.S.A.

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PREFACE

THIS Agenda, Part II, for the 1938 Synod, contains belated Reports, list of synodical delegates, overtures, list of protests, etc.

Tuesday evening, June 7, 1938, at 8:00 o'clock, D. V., PRAYER MEETING FOR SYNOD in the Sherman Street Church of Grand Rapids, led by the Rev. H. J. Kuiper, president of the Synod of 1937.

Wednesday, June 8th, at 10:00 a. m., in the Calvin College library, the president formally opens the synodical meeting with an opening address, prayer and roll call.

According to established custom, our local churches are requested to prayerfully remember, on the preceding Sabbath, the forthcoming meeting of our Synod.

VOORWOORD

DEZE Agenda, Deel II, voor de 1938 Synode, bevat na-gekomen rapporten die volgens opdracht van vorige synodale vergaderingen werden samengesteld, een lijst der synodale deputaten, voorstellen voor de Synode, lijst van protesten, enz.

Aan den avond van Dinsdag, 7 Juni, 1938, te acht ure, wordt, D. V., in het kerkgebouw der Sherman Street gemeente te Grand Rapids, het SYNODALE BIDUUR gehouden, geleid door Ds. H. J. Kuiper, president der Synode van 1937, die den volgenden morgen, Woensdag, 8 Juni, te tien ure des voormiddags, op formeele wijze de Synode opent met toespraak, gebed, enz. In de Calvin College bibliotheek.

Onze kerken worden, ouder gewoonte, verzocht om den Zondag te voren, de belangen der Synode aan den Heere op te dragen in den gebede.

Henry Beets

737 Madison Ave., S. E., Grand Rapids, Mich., U. S. A.

AGENDA

PART II

BELATED REPORTS

REPORT XI.

REPORT IN RE "THE STATUS OF DEACONS IN THE COUNCIL OF OUR CHURCH"

To the Synod of 1938.

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

THE question submitted for our study pertains to "the status of deacons in the Council of our church." According to the judgment of Synod 1936 this question is "comprehensive and involved," and constitutes an "actual problem" in our churches.

This suggests that ours was a rather exacting task, and indeed, the status of deacons has many ramifications and touches the life of our church in a very practical way. Fortunately, however, the problem is not new, neither is its consideration. Others, of the more distant past as well as of more recent times, have looked into the status of deacons in the council of the church. Still more fortunate is the fact that there is a good deal of harmony in the manner in which this problem has been solved. We need not break virgin soil; the fields are ready for our seasonal cultivation.

The signal harmony among students of this problem reflects itself in our official church deliverances. Not only is there no essential difference in this matter between our Confession and Church Order, but there is also perfect agreement between both of them and the Forms of installation of ministers, elders, and deacons. True, there is a difference between the expression of Article 30 of our Confession and some Articles of our Church Order, but this is a difference of point of view rather than of essential conflict. Properly understood, our Confession, Church Order, and Forms are one on the problem under consideration.

This essential agreement reflects itself in the life of our churches. There is evident harmony in their practice as it touches the status of deacons in the council of the church, and where there is no consistent practice, such does not seem to flow from any disagreement in principle. This probably accounts for the fact that neither Classis Hudson, which overtured Synod to clarify the status of deacons in the Consistory meeting, nor Synod, which charged us with this study, refer to any specific case or practical problem.

Consequently your Committee did not deem it necessary to make an original study of this subject. What we offer in this report is mostly a reference to what others have written before us, and to the official position of our own church.

I.

Permit us, first, to state a few pertinent basic propositions which are so generally recognized among us that they call for no further discussion:

1. The offices of ministers, elders, and deacons in the New Testament Church are derived from Christ. He instituted them in correspondence to His own three-fold office.

2. The ministers of the gospel or teaching elders represent Christ as the Prophet of truth.

The elders or ruling elders represent Christ as King of righteousness.

The deacons represent Christ as Priest of mercy.

3. The three-fold office of Christ was temporarily vested in the apostles.

4. In due time ministers, elders and deacons were appointed to continue the work of the apostles.

II.

Second, there is another consideration which leads us more directly to the problem at hand and calls for fuller discussion. It is the fact that the three offices in the church, although clearly distinct, are also plainly connected, and that this connection is not merely mechanical but rather organic interrelation.

This is a most natural fact since these three offices have their unity in Christ. If they are one in Him, they can hardly stand altogether apart in His representatives. The more so since these representatives all have their human and sinful limitations. It might be expected that in trying

times, in peculiar circumstances and important matters the offices would become as one.

Such seems to be the lesson of history. The apostles, particularly in the beginning, exercised all three offices. When there was need of calling others to service, and pastors, elders, and deacons were appointed, the elders who labored in the Word and doctrine ruled as well as the so-called ruling elders (I Tim. 5:17). Elders, moreover, were not only admonished to be overseers of the church, but also to do pastoral work as shepherds of the flock (Acts 20:28).

This interrelation of the offices reflects itself also in our Confession, Church Order, and Forms, and has been practised accordingly by the Reformed churches. Art. 30 of our Confession recognizes a council of the church consisting of ministers, elders, and deacons. Our Church Order prescribes that deacons shall take part with the ministers and elders in the calling and releasing of ministers (Artt. 4, 5, 10), in the appointing of elders and deacons (Art. 22), in mutual censure (Art. 81), and that they shall invariably be added to the consistory when the number is less than three (Art. 37). It is also stipulated that although the deacons have their own peculiar task (Artt. 25, 26, 40, 83), they must render an account to the Consistory (Art. 25), and that the ministers must take good heed that the deacons transact the business pertaining to their office, and, if necessary, be present at their meetings (Art. 40). And finally, according to Art. 23, the elders as well as the ministers are appointed to do certain pastoral labors. Our Forms of installation of ministers, elders, and deacons also recognize this interrelation of offices in the church. Pastors are also called "stewards of God and bishops, that is, overseers and watchmen." Elders are charged also to "promote the faithful discharge of the office by their fellow-officers," and deacons are to distribute their gifts with kindly deeds not only, but also with "words of consolation and cheer from Scripture."

The practice of our churches today is quite well in keeping with these official pronouncements. In large congregations ministers and elders meet in separate session to consider matters peculiar to their office, and so do the deacons. However, at stated times they gather as one broad council to consider matters of great import or of common interest. In smaller congregations the deacons with the ministers and elders, constitute the one Consis-

tory, the elders acting as assistant deacons, and the deacons serving as assistant elders. On this score the only more pressing problem seems to be: How large or small must a particular Consistory be before it is wise for elders and deacons to meet in separate session?

III.

It is in connection with this admitted interrelation of the three offices in the church that the question presents itself, "What is the status of the deacons in the Council of the church?" What is their power when these men meet with ministers and elders?

The term "Council" used in the formulation of this question points to Article 30 of our Confession, at least to the English translation of it. The English version of our Church Order uniformly employs the term "Consistory." This suggests that we must consider the status of deacons in the organization mentioned in Art. 30 of our Confession; namely, in the broader or larger Consistory.

Right here we might easily come to a dispute about terms. It might be maintained on the one hand, that the "Council" of Art. 30 of the Confession is really the Consistory, that is, that the ministers, elders, and deacons together constitute the proper ruling body of the church. On the other hand it might be maintained that the "Consistory" as the Church Order speaks of it is the ruling body and, therefore, the Consistory proper. There is, however, no use to start or continue an argument about a term. Among us the body in question has been named according to its own constituency, either just: "the Consistory," or: "the broader Consistory," or: "the Combined meeting." Perhaps it is well for our churches to make use of the happy variation in the English translation, and to speak of the "Council" whenever in large churches the combined meeting of ministers, elders, and deacons is meant in distinction from the separate meetings of elders and deacons, and to speak of the "Consistory" whenever that body is referred to after the fashion of our Church Order.

What, then, is the status of deacons in that broad Consistory meeting, the Council of the church? Which are their duties, rights, and privileges? Should they be seated with the ruling and teaching elders to govern the church, and should they do so with equal authority?

One might consider such to be proper procedure, if he would take his starting-point in the interrelation of the

three offices in the church in virtue of their unity in Christ. Then the offices of pastor, elder, and deacon would be pretty well merged into one general office constituting the one proper unit of church government. Then all its members would be elders or deacons, all according to the matter under consideration.

We do not believe that such obliteration of lines between the several offices has been the practice of the apostles. True, they themselves held the one three-fold office, but upon the growth of the church they themselves appointed distinct pastors, elders, and deacons, and their own office ceased. With the apostles we find a plain recognition of the several offices. When Paul, for instance, makes mention of the Presbytery, he refers to teaching and ruling elders, but does not name the deacons among them (I Tim. 5:17). This plainly implies that they do not belong to the Presbytery.

Such has been the conviction of the Reformed Churches of the Netherlands. The Church Order of Emden, 1571, (Art. 6) stipulated that in every church there should be meetings or consistories of ministers of the Word, elders, and deacons. In 1574, at Dordrecht, however, Synod provided for separate meetings of elders and deacons to do their own particular work, excepting the cases of small Consistories. The Synod of Middelburg, 1581, speaks very definitely of consistories consisting of ministers and elders. And that is the position of the Church Order henceforth until this very day, — a position confirmed by our recently revised Form for the installation of elders and deacons.

In keeping with this we hold that the deacons may belong to the Council of the church, but that this does not make them regular members of the Consistory proper; that they do exercise certain governing powers in this Council, but that these are specified in the Church Order as evident exceptions to the rule. The deacons' is the office of mercy, but not the government of the church.

This is not at all in conflict with the interrelation of offices admitted above. It could be expected that in view of human limitations, special problems, and very important matters there would be need of and provision for common counsel and action. It can easily be understood that the Confession in brief and general terms points to a common Council wherein ministers, elders, and deacons "*are as the Council of the church,*" leaving room, how-

ever, for detailed specification of the authority and task of its several members. And this specification is done by the Church Order. Agreeable to its own nature, the Church Order stipulates in which particular cases this Council is to function. Even the fact that deacons are received as regular members of the Consistory in small churches can be explained upon this basis of particular need and special arrangement.

That the deacons do not ordinarily share in the government of the church is the position of men of recognized authority in matters of Reformed church government. Several quotations are appended to this report to show that men like Biesterveld, Bouwman, Rutgers, and Jansen are in hearty accord on this matter.

IV.

In the light of the above discussion your Committee feels justified to conclude with the statement, that our churches will do well when they keep the following propositions in mind (in addition to the four mentioned under I) :

5. There is a natural and evident interrelation between the three offices of the church.

6. This interrelation does not do away with the distinctiveness of these offices. Ministers, elders, and deacons all have their own peculiar task.

7. The government of the church is entrusted to the ministers and elders. The work of mercy is assigned to the deacons.

8. These distinct offices and tasks reflect themselves ordinarily in separate assemblies. Those who rule the church as elders meet as Consistory, and those who hold the office of mercy as deacons meet as Diaconate.

9. In view of important matters coming up and human limitations always present, there is need of common counsel and united action on the part of all the offices.

To this end certain prescribed meetings are held of ministers, elders, and deacons as the "Council" of the church. Accordingly the Church Order specifies that the deacons take part with the ministers and elders in the calling of ministers, the releasing of ministers, the appointing of elders and deacons, and "Mutual Censure."

10. In small churches, invariably when there are less than three elders, the deacons are added to the ministers

and elders to constitute the one Consistory or ruling body of the church. All members have equal authority in all matters as regular or assistant elders and deacons. However, such discretion should be used, that in matters of church government the deacons give due consideration to the judgment of the elders, and similarly the elders attach special weight to the opinion of the deacons in that which pertains to the care of the poor.

Humbly submitted,

I. VAN DELLEN
P. DE KOEKKOEK
M. MONSMA

APPENDIX

Dr. F. L. Rutgers discusses our problem in response to questions relative to Art. 37 of the Church Order. A question presented to him as reported in *Kerkelijke Adviezen*, pp. 275 ff., reads: "Maken de diakenen deel uit van den kerkeraad?" Interesting is his approach to this question in its given form. Says he: "M. i. hoort deze kwestie, in zulk een vorm, op een kerkelijke vergadering niet thuis. In een kerkeraad komen kerkedienaren samen, en in een Classe en Synode een aantal kerken, om de voorvallende zaken, die tot hun bevoegdheid behooren, te behandelen en af te doen; niet om allerlei, voor het overige zeer belangrijke, exegetische of dogmatische of kerkrechtelijke of andere theologische punten te bespreken . . ." A little further Dr. Rutgers touches on Art. 30 of the Confession, and makes the pertinent observation: "Immers, aldaar staat niet, dat de drie soorten van kerkedienaren te zamen den kerkeraad uitmaken, of de kerkeraad zijn, maar dat ze zijn als de raad der kerk; welk woorje 'als' in het Hollandsch nog eenigszins op twee manieren kan worden uitgelegd, maar niet in den even authentieken Franschen tekst 'comme le Senat de l'Eglise,' en nog minder in den even authentieken Latijnsche tekst, 'quasie Senatus Ecclesiae.'" After this it is pointed out by him that the Church Order specifies that which in a general way has been expressed in the Confession, and then Dr. Rutgers sums up the rulings of several Synods of the Reformed churches in the following paragraph:

"Volgens alle die bepalingen is de zaak eenvoudig, dat 'de kerkeraad' bestaat uit 'predikanten en ouderlingen'; maar dat in kleine gemeenten de diakenen ook als het ware hulpdiensten doen als ouderlingen, en wederkeerig de predikant en de ouderlingen hulpdienst als diakenen, zoodat *alsdan* de kerkeraad altijd uit die drie bestaat (dus in verre de meeste gemeenten); en dat in *grootte* gemeenten de diakenen voor sommige zaken (die den dienst der barmhartigheid raken, en ook, naar de usantie, zaken van beroeping en benoeming van kerkedienaren, enz.) bij den kerkeraad komen, zoodat men *alsdan* heeft: een 'gewonen kerkeraad' en: een 'kerkeraad met diakenen' (soms wel ge-

noemd groote of breede kerkeraad), en dus het woord 'kerkeraad' een ruimeren of engeren zin heeft, al naar gelang de zaak, die er te behandelen is."

In connection with a question on Art. 38 Church Order the same author wrote: "Wanneer diakenen volgens Art. 38 K. O. tot den kerkeraad genomen zijn, doen zij daarin dienst als hulpouderlingen (wegens het kleine getal van de eigenlijke ouderlingen), en hebben zij daarin dus geheel dezelfde bevoegdheid als de ouderlingen; ook een belissende stem in tuchtzaken . . ." (p. 278.)

Dr. H. Bouwman expresses himself on the problem under consideration as follows: "In den kerkeraad in engeren zin hebben de diakenen geen zitting. In deze vergadering worden behandeld zaken van leer en regeering . . . Al de genoemde zaken van leere, regeer en tucht behooren niet tot het ambt van den diaken als zoodanig, en daarom is het ook naar de orde, dat de Kerkenordening de diakenen niet rekent tot den kerkeraad in engeren zin. Immers aan de diakenen wordt in de H. Schrift als hun taak aangewezen het uitoefenen van de christelijke barmhartigheid, en aan de ouderlingen de regeering" (*Het Ambt der Diakenen*, p. 119). In his work on *Gereformeerd Kerkrecht*, Dr. Bouwman also touches the significance of the familiar statement of Art. 30 of our Confession, and he, too, proves to agree with the position taken above. He writes on page 114: "Oppervlakkig beschouwd zou het kunnen schijnen, dat er verschil bestaat tusschen Art. 30 van de Belijdenis en de Kerkenordening. Doch dit is niet het geval. In de Belijdenis wordt wel in het algemeen uitgesproken, welke personen samen den kerkeraad vormen, zonder dat het de bedoeling is formeel te regelen, welke de afzonderlijke werkzaamheden der kerkeraadsleden zijn. Dit wordt nader in de Kerkenordening geregeld . . ." In the same chapter, pp. 117, 118, Dr. Bouwman discusses the task of the "Council of the Church" as mentioned in Art. 30 of the Confession. From it we quote: "Op de vergadering van den kerkeraad met de diakenen worden behandeld die zaken, welke betrekking hebben op de beroeping van dienaren des Woords, ouderlingen en diakenen, en in verband hiermede de bezwaren, ingebracht tegen de verkozen ambtsdragers of de bezwaren door een voorgestelde of een gekozen ambtsdrager ingebracht. Voorts behoort tot de werkzaamheden van den breedten kerkeraad het financieel beheer, de regeling van collecten, de algemeene regeling van den arbeid in de gemeente, en de behandeling van ingekomen stukken van algemeenen aard . . . Natuurlijk kunnen hier slechts algemeene regelen gegeven worden. In een bepaald geval moet de kerkeraad, met inachtneming van de hoofdbeginselen, den meest practischen weg volgen . . ." In all of this Dr. Bouwman is in complete accord with Dr. Rutgers. Also on this point: "Wanneer nu in een kleinen kerkeraad de diakenen mede tot den kerkeraad gerekend worden, dan doen zij daar dienst als hulpouderlingen, en hebben zij daarin geheel dezelfde bevoegdheid als de ouderlingen, terwijl omgekeerd ook de predikant en de ouderlingen in zulk een kerkeraad dienst doen als hulpdiakenen . . ." (p. 115).

Rev. Jansen takes up this subject in his *Korte Verklaring van de Kerkenordening*. He reasons in the same vein as the two preceding authors. From his book (p. 174) we quote the following conclusion of his argument: "De kerkeraad bestaat dus in eigenlijken en engeren zin uit predikanten en ouderlingen, terwijl in kleine kerken de diakenen er wel bijgenomen worden. In groote kerken echter bestaat de kerkeraad alleen uit predikanten en ouderlingen (de gewonen smalle kerkeraad), maar deze breidt zich dan voor sommige zaken uit tot

eene vergadering van den 'kerkeraad met de diakenen,' (die men dan wel de groote of breede kerkeraad noemt)."

We conclude our references to recognized authorities on Church government with a few quotations from *Het Diaconaat*, a thorough work on that subject by Professor Dr. P. Biesterveld, Dr. J. Van Lonkhuyzen, and Rev. R. J. W. Rudolph. All these brethren evidently take the same position. Dr. Biesterveld enters upon the discussion of our subject in the most direct way. He deals with "De Diaconie en de kerkelijke vergaderingen," writing at the very start: "De eerste vraag hier te bespreken is: *behooren de diakenen tot den kerkeraad?* Ht kerkelijk recht waaronder wij leven, geeft op deze vraag geen onzeker antwoord." And then he proceeds to show from a long series of Synodical decisions and corresponding provisions of the Church Order, that the answer is, that the deacons do not belong to the Consistory strictly speaking. He observes among other things: "Onze vaders gaven dan ook slechts bij wijze van uitzondering aan diakenen zitting in de meerdere vergaderingen . . . Waren nu de diakenen tot het mederegeeren, krachtens hun ambt, geroepen, dan moesten zij vanzelf ook kunnen afgevaardigd worden naar de meerdere vergaderingen der kerken" (p. 372). On page 374 Dr. Biesterveld writes: "Deze opvatting, dat de diakenen in den kerkeraad als zoodanig geen zitting hebben, is volkomen juist te achten naar de door 's Heeren ordinantie gewilde onderscheiding der ambten, en opdat goede volvoering van de roeping, die uit elk ambt voortvloeit, mogelijk zij." He also agrees that we should bear in mind "dat in kleinere kerken de diakenen, wanneer zij in den kerkeraad zitting en stem hebben, daar zijn als hulpouderlingen . . ." (p. 375). Dr. Biesterveld, moreover, gives considerable attention to the fact that the deacons "niet los naast den kerkeraad staan, maar in allerlei verband en aanraking met den kerkeraad komen." On the pages 376-378 he discusses the work the deacons share with the elders in the Council of the church, as specified in several Articles of the Church Order, stating finally: "Behalve al deze gewichtige werkzaamheden, dienen ook in deze vergadering behandeld de zaken van het financieel beheer der kerkelijke inkomsten, hetzij dit bestaat in het voeren van het beheer zelf, of in het instrueeren en benoemen eener daarvoor uit kerkeraad, diakenen en gemeenteleden samengestelde commissie. Alles wat het houden van collecten, bepalen van traktementen raakt, hoort daar thuis. Ook het vaststellen van de algemeene regelen der armenverzorging, de goedkeuring der armenadministratie . . ." Dr. Biesterveld also appends a "Regeling der werkzaamheden van de Dienaren des Woords, Ouderlingen en Diakenen der Gereformeerde Kerk te Amsterdam." He does so "om te doen zien hoe een en ander kan worden ingericht, zonder gevaar van aanranding der billijke zelfstandigheid, of van botsing . . ." (p. 381 ff.).

Several similar references might be added to show that the above-mentioned authorities take the position of this report, but we believe these will suffice. If our churches adhere to these principles and practices little trouble will be encountered in the exercise of the several offices in the church, particularly when "the status of the deacons in the Council of our church" is concerned."

REPORT XII.

REPORT OF COMMITTEE TO REVISE PROOF-TEXTS IN HEIDELBERG CATECHISM

To the Synod of 1938.

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

THE Psalter-Hymnal Committee reported as follows to the Synod of 1936 in connection with its work on the Heidelberg Catechism:

"In the matter of proof-texts from Scripture, your Committee has followed the Dutch edition of Rutgers rather than the old English edition. The former contains many texts in addition to those found in the latter. We hope that this change will be found an improvement, even though we do not guarantee that every text under every answer is pertinent. In fact, we believe that there is further need of improvement here. This or a future Synod might well charge a committee with the task of reviewing and improving the lists of proof-texts in our Catechism."

In connection with this suggestion of the Psalter-Hymnal Committee the Advisory Committee on Publication Matters came to Synod with the following advice:

"*Heidelberg Catechism*, pp. 34, 35. Your Committee recommends that Synod adopt the suggestion of the Psalter-Hymnal Committee that a Committee be appointed to review and improve the lists of proof-texts in our Catechism." (Acts 1936, p. 73.)

The Synod adopted this recommendation of its Advisory Committee, and appointed the following Committee: Rev. R. Veldman, Prof. L. Berkhof, Rev. J. De Haan, Jr. (p. 151, Acts of 1936.) Your Committee did not begin the work for which the mandate calls, because it has serious doubts as to the correctness and wisdom of the present procedure.

In the first place it would call attention to the fact that there was no overture to Synod requesting the appointment of a Committee to review and improve the lists of proof-texts in our Heidelberg Catechism. Synod acted on the mere suggestion of a Committee that a Committee should be appointed for that purpose. Since the sug-

gested work of this Committee contemplates changes in one of our Confessional Standards, not even on the basis of textual criticism but on exegesis, it would seem that Synod should not have acted on this suggestion until the matter under consideration was brought up by one or more of the churches, and the necessity of it was clearly proved. All we have now is the statement of the Psalter-Hymnal Committee that it believes that there is need of further improvement. No grounds whatever are given.

In the second place the method suggested by the Psalter-Hymnal Committee and adopted by Synod entails a great deal of unnecessary labor for those who may be called upon to engage in it, and these are usually men already burdened with work. Surely, in view of the fact that no official complaint was ever registered as to the relevancy of the Scripture passages to which the Catechism refers, we may proceed on the assumption that they are in the main correct, and it is not necessary to make an exegetical study of them. If the ministers of our Church find in their preaching on the Catechism that some of the proof-texts are irrelevant, let them call attention to these and give the grounds why they deem them incorrect. Then we have something definite, and Synod can appoint a Committee to study those particular passages and to report on them.

And, in the third place, it is doubtful whether it would be proper for our Synod to bring about any changes even in the passages on which our Catechism grounds its teaching, without consulting the sister churches in the Netherlands and in South Africa. It would seem desirable to consult them with respect to any changes that may seem necessary to improve the lists, even if in the end we should feel constrained to make the suggested changes. Let us show that we take our Church correspondence seriously especially when it comes to matters pertaining to our Confessional Standards.

The Committee wishes you God's blessing in all your deliberations.

Respectfully submitted,

RICHARD VELDMAN, *President*
LOUIS BERKHOF, *Secretary*
JOHN DE HAAN, JR.

REPORT XIII.

REPORT OF DELEGATE TO THE AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY

To the Synod of 1938.

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

YOUR delegate attended the annual meeting of the Advisory Council of the American Bible Society on December first, 1937. Thirty-three denominations were represented, and regrets were received from nine delegates who had expected to represent their respective church bodies. It was one of the largest Council meetings that we ever attended, and brought men and women together from fifteen states and the District of Columbia. The Reverend P. O. Bercell, president of the Evangelical Lutheran Augustana Synod of North America, was chosen chairman for the day.

At this meeting it was reported what the churches had done during the past year for the purpose of translating, publishing, and distributing of the Holy Scriptures in many countries. We also learned from the secretaries that the Christian Reformed Church had notably increased its gifts to the Society's work. It is certainly gratifying to your representative to inform Synod that the total income from our small denomination during 1937 amounted to \$1,918.79, nearly \$900.00 more than the year before, and the largest contribution since 1930.

A brief study of last year's gifts from our denomination reveals the following: 35 churches contributed which did not give during the preceding three years; 24 churches gave which did not give in 1936; 30 gave more than in 1936, and 3 gave for the first time since 1934. On the other hand, 14 gave a smaller amount in 1936, and 6 gave exactly the same amount as in 1936.

Recently the Society made a liberal grant of Dutch Bibles to the Christian Reformed church at Hoboken, N. J., for which we are very grateful.

The American Bible Society is doing an excellent work in promoting the Bible cause in the world. It sends out

the Scriptures in many languages to various parts of the globe. It ably assists the missionary enterprise of the churches. Consequently, it needs the generous support of all the churches, also of our church. Again we bespeak a good word in behalf of the Society in recommending it to the churches and requesting you to place it on the list of accredited causes.

Humbly submitted,

JOHN BEEBE,
Delegate to the American Bible Society.

REPORT XIV.

NATIONAL CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION REPRESENTATIVE

To the Synod of 1938.

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

AS YOUR representative to the National Christian Association, it is my pleasure to render the following report.

The National Christian Association was organized in 1868 by some Christian men to militate against secret societies. For seventy years this organization has carried out its purpose by the grace of God. For seventy years it has published its monthly, the *Christian Cynosure*.

We are happy to report that during the past two years, since we gave our last report, the N. C. A. has been very busy in its work against secret societies. And I might add that this is the only organization in the whole world that is opposing the lodge in the lives of professors of the Christ because the lodge and Christianity are essentially opposed to each other. Lodge membership is a denial of one's Christianity.

We have made propaganda against secret societies by means of lectures, distribution of literature, and the publication of our monthly magazine, edited by the Rev. G. M. Van Pernis of the Reformed Church in America. More work could have been done, but due to lack of finances our work had to be curtailed.

The Association suffered a great loss in the death of Dr. W. B. Stoddard, our field representative, who put more than fifty years of his life into this work. At the present time we are making use of interested ministers in various localities to continue the work of Dr. Stoddard. It would be a splendid thing if we could get a few of our own Seminarians to devote their life to this great missionary work, provided we had the money. If all our congregations would remember this work with an annual offering or donation we might be able to attain this ideal. Opposition to the lodge is very necessary, and opposition from the lodge is very great.

Our work is getting world-wide recognition through our monthly magazine. There seems to be an awakening among Christian peoples of the evil of the lodge. Our editor receives many invitations to speak against the lodge, but due to lack of money we cannot send him out. Recently calls came from Europe to help organize the work there against the lodge. After a long discussion the Board did not dare to turn down this opportunity. Our editor volunteered to go if only his traveling expenses were paid. The Board decided to allow him \$350 for this purpose, which would give him the opportunity of speaking about the evils of the lodge in England, Scotland, Holland, and Germany, hoping that the churches supporting this work will give a little extra to meet this added expense. Our editor is also an invited speaker at the Calvinistic Congress which will be held in Edinburgh, Scotland, this summer.

The financial support of our churches the last two years has been better than the two previous years, although by no means have all our churches remembered this cause. In 1934 and 1935 the Christian Reformed Church contributed \$314.00 and \$314.95, respectively. In 1936 our denomination gave \$516.67, and in 1937 the sum of \$614.04 was received.

The total receipts of our Association for the year 1936 amounted to \$3,524.27. In 1937 we received \$4,941.55. The expenditures for the years 1936 and 1937 were \$3,229.67 and \$5,424.20, respectively. A detailed financial statement is attached to this report.

For the benefit of those who do not know, we might add that three of our ministers are members of the Board of Directors, namely, the Revs. J. R. Brink, B. Essenburg, and James Putt.

We can whole-heartedly recommend the National Christian Association to the continued moral and financial support of our churches. May it please you to place it on the list of approved causes and to urge the congregations to remember this great work in a tangible way. The Board has asked me, when reporting on our work to Synod, to convey to you its sincere thanks for your past interest and Christian co-operation.

Respectfully submitted,

JAMES PUTT.

REPORT XV.

CHICAGO JEWISH MISSION OF THE CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH

To the Synod of 1938.

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

AS Secretary of the Board of The Jewish Mission of the Christian Reformed Church at Chicago, I was instructed by the Board to render a report of the activities of this part of the Kingdom work, as carried out during the year 1937.

You will notice from the statement of the Treasurer that we have again much reason to be thankful to God for supplying all our needs as far as finances are concerned. This does not mean, however, that more could not have been accomplished if the last Synod had not deemed it advisable to delay extension of the work; and first of all advising the Board to use the funds for further reduction of the encumbrance; and no doubt wisely so, as can be seen from the financial statement, that in addition to the \$3,800.00 received from the Van Agthoven Estate we have from our regular income been able to reduce our indebtedness \$4,150.00, making a total reduction of \$7,950.00. This we wish to bring to the attention of Synod, was made possible by the payment of nearly the full quota for Jewish Missions by all the churches, or to be exact 97% of the quota was received, for which the Board is very thankful.

Although we do not propose a larger budget than last year, it does not mean, as stated above, that much more could not be accomplished if we could see our way clear to make the necessary extensions in our work, as you will notice from the results of and the possibilities in this field of labor given below.

Owing to the departure of Rev. Van Schouwen from Archer Ave. to De Motte, Ind., it became necessary to appoint another member in his place, for which Rev. Wm. Haverkamp was appointed by Classis Illinois.

There were no additional workers appointed during this year, so that the staff remains the same as a year ago. Two regular workers in the Institute: Mr. A. Huisjen and

Miss Edith Vander Meulen, and two part-time workers: Dr. Wm. Yonker and Miss Delis, R. N., in the Clinic. The wisdom of appointing a lady worker during the previous year is further evidenced by the increased attendance and the interest taken in the classes by the girls and young ladies, and also the mothers.

The total average weekly attendance in classes and gospel meetings during the past year was 125, as compared to 90 in the previous year, and divided as follows:

Gospel meetings	23
Woman's Bible Classes.....	10
Girls and Young Ladies.....	42
Boys and Young Men.....	35
Children	15

The number of cases treated at the Clinic averaged 149 per month, or a total of 1,793 during the year, of which 263 came for the first time.

In addition to the institutional work, some outdoor street meetings were held during the three summer months, which attendance can not very well be estimated.

In June and part of July daily vacation classes were conducted, with an average daily attendance of 36. These are not included in the classes given above.

Informal messages are given to the Clinic patients in the waiting room three days a week.

An average of eight families per month were visited.

During the year 28 addresses were given by Mr. Huisjen on the work at Missionary Society meetings and festivals, and by request in some of our churches.

We are not able to give out any information as to a certain number of converts, as we should like to, although there are some whose lives we would venture to say are changed. There are many who show considerable interest in the lessons and speaking. There are surely reasons why we should feel encouraged as to the measure of success we are having at the present time. The attitude of many towards the workers is altogether different from what it used to be. One lady who was sick asked to be prayed for, which is one thing they would never do before, and is the first time it ever has happened. Another begged our pardon for not being present at a meeting. Another, at the Christmas party, said, "Why should you give us presents; we should give them to you." She

showed that she meant it by sending the workers each a present and donating two pounds of coffee. Another offered to get before a class of women and tell them that this Jesus was the Messiah which, according to their own Prayer Book, they had lost and are praying for to come.

The Gospel meetings on Friday evenings are attended almost exclusively by young people of from 15 to 25 years of age, and average from 35 to 50 except in four summer months when the attendance is very small and which brings the average attendance over the year down to 23.

So we have reason to go on sowing in hope, and trusting that in due time God will give the increase, which happily we can leave to His care, if only we are faithful in carrying out His command to bring the Gospel to all people, beginning at Jerusalem.

Respectfully submitted,

The Board of Nathanael Institute,

Per C. LEENHOUTS, *Secretary*.

REPORT XVI.

REPORT OF THE GENERAL FUND FOR JEWISH MISSIONS

From January 1, 1937, to January 15, 1938

Classis	Families	Am't of Quota	Am't Received	Rec. Per Fam.	Less Their Quota
California	639	\$ 479.25	\$ 584.86	\$.93	
East Friesland	654	490.50	533.02	.83	
Grand Rapids East	2981	2,235.75	2,025.33	.679	\$210.42
Grand Rapids West	3597	2,697.75	2,214.41	.616	483.34
Hackensack	668	501.00	468.00	.70	33.00
Holland	1956	1,467.00	1,556.86	.795	
Hudson	1533	1,149.75	1,007.11	.656	142.64
Illinois	2929	2,196.75	1,990.15	.679	206.60
Muskegon	2042	1,531.50	1,775.07	.868	
Orange City	1884	1,413.00	1,032.20	.593	380.80
Pacific	1010	757.50	731.59	.724	25.91
Pella	1168	876.00	980.70	.839	
Sioux Center	1281	960.75	428.14	.327	532.61
Wisconsin	722	541.50	454.69	.629	86.81
Zeeland	1540	1,155.00	1,056.92	.686	98.08
Totals.....	24604	\$18,453.00	\$16,839.05		

Societies, Churches, Individuals	\$ 871.98
Interest	65.00
Balance on hand Jan. 1, 1937.....	<u>1,390.96</u>

Total Receipts and Balance Jan. 1, '37-Jan. 15 '38.....\$19,166.99

DISBURSEMENTS

To Chicago	\$12,677.00
To Paterson	6,374.00
To Gratuity	100.00
Stamps, Box, Bond	<u>15.25</u>

Total Disbursements Jan. 1, '37-Jan. 15, '38..... 19,166.25

Balance on hand Jan. 15, 1938......74

IN RESERVE

Michael Van Den Berg Memorial Bonds.....	\$ 1,000.00
Johanna Woltman Legacy Certificate.....	500.00
(5 shares paid up stock)	

Respectfully Submitted,
PETER HOLWERDA, *Treasurer.*

Audited and found correct for period Jan. 1, 1937 to Jan. 15, 1938.

IRA STRUCK,
JOHN H. VAN HASSEL.

February 24, 1938.

REPORT XVII.

REPORT OF THE PATERSON HEBREW MISSION FOR THE YEAR 1937

To the Synod of 1938.

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

A GAIN you are looking forward to a brief report of the activities of the Paterson Hebrew Mission.

The Mission sustained a very severe blow in the death of its faithful superintendent, the Rev. H. Schultz. For a period of more than seventeen years he labored diligently in the work to which the Lord called him. On June 17, 1937, the Lord transferred him to the triumphant church where he now rejoices with the saints above.

The work at the mission is faithfully carried on by the personnel. These are the acting superintendent, the Rev. J. Rozendal, and Miss Martha Rozendale, and Dr. W. L. Dunning who is in charge of the dispensary.

The meetings are well attended. At the Gospel meetings we are pleased to inform you that there is an average attendance of 30 Jews. The dispensary on Thursday afternoons is also visited by a goodly number of the sons of Jacob. Once a month a social meeting is held at which one of the local church groups renders a program. At this meeting songs are sung, the pastor gives a message from God's Word. At the conclusion of the meeting there is a friendly chat with the Jews, and this certainly helps to promote the feeling of good will among them. In addition, let us add that many calls are made by the workers in the homes, shops; and the Gospel is proclaimed by word, tract, and conversation. The Board is very much encouraged with the work of the personnel, and is grateful for every effort put forth for the extension of God's Kingdom among the ancient covenant children.

Last Christmas appropriate exercises took place in the Mission. At that time several Jewish children rendered musical numbers and gave recitations. The workers were much encouraged with the response.

In our Mission there is a table filled with all sorts of literature which is available for them who frequent the Mission. Everything possible is done, through word and tract, to remove the veil from their eyes.

From the financial report it is evident that the Lord has richly remembered the Mission. In the near future we expect to add another full time lady worker to labor with the Miss Martha Rozendale.

During the past year a new roof was placed on the building. The upper floor, consisting of six rooms, was redecorated. This floor is now occupied by the Rev. J. Rozendal and family.

The Board meets monthly, except during the summer, to transact the necessary business of the Mission. Regular reports are rendered at the meetings of Classes Hudson and Hackensack, for under their auspices the many activities of the Mission are being performed.

The needs of the Paterson Hebrew Mission are set forth on the following page. May the Synod see its way clear to grant our request for the coming year. Please remember the manifold labors of this phase of the Lord's work in Paterson as well as in Chicago.

Humbly submitted,
Paterson Hebrew Mission Board,
H. VAN OOSTENBRIDGE, *Secretary*.

TREASURER'S REPORT OF HEBREW MISSION FOR 1937

RECEIPTS

Balance January 1, 1937.....	\$ 727.15
From General Fund through Rev. P. Holwerda..	5,276.00
Rent—second floor—Mission Bldg.....	420.00
Donations and gifts	39.73
Free-will offerings	30.11

Total.....\$6,492.99

DISBURSEMENTS

Salaries Paid	\$3,139.16
Building Repairs and Renewals.....	677.60
Fuel	171.00
Medicines and Medical Equipment.....	155.91
Sundry Supplies and Expenses, etc.....	162.48
Gas and Electric	46.94
Insurance	28.33
Telephone	23.61
Bibles, Testaments, and Literature.....	21.73
Water	19.23

Total.....\$4,444.99

December 31, 1937, balance on hand..... 2,048.00

\$6,492.99

Respectfully Submitted,
JOHN H. VAN HASSEL, *Treasurer*.

For Proposed Budget see under Overtures on Missions, Sub. No. 18.

REPORT XVIII.

SEAMEN'S HOME — HOBOKEN, N. J.

To the Synod of 1938.

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

THIS is a report of the work done at the Seamen's Home at Hoboken, New Jersey.

The Eastern Home Mission Board reports, with gratitude to God, that the work at the Seamen's Home has been carried on without interruption for another year.

The workers have co-operated nicely with one another and the Board. They have carried on with fruitful regularity and devotion to their tasks. The labors of the spiritual workers are not without fruit. Important contacts are made with men in spiritual need. Expressions of thanks are frequently received for the services rendered, while without doubt much of the seed sown works in a yet hitherto unknown way.

From the *Sailor's Handbook for Shoreleave* we have learned that, whereas most of the homes for seamen provide facilities for laundry, for banking and recreational activities and operate clinics for venereal diseases, our home is one of the few which seeks to minister to the spiritual needs of those who call at the home.

The Reverend A. H. Kort, pastor of the Hoboken Christian Reformed Church, continues to supervise the spiritual work of the home consisting mainly of the conducting of Gospel meetings. Seventy Gospel meetings were conducted with an attendance of one thousand and sixty-one persons. (Cf. Overtures, Sub. No. 12.)

Mr. E. Apol continues to supervise the running of the home, besides visiting ships, barges, and other craft to distribute Bibles, tracts, and other portions of Scripture, while seeking openings for personal work with those aboard these ships. During the year 204 ships, 252 barges and other craft were visited; 58 Bibles, 353 New Testaments, 3,910 Tracts, and other portions of Scripture were distributed. Eight beds and 184 meals were furnished free of charge.

Many persons found assistance through the home; 205 persons were assisted on incoming ships of which 33 were immigrants and 27 visitors, while 237 were assisted on outgoing ships. Lodging was found at the home by 222 emigrants, 18 immigrants, 29 sailors, and 19 visitors.

The home has been inspected each month by a committee from the Board. The building committee was especially active, supervising repairs and redecorating the building. The home is in excellent condition. It is a fit place for visitors and employees.

Respectfully Submitted,
Eastern Home Mission Board,
P. HOLWERDA, *Secretary*.

Recommendation to Synod: The Eastern Home Mission Board recommends to Synod that the funds received from the Van Agthoven Estate for the Seamen's Home be kept intact as an Endowment Trust Fund. *Grounds:*

1. Thus the name of the testator may be perpetuated.
2. The home will then become self-supporting eventually.
3. This can be realized if the churches continue to give a little support for the time being.

Eastern Home Mission Board,
P. HOLWERDA, *Secretary*.

For Annual Statement of Assets and Liabilities as of January 1, 1938, see Overtures, Sub. No. 13.

REPORT XIX.

REPORT IN RE CLASSICAL STATUS OF HOME MISSIONARY

(Sent in by the Stated Clerk of Classis Sioux Center)

DEAR BRETHREN OF CLASSIS,
Assembled at Doon, Iowa, March 1, 1938.

YOUR Classical Home Missions Committee was instructed at the last Classical session to advise Classis with regard to the question whether Rev. De Bruyn, Home Missionary of the Christian Reformed Church, can continue to serve as delegate of the Mission Board.

In studying the above question, the attention of your committee was called to a Synodical decision anent the status of Classical Home Missionaries. We find this decision in Acts of Synod 1930, page 145 f. The following is a quotation from the Acts: "In re status of Home Missionaries, the Committee appointed by the Synod of 1928 advises adding the following amendment to Art. 42 of our Church Manual (Agenda Part I p. 26). 'It is within the jurisdiction of each classical assembly to grant the privilege of membership to its Home Missionaries.' Your committee does *not sustain* this proposal because it conflicts:

"(1) With art. 33 of our Church Manual, 'Those who are delegated to the assemblies shall bring with them their credentials and instructions, signed by those sending them, and they shall have a vote in all matters, etc.' It would seem fair to conclude that only they that are delegated and have consistorial credentials shall have a vote;

"(2) With art. 41 of our Church Manual, 'The Classical meetings shall consist of neighboring churches that respectively delegate with proper credentials, a minister and an elder, etc.' It appears that Classis, by adding to its membership those who are not delegated by churches, does violence to this article.

"Your committee is of the opinion that a better way can be found and advises that Synod attach the following to Art. 41: In re delegating Home Missionaries to Classical Assemblies: 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 pos-

sible 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. Adopted." Thus the quotation from Acts of Synod 1930.

We call attention to the last reasons mentioned for the decision taken by Synod, which reasons represent the principles on which said decision is based. These reasons emphasize the principle of our church government that only they may be members of Classis who have been sent with credentials, and are therefore delegates to Classis.

If we apply these principles to the question given us, we must come to the following conclusion which we give as our advice to Classis:

It is the unanimous opinion of your committee that Rev. De Bruyn cannot properly represent Classis as delegate to the Mission Board. *Grounds:*

1. Home Missionaries under the present system adopted by the Synod are the missionaries of the Church at large, and not the missionaries of any one Classis.
2. No congregation has the right to delegate such a missionary to the Classis unless he should be a ruling elder in that church.
3. Classis has no right to extend to such a missionary more than an advisory vote, since according to Art. 33 and 41, only those who are delegated have the right to vote.
4. Therefore, since such a missionary would not actually be a member of Classis he cannot be delegated to represent the Classis at the Home Mission Board.
5. Neither would the best interests of the Classis be advanced by a delegate who is not laboring within the territory and domain of the Classis.

Humbly submitted,

Classical Home Missions Committee,
LEONARD VERDUIN, *President*
BENJAMIN H. SPALINK, *Secretary*
CORNELIUS OLDENBURG.

REPORT XX.

REPORT OF CHURCH HELP COMMITTEE

To the Synod of 1938.

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

WE herewith submit a report of the work done in 1937. As you will notice from the financial report, twelve loans were made during the year amounting to \$13,700. The largest loans were \$2,000, and the smallest \$200.

The receipts this year from quotas (50c per family or one collection per year) amounted to \$7,554.22, which sum is nearly \$3,000 more than it was in 1936. The receipts from re-payments of loans to churches this year was \$8,212.85, which is \$2,300 more than the re-payments in 1936. Our total receipts in 1937 were \$17,992.12.

We have been very careful, we believe, in making loans to such churches that needed help and where the prospects for growth seemed bright. We have also emphasized the importance of prompt re-payments of 5% per year.

The Second Church of Denver, which requested and received Synod's permission to make a direct appeal to all the churches for gifts, with the understanding that it would repay all the money received to the Church Help Committee, received thus far about \$5,000. We agreed to loan them enough more to make the total amount \$7,500. This was not yet done in 1937, but we felt that it should be reported to you now.

As you know, we had as our treasurer, Mr. J. J. Buiten. He was at first appointed by the Synodical Committee when the former treasurer, Rev. J. Manni, became ill. We retained him after the Synod appointed another member in Rev. Manni's place because he was familiar with the work and his work was satisfactory. Mr. Buiten was not a member of this committee and had no vote, but he did the work under our supervision. At the last Synod there seems to have been some objection to this arrangement (see Acts of 1937, page 27). The Synod called it an "irregularity." Although we think that we should have the right to delegate some of the work to some one else, we nevertheless felt burdened about it. When we mentioned the matter to

Mr. Buiten, he offered to resign and we accepted his resignation in order to correct this "irregularity." We have now appointed one of our own members, Rev. D. De Beer, as treasurer. He began his work in March of 1938. Mr. Buiten's book wersh audited by Mr. Herbert Bouma, a public accountant, and he found them in very good condition.

Your Committee feels constrained to state further that when having taken cognizance of Art. 38:4 of the Acts of Synod 1937, it felt grieved: First, because your Committee feels that it is unfair and too severe that, as a **penalty** for this "irregularity" the Committee is to be dismissed. Secondly, the application of this penalty must apparently serve as an enhancement for more centralization of power "appointing a centralized committee," a matter which your Committee, as well as many others in East and West, resents. Thirdly, your Committee has not the least intention to in any way influence your body in the choosing of the personnel of this Committee. Your present Committee, however, does wish to state that it has performed its work with pleasure and to the best of its ability. Moreover, it truly fails to see that a centralized committee would be able to function more **effectively** and **properly** since your present Committee represents a complete cross-section of the whole Church. Therefore, your Committee herewith respectfully petitions your honorable body that if you desire a different personnel to choose such that is equally representative.

Respectfully submitted,

Church Help Committee,

CLARENCE GROOT, *President*

HENRY J. VERMEER, *Secretary*

D. DE BEER, *Treasurer*.

CLASSICAL COLLECTIONS

CLASSIS	1937	1936 For Comparison
California	\$ 253.16	\$ 320.42
Grand Rapids East	660.20	466.61
Grand Rapids West.....	1,163.76	522.19
Hackensack	143.78	133.08
Holland	820.66	337.48
Hudson	436.35	324.43
Illinois	934.29	495.28
Muskegon	1,001.71	793.29
Orange City	78.18	86.99
Ostfriesland	226.09	53.34
Pacific	375.83	405.19

Pella	343.55	132.15
Sioux Center	142.65	122.18
Wisconsin	505.52	99.37
Zeeland	355.49	319.02
Miscellaneous, Personal	113.00	000.00

TOTALS	\$7,554.22	\$4,611.02
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P. S. Last year's miscellaneous donations were credited to Classes.

LOANS STATEMENT

Church at	Amt. Owning 1/1/37	New Loans	Paid in 1937	Amt. Owning 12/31/37
Ada, Michigan	\$ 25.00	-----	\$ 25.00	\$.00
Aetna, Michigan	575.15	\$ 1,200.00	123.29	1,651.86
Alameda, California	1,950.00	-----	150.00	1,800.00
Alamosa, Colorado	300.00	-----	61.78	238.22
Arlene, Michigan	107.00	-----	10.04	96.96
Atwood, Michigan	1,155.00	-----	75.00	1,080.00
Austinville, Iowa	385.00	-----	35.00	350.00
Bauer, Michigan	475.00	-----	50.00	425.00
Bellflower, California	2,200.00	-----	150.00	2,050.00
Bemis, South Dakota .....	.00	200.00	7.67	192.33
Bigelow, Minnesota	1,423.60	-----	118.06	1,305.54
Bijou, Minnesota	475.00	-----	29.31	445.69
Birnamwood, Wisconsin	2,055.42	-----	.00	2,055.42
Bradley, Michigan	416.33	-----	416.33	.00
Brocton, Minnesota	1,221.02	-----	8.38	1,212.64
Burdette, Canada	1,000.00	-----	1,000.00	.00
Chandler, Minnesota	1,615.42	-----	177.80	1,437.62
Chatham, Canada	2,975.00	-----	.00	2,975.00
Colton, South Dakota	950.00	-----	.00	950.00
Columbus, Montana	488.00	-----	488.00	.00
Conrad, Montana	1,620.00	-----	50.00	1,570.00
Coopersville, Michigan	1,417.93	-----	.00	1,417.93
Crookston, Minnesota	650.00	500.00	12.10	1,137.90
Delavan, Wisconsin	1,000.00	-----	50.00	950.00
Des Plaines, Illinois	1,885.00	-----	100.00	1,785.00
DeMotte, Indiana	845.00	-----	50.00	795.00
Decatur, Michigan	3,500.00	-----	.00	3,500.00
Detroit, Michigan	325.00	-----	325.00	.00
Doon, Iowa .....	.00	1,500.00	.00	1,500.00
Dutton, Michigan	300.00	-----	50.00	250.00
Duval, Washington .....	.00	1,000.00	.00	1,000.00
East Martin, Michigan	1,110.00	-----	75.00	1,035.00
East Muskegon, Michigan	3,735.54	-----	50.00	3,685.54
Estelline, South Dakota	2,347.64	-----	55.50	2,292.14
Everette, Washington	1,000.00	-----	50.00	950.00
Goshen, Indiana	450.00	-----	100.00	350.00
G. R. East Leonard	5,960.00	-----	72.32	5,887.68
G. R. Godwin Heights	2,775.00	-----	150.00	2,625.00
G. R. Lee Street	1,650.00	-----	150.00	1,500.00
Grangeville, Idaho	450.00	1,500.00	25.00	1,925.00
Hamilton, Ontario	3,000.00	-----	60.00	2,940.00
Hamshire, Texas	2,000.00	-----	125.00	1,875.00

Church at	Amt. Owing 1/1/37	New Loans	Paid in 1937	Amt. Owing 12/31/37
Hancock, Minnesota -----	1,026.20	-----	13.12	1,013.08
Hanford, California -----	40.49	-----	40.49	.00
Hawarden, Iowa -----	800.00	-----	25.00	775.00
Hills, Minnesota -----	950.00	-----	50.00	900.00
Holland, Iowa -----	1,050.00	-----	106.50	943.50
Holland, Minnesota -----	1,425.00	2,000.00	51.43	3,373.57
Hollandale, Minnesota -----	1,140.00	-----	90.00	1,050.00
Holland Center, South Dakota--	1,030.00	-----	70.00	960.00
Ireton, Iowa -----	450.00	-----	25.00	425.00
Lansing, Illinois -----	675.00	-----	150.00	525.00
Lark, North Dakota -----	500.00	-----	.00	500.00
Los Angeles, California -----	1,584.90	-----	140.00	1,444.90
Lynden, Washington, II -----	1,750.00	-----	200.00	1,550.00
Martin, South Dakota -----	225.00	-----	13.86	211.14
McBain, Michigan -----	1,035.44	-----	70.49	964.95
Millwood, Michigan -----	2,375.00	-----	200.00	2,175.00
Momence, Illinois -----	900.00	-----	50.00	850.00
Morrison, Illinois -----	1,000.00	-----	175.00	825.00
Mountain Lake, Minnesota -----	355.00	25.00*	30.00	350.00
Muskegon Heights, Michigan --	250.00	-----	35.00	215.00
Neerlandia, Canada -----	5,000.00	-----	500.00	4,500.00
Noordeloos, Michigan -----	48.62	-----	7.50	41.12
North Blendon, Michigan -----	110.00	-----	35.32	74.68
Ocheyedan, Iowa -----	958.35	-----	75.00	883.35
Ogilvie, Minnesota -----	500.00	-----	25.00	475.00
Ontario, California -----	1,992.31	-----	.00	1,992.31
Orange City, Iowa, II -----	1,200.00	-----	75.00	1,125.00
Oskaloosa, Iowa -----	112.46	-----	33.56	78.90
Parchment, Michigan -----	.00	2,000.00	.00	2,000.00
Pella, Iowa, II -----	466.00	500.00	50.00	916.00
Portland, Michigan -----	705.00	-----	65.00	640.00
Preakness, N. Y. -----	1,000.00	-----	50.00	950.00
Purewater, South Dakota -----	645.00	-----	20.00	625.00
Riverbend, Michigan -----	1,175.00	-----	.00	1,175.00
Rock Rapids, Iowa -----	2,619.94	2,000.00	50.00	4,569.94
Roseland, Illinois, IV -----	2,850.00	-----	200.00	2,650.00
Rudyard, Michigan -----	253.46	-----	50.00	203.46
Sanborn, Iowa -----	140.57	-----	.00	140.57
Shepard, Montana -----	3,056.80	-----	290.00	2,766.80
Sibley, Iowa -----	1,425.50	-----	40.00	1,386.50
Sioux Center, Iowa, I -----	1,337.20	-----	.00	1,337.20
Sioux City, Iowa -----	680.00	300.00	80.00	900.00
Sioux Falls, South Dakota -----	1,585.20	-----	27.69	1,557.51
Sullivan, Michigan -----	110.00	-----	110.00	.00
Sully, Iowa -----	2,850.00	-----	50.00	2,800.00
Sultan, Washington -----	1,005.00	-----	25.00	980.00
Sumas, Washington -----	.00	1,000.00	50.00	950.00
Tracy, Iowa -----	996.60	-----	67.50	929.10
Vancouver, Canada -----	1,509.00	-----	100.00	1,409.00
Volga, South Dakota -----	450.00	-----	35.00	415.00
Vona, Colorado -----	432.25	-----	.00	432.25
Wellsburg, Iowa, II -----	900.00	-----	50.00	850.00
West Branch, Michigan -----	823.20	-----	92.00	731.20
Winnipeg, Canada -----	349.50	-----	3.54	345.96

Church at	Amt. Owing 1/1/37	New Loans	Paid in 1937	Amt. Owing 12/31/37
Worthington, Minnesota -----	1,459.75	-----	73.00	1,386.75
Wyoming Park, Michigan -----	904.51	-----	50.00	854.51
(98) CHURCHES. TOTALS--	\$114,026.30	\$13,700.00	\$8,212.85	\$119,359.72
		25.00*	178.73*	

* Special Adjustments.

SUMMARY

RECEIPTS AND DISBURSEMENTS

Balance on hand January 1, 1937.....\$ 2,225.05

RECEIPTS

Classical Collections and Personal Donations.....\$ 7,529.22

Adjustment Lincoln Center Donations 1936.....25.00

Re-payments by Churches.....8,212.85

TOTAL RECEIPTS AND ADJUSTMENT.....\$15,767.07

TOTAL BALANCE AND RECEIPTS.....\$17,992.12

LESS: New Loans Granted.....\$13,700.00

Amount charged back to Mountain Lake Lincoln
Center, donations 1936.....25.00 13,725.00

\$ 4,267.12

LESS: Administrative Expenses paid during 1937.....109.33

Balance on hand December 31, 1937.....\$ 4,157.79

(Cf. Overture No. 20.—H. B.)

REPORT XXI.

MISSIONARY TRAINING AND BIBLE SCHOOL

To the Synod of 1938.

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

THE Standing Committee advised the Synod of 1937:

a) that Synod establish a real Missionary Training School for layworkers.

b) that Synod appoint a full-time head and part-time assistants . . . In case Synod cannot see its way clear to appoint a full-time head, we advise that the work be dropped.

In place of the above advice of the Committee, Synod decided to instruct the present Board of Directors to present a complete program and budget for a real Missionary Training and Bible School to the next Synod. See pp. 67, 68 *Acts of Synod, 1937.*

The report herewith submitted embodies our findings.

I. If our Church is to establish "a real Missionary Training and Bible School," such a school should be able to compete at least to some extent with Bible Schools of a similar character now existing throughout the country. This seems to be self-evident, and to be tacitly admitted. For instance, the Standing Committee of the Synod of 1937 advised Synod upon two "grounds," one of which reads as follows:

"2. An increasing number of our best young people go to other training schools and are weaned away from our Church."

The idea therefore seemed to be to erect a school which may be a substitute for such existing schools. In this connection we may also call attention that the "Reformed Bible Institute" in Chicago openly advertises, "Our aim is to be a substitute for the Moody Bible Institute."

If we are to be at all successful in carrying out such aims, we should take cognizance of some facts such as these: The National Bible Institute in New York has a faculty of thirteen members plus eighteen lecturers in its

medical department, plus five special lecturers. The Garrett Biblical Institute, has a faculty of twenty-five, plus eight "visiting professors" and a long list of two pages of names of special lectures and addresses. The Presbyterian College of Religious Education in Chicago has a faculty of thirteen. Moody Bible Institute has a faculty and instructors numbering twenty, plus several men and women giving special instruction, for instance, seven teachers in music.

If now we compare with this the Reformed Bible Institute, opened in May, 1937, by our own men at Chicago, we find that they offer courses by eight men, all busy pastors, etc. Men, in other words, who must needs give a small part of their time to this work. Yet this School reopened in October, 1937, with two branches, 100 students in the South Side and 50 in the West Side branch. Since they did not and do not have any Sunday School lesson teaching (which drew the bulk of our students here at Grand Rapids), we may conclude that interest in and around Chicago in this matter is far greater than interest has proven to be in Grand Rapids (cpr. Acts of Synod, 1937, p. 67). If Synod should want to proceed with this matter, it would seem advisable to establish a school of this nature in Chicago.

There are, moreover, other considerations which point in the direction of Chicago as more desirable. Among these we may mention first of all, that it should be self-evident that, no matter how much the zeal and accomplishment of the Chicago brethren deserves our praise, the ideal of being a substitute for Moody Institute has not as yet been quite realized. If this ideal is to materialize, more teachers are needed and more subjects are to be taught.

Let us consider what a proper course that may compete with the Moody training should involve.

Moody offers seven different courses, namely, a General Course, a Pastors Course, a Missionary Course, a Christian Education Course, a combination Christian Education-Music Course, a Music Course and a Jewish Missions Course. To quote from the catalog, "The General Course is the trunk of the tree of which the other courses are the branches. It carries out the original purpose of the founder of the Institute to make men and women proficient in winning souls to Christ and building them up

in the gospel. To this end, it places the emphasis upon the mastery of the English Bible, gospel music and personal work." We continue our citation as follows:

"Students in this course must elect one of the special classifications listed below:

Bible—for students who are preparing themselves to serve in home churches as lay workers, Bible teachers, pastor's assistants, and those planning to enter the pastorate who do not desire the more extended training of the Pastors Course.

Home Missions—for students who are preparing for work in home mission fields.

Christian Education—This group will be elected by those who are preparing themselves as department specialists in the Sunday School and directors of Daily Vacation Bible Schools.

Music, Vocal and Instrumental—for students who are preparing for work in home churches as Bible teachers and pastors' assistants where music is required."

It seems to your Committee that the second and fourth of these courses (Home Missions and Christian Education) would be about what we should want in our proposed Missionary Training and Bible School.

Now at Moody Institute the Home Missions Course is taught both in the Day School and in the Evening School. In the Day School there are six terms, or three years. The Bible is covered in two years. There are 13 class periods in each week (or 14). Subjects taught are 31 in number. The Christian Education Course also covers six terms with from 13 to 14 class hours per week and 30 subjects. It stands to reason that many of the subjects taught in both of these courses are the same, although not all.

In the Evening School the same material is covered, but it is spread over a period of twelve terms, with six weekly class hours during each term.

There are, of course, numerous other subjects which are taught at Moody, and which belong to one of the other courses. Students, we take for granted, may take some of these in addition to their regular courses if they so desire.

In order to compete at all successfully, then, with a school of the Moody scope, it would seem that we should need to teach thirty-four subjects, more or less, in the

home missions and educational departments. We might add that also the National Bible Institute in New York has a Christian Education Course which covers many subjects in three years, with 16 class hours per semester, and a Missionary Course which is stated to be for foreign or home missionaries. This course is said to be the result of fifty years of experience and contacts with Mission Boards, etc. The course takes three years when medical subjects are included, or two years without medical courses. Without medical subjects the course requires some thirty-four subjects.

Our conclusion is, therefore, that a "real Missionary Training and Bible School" would require the teaching of at least thirty subjects, most likely more. That this would demand four full-time teachers and some part-time. This would mean an annual expenditure of some \$12,500, not counting the cost of buildings, or, in case buildings could be borrowed, additional expense for light and fuel, \$12,500—total \$25,000. It is the opinion of your Committee that a small and impecunious body such as our Christian Reformed Church, is not warranted to start a project of this nature at the present time in addition to our many institutions for Christian worship, education and charity.

II. The above advice, however, does not necessarily mean that the work of missionary and religious educational training among us has to be dropped altogether.

The Presbyterian College of Christian Education states in its catalog that Chicago is becoming more and more a center of theological and religious training. Their students are able to take several courses in McCormick Seminary by arrangement with the faculty of that institution. Could not our young and inexperienced church learn from this attitude?

Again, we are told that at Moody "Dr. Torrey devoted more than a decade to foundational activities, formulating courses of study, organizing the practical work arm of training for effective service; in short, bringing to the formative years the invaluable benefits of his vision, scholarship, and passionate zeal for the salvation of souls." If we should think that we can brush aside the results of such labors with a mere gesture, or that we can successfully compete with the vast outlay in suitable

buildings, dormitories, classrooms, cafeterias, administrative buildings, etc., of such world renowned and heavily financed institutions, we should indeed make a serious mistake.

However, we need not become discouraged. Students at Moody, for instance represent 51 denominations. Surely that is not many when compared with the 258 religious sects existing in the U. S. These students constitute a very specific cross section of the evangelical denominations (sects) in America. The same may be said in the main of the members of the faculties in the various evangelical Bible Schools in Chicago. Is it necessary for the Christian Reformed Church to assume an attitude of complete detachment from such Bible Schools? Though they may not be specifically Reformed, they are evangelical. They offer in their curricula many courses of which it can not be said that a specifically Reformed approach would have any bearing. They are, for instance, General Chorus Work, Child Study, S. S. Administration, Church Supervision, Vacation Bible School Class, Evangelism, Rural Church, Public Speaking, English, Piano, Homiletics, Cooking, Manual Arts, Bible Story Telling, etc. These are regarded as very valuable, if not indispensable in a missionary training course. Such courses could very well be utilized for the proposed missionary and religious educational training school.

In methods of religious education and other branches we should be grateful pupils of the American schools with their vast experience. In other subjects, such as *Doctrine*, *Christian Evidences*, *Outlines of Church History*, etc., however, we are well able to speak for ourselves.

Your Committee advises, therefore, that we should have a school in conjunction, or co-operation with the large Bible Schools, such as Moody and the Chicago Presbyterian College for Christian Education. Let Synod appoint a Committee which is to contact the registrars of said schools. Let the committee map out a complete course of study for a "real Missionary Training and Bible School," some courses to be taken at the existing Chicago schools, some to be taught by our own men and women. In this manner we shall be able to do something. For a

complete school we lack both the means and the men. And if we do nothing at all, or are satisfied with inadequate means and methods, our people will soon leave us with our efforts and receive all their training elsewhere.

The Committee,

H. BEL
J. K. VAN BAALEN
A. J. ROOKS
W. STUART
H. VAN ZYL
H. SCHULTZE

REPORT XXII.

REPORT OF THE HISTORICAL COMMITTEE

To the Synod of 1938.

ESTEEMED BRETHERN:

WHEN we reported to the Synod of 1936 (see Acts, 1936, pp. 26-27), we regretted to say, that the actual work entrusted to us, that of collecting historical documents pertaining to the history of our Church and the Church from which we originated and to religion in general, had not been attempted due to the difficulties which we encountered in finding a proper place for their safe keeping and display. It gives us pleasure, now to be able to report, that a beginning has been made with the collection of such documents and that some material of value has been received for which the donors deserve the thanks not only of the Committee, but of Synod and the Church at large. However, our collection is still small, and we take this occasion to make another appeal for the co-operation of such among our church-members as may be in possession of the kind of documents specified or may know of their existence and whereabouts. Particularly do we hope, that such descendants of some of our early leaders as are in possession of diaries written by those leaders, of which more than one is known to exist, may be moved to make them over to Synod's Historical Committee.

What has been collected so far has not, as was expected in 1936, found a place in the Library but in the office of the classroom for Church History in the Seminary Building. Out of the allowance provided by the Synod of 1934 and continued by the Synod of 1936 a spacious and good-looking chest of drawers with a glass display top has been procured for our treasures. As long as the collection is small, this container and its present location will suffice. We do not look forward to any considerable expense in the near future in connection with this work; but we deem it advisable to provide, as far as possible, against the Committee's being handicapped by want of funds. We therefore request Synod to replenish our depleted allowance for the present to a total of one hundred dollars.

H. BEETS

D. H. KROMMINGA

P. S. So far we spent \$137.00 of the \$200.00 allowed us.

REPORT XXIII.

REPORT RELATIVE TO AN INDEX OF IMPORTANT SYNODICAL RESOLUTIONS.

To the Synod of 1938.

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

THE task of preparing an index of all important decisions of our past Synods was by direction of the Synod of 1934 entrusted to the departments of Church History and of Practical Theology of Calvin Seminary, as can be gathered from the synodical Acts of that year, page 128. The report of this subcommittee of the Seminary Faculty to the Synod of 1936 can be read on pp. 329-331 of Part II of the Agenda. In that year, Synod instructed the Faculty to continue the work and to report to the next Synod. Due to circumstances the Committee reports the completion of its labors to the Synod of 1938 instead of to that of 1937.

An entirely new turn was given to the work in 1936 in consequence of the fact that the Rev. John L. Schaver, of Lucas, Mich., had in the meanwhile engaged privately upon the same project for which Synod had made the arrangements indicated above. At the request of the Committee, Synod added Rev. Schaver to its membership and gave the Committee a free hand with respect to the publication of the results of its labors with the understanding that Synod would incur no financial obligations (Acts of Synod, 1936, p. 14).

The original members of this Committee, upon due inspection, approved of the general plan of Rev. Schaver's work and found its execution commendable. They judged, that his work would acceptably serve the purpose which the Synod of 1934 contemplated. Therefore they approved of the publication on his own responsibility of his work, which came from the press in 1937 as: Christian Reformed Church Order, a Manual of the Church Order adopted by the Synod of 1934, and of Synodical Decisions, etc., on Church Government, with an Improved Classification. We trust the volume, which does not merely index but reproduces the synodical decisions which have continued validity will be of real service to our consistories and major assemblies.

Respectfully submitted,

The Committee.

REPORT XXIV.

REPORT OF THE SYNODICAL COMMITTEE FOR SOUTH AMERICA

To the Synod of 1938.

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

YOUR Committee for the advancement of the religious interests of those in South America that are of the same Reformed faith and Dutch stock with us has again much that is encouraging and hopeful to report.

Our own Rev. Jerry Pott and family arrived at Tres Arroyos on Dec. 10, 1937, and were heartily welcomed by the congregation with appropriate festivities. He has begun the ministry of the Word and of the sacraments in Tres Arroyos, and the first communion service conducted by him in this congregation was especially mentioned in *Kerkblad voor Zuid-Amerika*, with gratitude on the part of the congregation. Since his congregation is widely scattered, and since he also serves a widely distant branch of his congregation, it was deemed necessary to provide him with a car, a Chevrolet. There is also a Christian School principal at Tres Arroyos.

In Carambehy, Brazil, the Rev. and Mrs. Wm. V. Muller labor with much devotion and self sacrifice and their work is much appreciated. Here there is a Christian School with three teachers, and Rev. Wm. V. Muller has done much for this school. His wife, a trained nurse, has found an abundant field of labor at Carambehy.

The congregation of Buenos Aires, under the able leadership of the Rev. A. C. Sonneveldt, has purchased ground for a church building and hope to have their church edifice built within a year. We congratulate the Rev. A. C. Sonneveldt.

But the congregation of Chubut, in southern Argentina, is still in need of a full time shepherd. Many of its youth are going astray, and something should be done about this matter as soon as possible. We pray that the Lord may guide every step that is taken for the welfare of the Chubut congregation and of all the other congregations

and outposts. On his own initiative a candidate from the Netherlands came to South America.

We understand that the Delegates for South America of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands are inclined to the position that it would be advisable that Classis Buenos Aires be placed upon its own financial resources in about ten years.

Though your committee looks forward to the time when Classis Buenos Aires would become fully self-supporting, yet we are not prepared to recommend that this must take place in some ten years, but prefer to work in the direction indicated without a definite stipulation of a certain number of years in which this must be accomplished.

Moreover, we have assumed certain obligations toward our own ministers in South America that would have to be considered, in order that the rights of these ministers might not be violated.

ADVICE

Your Committee for South America presents the following items for consideration by your honorable body:

I. Synod raise the salary of the Rev. and Mrs. Wm. V. Muller from \$1,000 to \$1,200, to apply in full to 1938, in view of the following grounds and considerations:

- a) Our home missionaries in the United States all have a basic salary of \$1,200.
- b) From rather detailed information on the actual needs involved, your committee is convinced that this raise is justified by the present purchasing power of United States currency in the Brazilian community where the Rev. Wm. V. Muller labors.
- c) The salary of the Rev. Jerry Pott at Tres Arroyos, Argentina, is now also \$1,200, and has there a purchasing power approximately equal to that of the same amount in the United States.
- d) Your committee believes that the South America Fund will permit of this raise as well as of eventual furloughs and that our churches will give this step their moral and financial support.

II. Synod grant the following stipulation with respect to the Rev. Wm. V. Muller and the Rev. Jerry Pott that is also granted to our home missionaries, namely that for every five years of service as ministers loaned to Classis

Buenos Aires their salaries shall be increased by \$100, but that this service-increase shall in no case exceed the amount of three hundred dollars, and that furlough years shall be counted toward these terms of five years.

Grounds:

- a) The work of the above-mentioned brethren is much like that of our home missionaries.
- b) Our ministers in South America are making many sacrifices as it is, and should not be called upon to make greater sacrifices than our home missionaries, in a matter of this kind.

III. Synod allow its Committee for South America, if need be, to co-operate in order that a candidate or minister may be placed in the congregation of Chubut in Southern Argentina. *Grounds:*

- a) It has long been the conviction of your committee that this congregation should have a full-time pastor.
- b) This conviction also came to expression in the report of the representative from the South African Reformed Churches who visited the congregation of Chubut, the Rev. D. Postma.

IV. The following annual budget is presented for our denominational work in South America, all in U. S. currency:

Salary at Carambehy, Brazil.....	\$1,200.00
Salary at Tres Arroyos, Argentina.....	1,200.00
Administrative Expenses	125.00
Furlough and other Special Expenses.....	500.00
Total.....	\$3,025.00
Expected from Carambehy at least.....	\$ 144.00
Expected from Tres Arroyos at least.....	200.00
Total expected from South America.....	\$ 344.00
Total sum expected to be raised by our Churches..	2,681.00
Grand Total.....	\$3,025.00

V. Your committee proposes that this Fund again be recommended by Synod to our consistories for an annual offering, or for 15 cents per family.

VI. Synod again appoint a committee for South America with mandate as heretofore.

Respectfully submitted,

Synodical Committee for South America,

HENRY BEETS, *Pres.*

DAVID D. BONNEMA, *Vice-Pres.*

MARTIN J. WYNGAARDEN, *Sec.-Treas.*

HARRY BLYSTRA

PETER JONKER, JR.

REPORT XXV.

EMERITUS BOARD REPORT

To the Synod of 1938.

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

THE Board appointed to administer the Emeritus Fund is constituted as follows: Mr. H. Hekman, President; Mr. G. D. Vanderwerp, Vice-President; Rev. J. O. Bouwsma, Secretary; Mr. W. K. Bareman, Treasurer; and Rev. R. T. Bos, Vice Secretary-Treasurer.

Again the past year the beneficiaries co-operated splendidly with us to enable us to secure particulars concerning their physical and financial conditions. In accordance with Synodical instructions we have secured information about all the beneficiaries. This information can be presented to your honorable body.

The number of beneficiaries has been growing. It has never been as large as it is this year. There are 75 emeritated ministers and widows receiving allowances.

Requests for aid were received since the last Synod of:

Classis Grand Rapids East, for Rev. T. De Boer, who was granted emeritation because of ill health. His support began Oct. 1, 1937. Aid of \$700 per annum was recommended.

Classis Hudson, for Mrs. H. H. Schultz, whose husband, Rev. H. H. Schultz, was taken away. Her support began July 1, 1937. Aid of \$500 per annum was recommended.

Classis California, for Rev. H. J. De Vries, who was granted emeritation because of hardening of the arteries and high blood pressure. His support began Nov. 1, 1937. Aid of \$800 per annum with \$200 extra allowance for one year was recommended. (This brother died April 9. New arrangements will now be needed.)

Classis Grand Rapids West, for Rev. J. De Haan, Sr., who was granted emeritation because of old age, having entered upon the forty-eighth year of service in Christ's Kingdom. His support began May 1, 1938. Aid of \$700 per annum was recommended.

Classis California, for Rev. J. W. Brink, who was granted emeritation because of advanced age. Aid of

\$600 per annum was recommended. His support will begin when he leaves his post on the Mission Field.

We gratefully inform Synod that Rev. J. R. Rozendal has recovered his health. He is engaged in Hebrew Mission work in Paterson, N. J. His allowance ceased Jan. 1, 1938. We have been requested to submit the following letter to Synod:

"Esteemed Brethren:

"I hereby express our heart's gratitude for the financial support given us from the Emeritus Fund during our illness. Also for the kind and generous support given us while awaiting a call.*

"Under God's Providence we are again active in bringing the Word of God, this time in the capacity of Missionary to the Jewish people in Paterson, N. J.

"It is our prayer that God may use us to be a blessing unto the Jews by bringing to them the only Savior.

"Wishing you the guidance and blessing of the Holy Spirit in all your sessions and deliberations and decisions.

"I am gratefully yours, your brother in Christ,

J. R. ROZENDAL AND FAMILY."

The following beneficiaries of the Fund passed to their reward since the last Synod: Rev. J. O. Vos, Rev. J. B. Vanden Hoek, and Mrs. J. Timmermann.

It has been our earnest endeavor to administer and disburse the funds wisely and equitably. A complete report of all receipts, disbursements and present assets, certified by a Public Accountant, will be made available for every Synodical delegate.

The list of the beneficiaries of this Fund, of the allowances recommended by consistories and classes, of the allowances received by the beneficiaries and of the recommendations by us will be given to all the delegates to Synod.

We humbly request Synod to take special cognizance of the following:

(1) We have informed the beneficiaries of the synodical decision that they must renew application for aid this synodical year. In accordance with the decision of the Synod of 1930: "Every synodical year the consistories shall state what is needed for the support of the emeriti, widows and orphans under their supervision" and with "The Rules for the Administration of the Emeritus Fund": "Every Classis determines, subject to the approval of Synod, the amount to be disbursed to those persons by it emeritated or that have become widows or

* He was given "wachtgeld" for a few months.

orphans," and whereas the Synod of 1936 rejected the advice "to declare that henceforth the recommendation of present consistory and classis only should be secured," we asked the beneficiaries again to apply for recommendations of allowances with their present consistory and of the consistory which originally granted emeritation, and of classes.

This necessitates much correspondence, also much inconvenience. A large number of beneficiaries cannot understand why they must contact a consistory or classis under whose supervision they no longer resort and a large number of consistories regard it as unnecessary to pass on the allowance of a person who has moved away. This procedure also causes confusion. It cannot be followed in some cases. Because of these matters we ask Synod to consider the following: The consistory under whose supervision the beneficiary resorts after having consulted the original consistory recommends to the present classis what aid should be given and the classis makes report to the Synod.

(2) The number of beneficiaries has never been as large as at present. There is a gradual increase from year to year. The balance which was on hand Jan. 1, 1938, was very small. Our receipts have been falling off since the first of the year. The allowances have been and are low, too low, for they have been cut to the bone. The Synod of 1937 increased the assessment and also increased some allowances. However, we have been forced to do, what we dislike to do, make some cuts, for, were we to receive the full assessment from all our churches, we would not be able to pay, with that money, full allowances. Fortunately we have some funds in the Capital Fund, the interest of which is to be used for the benefit of the Emeriti and the principle when a grave emergency arises. Should we make further cuts or should we draw on the Capital Fund, should our receipts be inadequate or should the assessment be increased?

(3) The term of appointment of Rev. R. T. Bos, of Mr. W. K. Bareman, and of Rev. J. O. Bouwsma expires. The Synod should appoint three members and three alternates.

Respectfully submitted,

By order of the Emeritus Board,

J. O. BOUWSMA, *Secretary*.

DEPUTATI SYNODI

Primi

Secundi

Classis California

G. S. Kok.....	Minister	J. De Jong.....	Minister
R. J. Frens.....	M	M. M. Schans.....	M
J. C. Kobes.....	Elder	Rev. J. Bolt.....	Elder
A. Den Dulk.....	E	H. Elders.....	E

Classis Grand Rapids East

D. D. Bonnema.....	Minister	J. Weidenaar.....	Minister
J. Vander Ploeg.....	M	W. Hendriksen.....	M
J. M. Vander Wal.....	Elder	J. B. Hulst.....	Elder
R. De Boer.....	E	H. Battjes.....	E

Classis Grand Rapids South

A. Van Dyken.....	Minister	E. Boeve.....	Minister
Dr. E. Masselink.....	M	J. J. Steigenga.....	M
H. Hoeksema.....	Elder	G. Engels.....	Elder
Prof. J. G. Vanden Bosch.....	E	B. Mulder.....	E

Classis Grand Rapids West

J. K. Van Baalen.....	Minister	R. Veldman.....	Minister
J. De Haan, Jr.....	M	H. Verduin.....	M
H. Denkema.....	Elder	L. Vander Honing.....	Elder
J. Feenstra.....	E	M. Berghage.....	E

Classis Hackensack

H. Bouma.....	Minister	J. J. Hiemenga.....	Minister
J. M. Vande Kieft.....	M	D. De Beer.....	M
A. Van Assendelft.....	Elder	A. De Vries.....	Elder
T. Minnema.....	E	R. Meyer.....	E

Classis Holland

N. J. Monsma.....	Minister	L. Van Laar.....	Minister
D. Zwier.....	M	H. Blystra.....	M
A. Peters.....	Elder	S. Koppers.....	Elder
H. F. Bos.....	E	J. Prins.....	E

Classis Hudson

R. Rienstra.....	Minister	E. Kooistra.....	Minister
H. J. Triezenberg.....	M	E. Van Halsema.....	M
J. De Jong.....	Elder	J. Wiegers.....	Elder
Rev. H. C. Bode.....	E	J. Van Dyk.....	E

Classis Illinois

E. J. Tanis.....	Minister	P. A. Hoekstra.....	Minister
J. M. Ghysels.....	M	C. Huissen	M
N. Youngsma	Elder	J. H. Vander Velde.....	Elder
A. Meeter	E	T. Den I.....	E

Classis Kalamazoo

Delegates not yet appointed. — S. C.

Classis Minnesota

G. André	Minister	Dr. W. Bode.....	Minister
P. Bloem	M	P. F. Dahm.....	M
J. Verbrugge, Sr.....	Elder	B. Hoogwerf	Elder
J. B. Eerdmans.....	E	A. Bolt	E

Classis Muskegon

Dr. J. H. Bruinooge.....	Minister	C. Holtrop	Minister
J. L. Schaver.....	M	J. Dolfin	M
G. P. Vander Ark.....	Elder	M. De Young.....	Elder
J. Breuker	E	F. Keegstra	E

Classis Orange City

B. Van Someren.....	Minister	J. R. Van Dyke.....	Minister
J. H. Geerlings.....	M	F. Vander Stoep.....	M
A. Steensma	Elder	F. De Jong.....	Elder
W. Greenfield	E	C. Balt	E

Classis Ostfriesland

K. Tebben	Minister	J. M. Voortman.....	Minister
A. Visscher	M	L. F. Voskuil.....	M
H. M. Tjepkes	Elder	W. B. Buus.....	Elder
O. Haupt	E	W. Siebenga	E

Classis Pacific

J. Vanden Hoek.....	Minister	N. De Vries.....	Minister
J. Zwaanstra	M	G. Stob	M
G. Likkell	Elder	P. Kooi	Elder
T. Triemstra	E	D. Bos	E

Classis Pella

I. Van Dellen.....	Minister	M. Monsma	Minister
F. De Jong.....	M	P. De Koekkoek.....	M
D. W. Vos.....	Elder	A. Decker	Elder
Wm. Schneider	E	A. Slings	E

Classis Sioux Center

A. Wassink	Minister	J. M. Dykstra.....	Minister
B. H. Spalink.....	M	J. G. Vande Lune.....	M
J. Ten Harmsel.....	Elder	.... Compaan	Elder
H. Ligtenberg	E	W. De Boer.....	E

Classis Wisconsin

E. B. Pekelder.....	Minister	J. J. Holwerda.....	Minister
N. Jansen	M	J. C. Schaap.....	M
George Eisenga	Elder	John Verhage	Elder
L. J. Bultman.....	E	Henry Vrieze	E

Classis Zeeland

H. Dykhousc	Minister	G. J. Vande Riet.....	Minister
A. Jabaay	M	J. Geels	M
F. Langeland	Elder	N. Frankena	Elder
P. Bouma	E	J. Zylstra	E

AGENDA

Part II

Overtures

I. CALVIN COLLEGE AND SEMINARY MATTERS

REPORT OF CURATORIUM AND REPORTS ON KINDRED MATTERS — SEE AGENDA, PART I. ALSO REPORT EX. COMM. CALVIN TO ARRANGE EXAMINATIONS OF PROSPECTIVE CANDIDATES.

1. Classis overtures Synod to provide for an itemized financial statement of our Calvin College and Seminary like that of all other statements of our church funds.

Grounds:

1. The consistories have a right to claim such a statement.
2. An itemized financial statement will create more confidence and encourage to contribute more faithfully.

(Classis Sioux Center.)

2. Classis Minnesota overtures Synod that a somewhat complete financial statement of the income and disbursements of Calvin College and Seminary, including a statement of the salaries of the respective professors and instructors, be incorporated in our Acts of Synod. *Ground:*

As office-bearers of the Church we are entitled to this information, and are interested in knowing how the moneys for our educational institutions are being disbursed.

(Classis Minnesota.)

II. MISSION MATTERS

REPORTS CHR. REF. BOARD OF MISSIONS AND EXEC. COMM. FOR HOME MISSIONS; CHURCH HELP; JEWISH MISSION REPORTS AND BUDGETS; HOBOKEN SEAMEN'S HOME et al; SOUTH AMERICA; PROPOSED NEW MISSION MANUAL

3. Re: The New Home Mission Order. In view of the fact that the Executive Committee (Home Missions) is bringing the matter of Carnes' subsidy to Synod for final disposal, Classis Orange City wishes to present as our

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answer, first a history of the case, and secondly the grounds for our action.

1. First of all the history in brief, which will be more fully elucidated at Synod by our delegates. Shortly after Carnes became vacant, she requested Classis for permission to extend a call. The Classical Committee, in conjunction with the Classical Home Mission Committee and Consistory of Carnes, made a thorough study of the question as to the necessity of the existence of Carnes. After due investigation Carnes was given permission to call. Carnes did call. This all took place prior to the Synod of 1937.

The Synod of 1937 took the following decision (see Acts of Synod 1937, p. 84): "With regard to calling by vacant subsidized churches, your Committee advises Synod to decide that subsidized churches becoming vacant shall not have the right to figure on the continuation of the payment of the former subsidy until they have received the approbation of the Home Mission Committee of the Classis and of the Synod or the Executive Committee for Home Missions, on grounds given in the report of the Executive Committee."

The Carnes consistory in November, 1937, received a letter from the Executive Committee stating that they had not complied with the above mentioned decision and urged them to do so immediately. To this letter the Counsellor of Carnes replied that having taken the matter up with the Classical Committee, it was unanimously agreed upon that this ruling of Synod does not affect Carnes, because it is not retroactive.

The consistory of Carnes received another communication dated Dec. 13, 1937, stating that since Carnes had not complied with the ruling of Synod, referred to above, the Executive Committee "feels compelled to report this case to Synod, and the Committee shall, therefore, not be in position to pay any subsidy to this church (the Carnes church) before the Synod of 1938 meets, unless this church complies with the demands of the decision of the Synod of 1937." This letter was referred to the Classical Committee of Classis Orange City. After careful study the Classical Committee replied to the Executive Committee that Carnes has received the necessary approbation to call, and that Carnes, during this present vacancy, does not come under the ruling of Synod of 1937.

2. The grounds for this action are as follows:

- a. Whereas the ruling above referred to (see Acts of Synod 1937, p. 84) we regard it self-evident that Carnes is not affected by it during the present vacancy, since Carnes was vacant, had received permission to call, and had called before the above decision of Synod was taken.
- b. Synod knowing Carnes was vacant and calling, approved subsidy for Carnes (Acts of Synod, p. 152).
- c. We do not regard the ruling referred to as being retroactive.

Classis Orange City, in view of the foregoing, wishes to present the following before Synod:

1. Classis Orange City resents very much the attitude of the Executive Committee of Synod which they took over against the Committee of Classis, as if they have been negligent in investigating the advisability of the continuation of the existence of Carnes. We refer to the statement in the letter of Jan. 21, 1938, of the Executive Committee, namely: "That the Executive Committee suggest to the Committees of Classis Orange City to discuss the

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necessity of the existence of the Carnes church with the Classis at its meeting in the month of March next." Classis Orange City has been assured by its Committee, that they gave Carnes permission to call after due investigation, and which was approved by Classis at their session last fall.

2. Classis kindly requests Synod to express their disapproval of the action of the Executive Committee of Synod in making the decision of Synod (see Acts of Synod 1937, p. 84) retroactive in re Carnes, and also on withholding the subsidy which had been granted by Synod.
3. Classis asks Synod to reimburse Carnes for the subsidy withheld, beginning April 1.

(Classis Orange City.)

4. Classis Orange City expresses its disapproval to Synod of the action of the Executive Committee in refusing to make an exception of Sioux City, although empowered to do so.

(Classis Orange City.)

5. Classis Orange City overtures Synod to instruct the Executive Committee to grant Sioux City a special allowance of \$340.00 as long as it is needed for rent for the parsonage. *Grounds:*

1. The Executive Committee has informed Classis that it is not in accordance with the Acts of Synod of 1937 to include this item as part of subsidy.
2. Without this grant Sioux City will not be able to furnish its pastor with a home or with an adequate salary.
3. The Classis is convinced that Sioux City is doing all in its power to do their share in the matter.

If Synod should share the opinion of the Executive Committee that house rent may not be paid from the Subsidy Fund, Classis petitions Synod to make provision for this special need of Sioux City from some other fund.

(Classis Orange City.)

6. Classis Orange City overtures Synod to change the new Home Mission Order as follows:

1. To change the first part of Art. 5, h, so that it reads as follows:
"The Executive Committee shall without modification submit to Synod for its approval all applications for support from the Subsidy Fund that have been approved by the respective Classes under which the applicants reside." *Grounds:*
 - a. The Classes through their Home Missions Committees are much more conversant with the needs and circumstances of

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their local congregations than the Executive Committee, and for that reason are better qualified to pass upon the applicants of the churches which reside within their respective boundaries.

- b. This change will remove a very fruitful cause of friction between the Executive Committee and the Classes.
- c. The Home Mission Order, as it stands, gives the Executive Committee for Home Missions the power, in the matter of subsidies, to overrule any and all recommendations and decisions of any and every Classis in the denomination. This is far greater power than ought to be entrusted to any Board of the church.
2. To change the last part of the Art. (5, h) so that it reads: "It is understood that the Classical Home Missions Committee, in consultation with the missionary-at-large may make such adjustments between Synods as circumstances shall render imperative."
3. To change Art. 10, second part, so that it reads: "Synod shall determine on an equitable basis when and to what extent a congregation is entitled to support from the Subsidy Fund."
4. To change the decision taken at the Synod of 1937, Acts, p. 84, 5, so that it reads: "Synod to decide that subsidized churches becoming vacant shall not extend a call before such churches have conferred with the Classical Home Mission Committee and Classis in regard to the amount of subsidy to be expected and the continuation of the payment of subsidy." *Grounds:*
This is in line with the proposed change in Art. 5 suggested above. For the rest, the grounds will remain the same as those given for the original motion at the Synod of 1937, Acts of 1937, p. 154.
5. Classis Orange City overtures Synod:
 - a. To rescind the decision given in the Home Mission Order (Acts 1937, Art. 103, Sec. B, 6), which reads as follows:
" . . . Ministers serving subsidized churches shall be expected, if called upon by the Executive Committee, to devote one week, including the Lord's Day, per year for every hundred dollars received by such churches from the Subsidy Fund, in the interest of home missions." *Grounds:*
 1. The weak and struggling subsidized churches are the least able to provide pulpit supplies in the absence of their ministers, yet such supplies are an absolute necessity for those churches that are located in the cities.
 2. The prolonged or frequent absence of a minister, which is likely in churches receiving a large amount of subsidy, is detrimental to the welfare of those churches, since those who receive large subsidies are usually the weakest.
 3. Since Synod has sharply separated the subsidy phase of the Home Missionary enterprise, so much so that it has set up two separate funds for them, it hardly seems consistent to expect subsidized churches to loan their ministers for the work of Church Extension when these churches receive no support from the Church Extension Fund.
 4. There is no need for such a rule, since there are a sufficient number of Candidates to take care of any emergencies that may arise.

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- b. To decide that this right should be restored to the respective Classes, who through their Classical Committees are best able to judge how and by whom such emergency appointments should be filled.

(Classis Orange City.)

7. Classis Minnesota overtures Synod, that if Synod returns to bi-ennial Synods, it shall also decide to enlarge the Executive Committee for Home Missions so as to include a delegate from each Classis. *Ground:* This is then necessary in order to obviate the danger of Boardism.

(Classis Minnesota.)

8. *Subsidy.* Classis recommends the following churches for subsidy: Granum, \$200.00; Grangeville, \$600.00; Sumas, \$700.00; Burdett, \$700.00; Zillah, \$700.00; Conrad, \$600.00, plus \$100.00 traveling expenses; Sunnyside, \$600.00; Shepherd, \$700.00; Sultan and Duvall, \$600.00, plus \$100.00 traveling expenses.

(Classis Pacific.)

9. *Classical Expenses.* Classis Pacific requests the aid of Synod in defraying the cost of its classical expenses only when and in so far as these expenses come above 50c per family.

(Classis Pacific.)

10. The Eastern Home Mission Board recommended the following churches for subsidy: Preakness, \$600.00; Englewood, \$600.00; Terra Ceia, \$600.00. Classis approved of this recommendation.

(Classis Hackensack.)

11. In regard to the liabilities of Classis in re subsidies, etc., Classis declared itself responsible for the debts of the Eastern Classes alone, precluding payment to the Central Home Missions Committee of any payment in the liquidation of indebtedness by other Classes.

(Classis Hackensack.)

12. *Seamen's Home.* Rev. A. H. Kort reported that during the year 1937 one thousand sixty-one attended a total of seventy gospel meetings at the Home.

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Mr. E. Apol reported as follows: "A year's work in statistics shows that 206 ships, 252 barges, and other craft were visited. A total of 58 Bibles, 352 New Testaments, and 3,910 tracts and other portions of Scripture were distributed. We furnished free beds for eight, and free meals for 184. Two hundred and twenty emigrants, 29 sailors, 19 visitors, and 18 immigrants found lodging in the Home. Assistance was given to 215 persons on incoming ships, of which 33 were immigrants, and 27 visitors, while 237 were assisted on the outgoing ships."

(Classis Hudson.)

13. Annual Statement of Assets and Liabilities as of January 1, 1938:

Little Miami R. R. Stock—80 shares.....	\$ 8,320.00
Mortgage of Raemont Lerouche.....	1,157.48
Mortgage of Hattie and P. Meyer.....	2,500.00
Share of \$10,000 Mortgage, Bank St., New York City.....	4,000.00
Mortgage—Emily Grasquay	2,800.00
Cash in Savings Account, Prospect Park Bank.....	806.28
Cash on Check Account, Prospect Park Bank.....	951.41
Three-story building, 334 River St., Hoboken.....	25,000.00
Three-story building, 310 Hudson St., Hoboken.....	15,000.00
Total Assets, Cash and Real Estate.....	\$60,635.17
Total Assets, January 1, 1937.....	57,209.02

It should be stated, however, that these buildings in Hoboken have not been appraised for some time. The present valuation may be considerably lower.

(Classis Hudson.)

14. Classis California petitions Synod to reconsider the status of the ordained ministers on the Indian Mission field, involving, as it necessarily does, their calling and installation (or ordination), their official standing in the local consistory, and their consequent being delegated to Classis and being seated there. *Grounds:*

A. The present generally-prevailing arrangement is unsatisfactory.

1. Delegating such missionaries to Classis as ministers is not in harmony with the Church Order. See Artt. 4 and 5, compared with Art. 41. (Cf. II, A, above.)
2. Delegating such missionaries to Classis as elders is not only unfair to them as ministers, but

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also in violation of the Church Order. See Art. 17.
(Cf. I, B, above.)

- B. It is a matter which involves, if not all the churches generally, at least churches outside the jurisdiction of Classis California.
- C. It involves the meaning and interpretation or application of the Church Order.

(Classis California.)

15. Classis Sioux Center, het rapport van hare commissie aanbiedende, verzoekt de Synode om uitspraak te doen aangaande den kerkelijken status van Zending-leeraren, zoodat zij naar de meerdere vergaderingen kunnen gedelegeerd worden." (See material in Report XIX.)

(Classis Sioux Center.)

16. Classis Muskegon calls the attention of Synod to the discrepancies that exist between the sum total of the budget allowances of various funds and the quota per family per year for these funds.

(Classis Muskegon.)

17. Since Classis Muskegon has granted the Bethany church of Muskegon the permission, if and when the way is opened, to assume the responsibility of calling a second or associate minister for Evangelistic and Church Extension work, Classis recommends to Synod that, if and when the Bethany church of Muskegon calls and obtains a second or associate minister for Evangelistic and Church Extension work, it shall then be excused from paying its regular quota to the Denominational Church Extension Fund.

(Classis Muskegon.)

18. Proposed Budget for the Paterson Hebrew Mission for the year 1938:

Salaries of Missionary and Worker.....	\$ 2,700.00
Gas, Electricity, Fuel, Water, and Telephone.....	300.00
Medical Department (Salary of Physician and for Dispensary)	500.00
Insurance	100.00
Building Repairs and Replacements.....	300.00
Literature, Printing, Miscellaneous Supplies, and Expenses	150.00
Total.....	\$ 4,050.00

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STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES

ASSETS:

Three-story Mission Building (unencumbered).....	\$10,000.00
Furniture and Equipment.....	500.00

Total.....\$10,500.00

LIABILITIES: We have no liabilities.

Humbly submitted,

JOHN H. VAN HASSEL, *Treasurer.*
(Classis Hackensack.)

The above Proposed Budget for 1938 was approved by Classis Hackensack at its Spring meeting, held in Passaic, N. J., March 22, 1938. On motion, it was ordered sent to the Synod of 1938, which convenes June 8, 1938, in Grand Rapids. J. VAN BRUGGEN, S. C.

19. **Explanatory Note:** The matter from Farmington, see below, was discussed at our last Classis. No action was taken except that it was decided to forward the overture to Synod without comment. It probably should have been sent to the Mission Board first and let it bring it to Synod. But the decision of Classis was to send it to Synod.

Fraternally,

R. J. FRENS, *Stated Clerk*
of Classis California.

*To the Classis of California, meeting at
Bellflower, Calif., February 23, 1938.*

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

We respectfully overture Classis to overture Synod to rescind certain rules adopted in connection with the new system of bookkeeping which was approved by the Synod of 1937 for the Christian Reformed Board of Missions.

The rules to which we refer are those which specify that all donations made by individuals or societies to the work of an individual missionary or station, are to be deposited to the credit of The Christian Reformed Board of Missions, with the understanding that they may be expended only by the Board's treasurer for the synodically approved budget.

We present the following *grounds* for our request that these rules be rescinded:

1. These rules, which prevent a missionary from using an undesignated gift for some special need of the work, or which, as in some instances, divert designated gifts to the General Treasury and Budget, frustrates the purpose of the donor.
2. The enforcement of these rules will decrease mission support by discouraging these voluntary gifts which some members desire to make apart from their regular contributions to the congregational collections.

Respectfully submitted,

Farmington-Toadlena Consistory,

Per J. C. KOBES, *Clerk.*

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20. The Consistory of Alameda overtures Classis to overture Synod not to consider the advisability of appointing a centralized committee for **Church Help** as proposed in Acts of Synod 1937, Article 38, III, 4. *Grounds:*

1. In view of the fact that this committee is in constant correspondence, no so-called regular meetings are necessary. Especially since these loans need not be made in haste.
2. A centralized committee would be less effective than the present set-up. Due to their constant personal contacts with these fields, the men who now function in this committee have a better knowledge of the various fields than could any centrally located committee have.
3. Unnecessary centralization tends to taxation without representation.

The Alameda Consistory,

E. TANIS, *President.*

T. WORKMAN, *Clerk.*

This overture was endorsed by Classis California in its meeting held at Bellflower February 23, 1938.

R. J. FRENS, *Stated Clerk*
of Classis California.

21. Article X of the Minutes of Classis Kalamazoo, in session January 12, 1938, reads: "Cleveland West presents an overture. This overture is 'to go on record as favoring the adoption of the Sudan Mission as our field of labor.' Several reasons are given (see the file for the letter). The motion is made and accepted to overture Synod to take over the Sudan Mission work according to the instruction of Cleveland West Side consistory."

(Copy of the overture)

Instruction to Classis January, 1938.

"Overture to go on record as favoring the adoption of the Sudan Mission as our field of labor. *Reasons:*

1. Although the Board is at present investigating this field and is to advise the next Synod, and although the last Synod has urged our churches to 'assume responsibility, financial or otherwise, only for mission work that enjoys . . . expressed synodical approval' (1937 Acta, p. 99), and although this field does not enjoy this expressed synodical approval, nevertheless, our people have given undeniable evidence that they are determined to support this field during the tour of Mr. and Mrs. E. J. Smith through our churches;

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2. Our people are now contributing about 80% of the funds for carrying on this work;
3. As has been pointed out (Acta, p. 98) we have three workers on this field, our support is unofficial and without ecclesiastical control at the present, the field is in the neighborhood of the Dutch Reformed Church of South Africa which means good hospital facilities and the cost of carrying on mission work in this field is comparatively low;
4. This appears to be a very fertile field for the salvation of souls;
5. The work in China seems very uncertain and has been proportionately very costly."

(Classis Kalamazoo.)

22. Request of aid for church building Hoenza-Driel, Netherlands.

III. CHURCH ORDER MATTERS

REPORT SYNODICAL COMMITTEE, et al.

23. Classis Holland overtures Synod to rescind its decision to meet annually, and to return to the practice formerly prescribed in our Church Order, Art. 50: "The General Synod shall ordinarily meet once every two years, unless there be urgent need to shorten the time."

In support of this overture Classis respectfully calls attention to the following considerations and grounds:

1. The decision to meet annually was passed at the Synod of 1936 without having received full and adequate consideration. There was at the time only one Classis that overtured Synod to take this action. At Synod this proposal was linked up with the question as to the reduction of the number of delegates of each Classis. The matter was brought to Synod for the first time and under the circumstances could hardly be considered properly from every angle (Acts 1936, p. 38). It is true, as the Synod of 1937 observed, that Reformed Church polity does not demand that Consistories and Classes must first be given an opportunity to express themselves on every important matter before Synod decides (Acts 1937, p. 43). But on the other hand, it is also true that the above decision was taken hastily, contrary to our usual policy of discussing matters fully and freely in our church papers and otherwise. We feel sure that our churches, to use an old expression, were not "ripe" for such a radical decision.
2. One of the matters involved which surely was not generally understood at the time is the great increase, we may safely say, the doubling of expenses occasioned by annual meetings. It was argued that the additional expense would be offset by reducing the number of delegates from each Classis, by shortening the duration of our Synods, and by reducing the membership of our Boards. But over against this stands the fact that the number of our Classes was increased by three, soon perhaps by five.

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Every Synod will now cost our churches at least \$6,000.00. This is a low estimate. A biennial Synod may have to remain in session a few days longer, but the extra cost this involves is negligible. By returning to our former practice our churches can therefore save \$6,000.00 every other year. Our small denomination certainly does not urgently need an annual meeting of its major assembly, and should not be burdened by this unnecessary expense. It is our contention that this large sum of money can be used more advantageously and wisely in God's Kingdom. We admit that annual Synods will promote contact between the various parts of our Church (Acts 1936, p. 39), but however laudable this object may be, shall we spend \$6,000.00 every other year for the enjoyment of this benefit?

3. The expectation that annual Synods will make for shorter meetings (Acts 1936, p. 39) is almost sure not to be realized. Our Church Order demands that in major assemblies only such matters shall be dealt with as *could not be finished in minor assemblies* (Art. 30). But in late years we find a very noticeable tendency among us to carry *all* matters through to Synod. This wrong practice will no doubt increasingly prevail when a synodical gathering is always near at hand, at most only a few months away. The minor assemblies will be inclined to shirk their responsibility and say: Let Synod decide. This is not in harmony with Reformed Church polity.
4. One of the expressed objective of having annual meetings is that Synod will be able to deal directly with many matters formerly taken care of by our Boards. But this is not an unmixed blessing. We grant that this object is in itself praiseworthy, for Reformed Church polity does not favor "Boardism." But on the other hand we should not forget that this policy will greatly prolong the duration of our Synods. Of course, all important matters should, as heretofore, and perhaps more than heretofore, be submitted to Synod, even though their discussion takes up a great deal of time. Not a Board, however experienced, but Synod must decide in all matters involving principle or policy. But must our major ecclesiastical assembly busy itself with all kinds of minor details? Much valuable time is sure to be wasted in this manner. A small body of men, many of them with a background of many years of service on a certain Board, can far more efficiently dispose of the multitude of unimportant matters that will now be cast into the lap of Synod.
5. In answer to the contention of the Synod of 1936 that annual meetings will expedite matters in cases of protests and appeals, we submit that there is another side to this matter. Our Synods have lately been troubled by altogether too many cases of this sort, many of them of purely local and very little significance. Give such cases time to cool off. Time will heal many sores of this nature. Generally speaking, it is wise not to rush such matters as speedily as possible to Synod. And in cases of urgent need, Art. 50 of our Church Order and the decision of the Synod of 1922, Art. 37, XI, used to make provision for the calling of a special Synod to take care of matters really urgent and important.
6. Another consideration of the Synod of 1936 was that annual Synods would open the way for a reduction in the membership of our Boards. This can pertain only to the Board of Calvin

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College and Seminary. Our other Boards cannot be reduced in size because this would deprive some Classes of their representation, and our distant Classes surely would not agree to such a procedure. The Board of Calvin College and Seminary has been reduced. This object has therefore been attained. Because of the present and probably the future increase in the number of our Classes, we do not advocate a restoration to its former size. With one delegate from each Classis, the Board is large enough to take care of matters pertaining to this institution, especially since there is also a Board of Finance to which most of the financial matters have been entrusted. And again, if a really urgent need arises, a special Synod can be called together.

7. Finally, the matter of "preparatoire" examinations, this year to be conducted by Synod itself, presents no insuperable objection. It is not necessary to return to the former practice of having these examinations conducted by the Board of Calvin College and Seminary. Why not transfer these examinations to the ecclesiastical assemblies to which they really belong according to Art. 49 of our Church Order? And if the establishment of Particular Synods is not feasible at this time, or for that matter at any time, let the Classes conduct these examinations. Let each graduate of our Seminary who desires to be admitted to candidacy be examined by his home Classis, in the presence and with the help of the delegates and examiners of three neighboring Classes. Let Synod draw up a set of rules and regulations to govern these examinations, patterned after those now in force for the "peremptoire" examinations. We know that there are practical difficulties that may be urged against this procedure—but we have never yet tried to scale them. Where there is a will there is a way. We feel sure that these practical difficulties can be overcome, if we only try.

(Classis Holland.)

24. Classis Zeeland overtures Synod to rescind its decision to meet annually, and to meet as before, every two years, unless there are circumstances which make it advisable to shorten the time. *Grounds:*

1. The need for an annual meeting is not so urgent that it warrants an extra expense of \$6,000 every other year.
2. The expectation that annual Synods will make for shorter meetings will not be realized, because Synod undoubtedly will be burdened with a larger amount of routine business, as well as other matters which the minor assemblies will be only too glad to place in the hands of Synod.

(Classis Zeeland.)

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25. Classis overtures Synod to rescind its decision to meet every year and meet biennially as before, unless circumstances warrant a different arrangement.

Reasons:

1. The annual sessions will make for much routine work on the part of Synod — work which our minor assemblies can and should do.
2. The extra expenditure of \$6,000.00 every other year is a practical consideration far weightier than the need for an annual Synod has been shown to be.
(Classis Ostfriesland.)

26. Classis Pella overtures Synod not to make any changes at this time in regard to the frequency of Synodical gatherings. *Grounds:*

Annual Synods have just been introduced, particularly to promote direct government by the Churches. At this early date no one is able to say with certainty what the merits and demerits of annual Synods are. The plan should at least have a fair trial.

(Classis Pella.)

27. Classis Pella further overtures Synod of 1938 to appoint a committee which is to observe and consider the merits and demerits of annual Synods, and which is also charged to consider matters such as follows: The possibility of organizing Particular Synods, and, in keeping with these possible Particular Synods, the holding of bi-annual or Tri-annual General Synods; the declaration of candidacy for the ministry by our Classes or possible Particular Synods; the effect which a return to Bi-annual Synods would have on the constitution and work of our Boards, and on our new Home Mission plan.

It is understood that the committee is to report not before the Synod of 1940.

(Classis Pella.)

28. Classis Pella overtures Synod to adopt the following resolution:

"Synod of 1938, having taken note of the fact that more than one Classis has adopted the practice of delegating its ministerial delegates to Synod according to the rotation plan, hereby issues a word of serious warning against the dangers involved in this method of delegation to Synod,

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and declares that this method of delegation is not in accord with the genius and letter of our Church Order (cf. Art. 41), and furthermore resolves to urge all the Classes to send its delegates to Synod only by choice of ballot."

(Classis Pella.)

29. The Consistory of the Prinsburg Christian Reformed Church had requested the last Classis to reconsider the decision of the previous meeting of Classis as to the decision relative to the system of delegation to Synod by rotation. This request was that the Consistories might first have time to consider before a final decision was made. Classis decided not to reconsider.

The Consistory also requested Classis to bring the following before Synod. Since Classis decided contrary to our request, the Consistory gave notice that as a Consistory we would bring our request to Synod.

Our overture, as it was before Classis, read as follows: "Prinsburg requests that we ask Synod for an expression of its interpretation of Artt. 41 and 50 where mention is made of delegation and choosing (of Synodical delegates) so that we may have a synodical expression as to the desirability and permissibility of adopting a system of rotation. *Reasons for the Request:*

1. The delegation of Ministers and Elders is at present considered by more than one Classis.
2. After reflection upon the adopted plan it seems to be evident that the system of rotation does *not* do away with the possibility of *injustice* to some office-bearers, be they ministers or elders, but the way is opened for possible greater injustice.
3. The system of rotation makes it possible that by such legislation, the talents of some servants in the Church may be prevented from being used in Kingdom service, either for a long time or for life."

In our original notice to the Clerk of Classis, we also made mention of the decisions of Synod of 1902. We would ask further expressions as to that decision.

(Consistory, Prinsburg.)

30. Classis Minnesota overtures Synod, that if it should decide to return to bi-ennial Synods, it then enlarge the Executive Committee for Home Missions to contain a member from each Classis.

(Classis Minnesota.)

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31. Overture of Classis Muskegon in re division of Classis:

The following division was in the mind of Classis. Churches in the southern group: East Muskegon, First and Second Fremont, First and Second Grand Haven, First Muskegon, Immanuel, Allen Ave., Bethany, Muskegon Heights, New Era, Reeman, Sullivan, and Spring Lake, fourteen churches in all. Churches in the northern group: Aetna, Arlene, Atwood, Ellsworth, Highland, Lucas, McBain, Prosper, Rudyard, Vogel Center, and West Branch, eleven churches.

(Classis Muskegon.)

32. The Consistory of Edgerton, Minn., kindly requests Synod to consider the following overture, which received favorable action on the floor of Classis Minnesota to the extent of a 19 to 16 vote, but could not win sufficient favor to obtain the necessary two-thirds vote in order to rescind the decision made by a former meeting of Classis. Classis has knowledge of this action of the Consistory.

"The Consistory of the Chr. Ref. church at Edgerton, Minn., overtures Classis to rescind the decision of the last Classis in re delegating our ministers to Synod. *Grounds:*

1. Classis acted too hastily in this manner.

Whereas the consistories were not able to pass an intelligent judgment upon this matter before the meeting of Classis because of lack of information.

Whereas the matter was not referred by Classis either to the Consistories or to a committee or to both for proper study before action was taken by Classis, although a matter such as synodical delegation, because of its import, calls for a careful and comprehensive study.

2. The action of Classis was unwarranted, because

- a. the freedom of the delegates to Classis is curtailed in depriving them of their personal rights;
- b. it is bound to create situations which are unavoidably unpleasant;
- c. it will necessitate that talents remain latent which could and should be profitably used.

3. In legislating a rule of rotation of ministers:

- a. Classis went beyond the intention of Art. 41 of the Church Order, which Article favors the idea of

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- leaving the election of delegates to Synod till the last meeting previous to Synod;
- b. Classis went beyond the intention of Art. 50 of the Church Order, which Article favors the idea of placing the profit of the Church in the foreground;
 - c. Classis went beyond the intention of the Synod of 1902 (see Acts 1902, Art. 103, p. 55), "Classes are advised that a larger number of ministers be given opportunity, through alternating synodical delegation, for active participation of the affairs of the Church, but no rule relative to the matter is drafted."
 - d. Classis proceeded without cause on a course which is radically different from the established custom of our Church.
4. Classis has failed to consider the fact that legislating rotation of the ministerial delegation destroys the balance of power in our synodical meetings in view of the recently increased centralization of our Church governmental life.

(Consistory, Edgerton.)

IV. EMERITI MATTERS

REPORT EMERITUS BOARD; COMMITTEE ON SUBJECT, et al.

33. Classis Holland overtures Synod to **rescind** the decision made by the Synod of 1937 in re the publishing of the names of the beneficiaries of the Emeritus Fund and the amounts they receive (cf. Acts 1937, Art. 38, II, p. 26) and to cause these names and amounts to be published as heretofore. *Grounds:*

- 1. The churches, being contributors to this Fund, have a right to know how it is distributed.
- 2. Suppression of information will very likely result in suspicion and not increase the popularity of this Fund.

(Classis Holland.)

34. Classis Sioux Center overtures Synod to **rescind** its action recorded in Acts 1937, Art. 38, II, stating that the names of the beneficiaries of the Emeritus Fund, together with the amounts they receive, be no longer published. *Grounds:*

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1. The consistories have the right to claim this information.
2. To deny this information will cause strong suspicion, and gradually diminish the amount of the offerings.
(Classis Sioux Center.)

35. Classis Minnesota overtures Synod to **rescind** its decision, made by the Synod of 1937, in re the publishing of the names of the beneficiaries of the Emeritus Fund, and the amount they receive (cf. Acts 1937, Art. 38, II, p. 26) and to cause these names and amounts to be published as heretofore. *Grounds:*

1. Not merely the delegates to Synod, but the churches contributing to this Fund, have the right to know directly how this is distributed.
2. Suppression of the necessary information results in suspicion and does not increase the popularity of this Fund.

(Classis Minnesota.)

36. Classis Orange City overtures Synod not to adopt the plan of the Emeritus Fund Committee, as outlined in their report to Synod (Agenda, pp. 78-81) unless it be so revised as to take away all limitations of age and years of service for such as shall be benefited by the proposed funds for the aid of incapacitated ministers and their families. *Grounds:*

1. The proposals of the committee would overrule a former decision of Synod (see Acts 1932, Art. 73, p. 52). This decision was then accepted as being scriptural.
2. The proposal as formulated by the committee would contradict both the spirit and the letter of Art. 13 of the Church Order as it now exists and as it would exist if said proposal were adopted.
3. It would be unfair to such ministers and their families who are incapacitated before the ten years of active service.
 - a) Men entering the ministry have given of their best years in pursuit of their studies, and generally receive the lower salaries in the first years of the ministry. Should these become incapacitated either by illness or death, they nor their families

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would be entitled to any aid from the Church funds, not from the Pension fund nor from the Relief fund.

- b) The proposal, moreover, is unfair in that it does require ministers to contribute to the Pension Fund before the ten years of service is completed, but it makes no provision for the return of such contributions in case such a minister becomes incapacitated before he is eligible for benefit from these funds.

(Classis Orange City.)

37. The Consistory of Hawarden overtures Synod of 1938 to accept the Report of the Emeritus Fund Committee in its entirety, pages 78 to 81, Agenda, Part I, with this exception that ministers who have a \$1,000 or less income per annum from salary and auto allowance included shall be exempt from the 3% assessment. *Grounds:*

1. According to Acts of Synod 1937, pp. 151 to 153, there are 22 ministers who received \$1,000 or less in salary and auto allowance for the year 1936.
2. For a minister in active service to receive \$1,000 or less per annum is a very meagre hire, and should not be reduced automatically by a decision of Synod in re the support of the Emeritus Fund.
3. That this exemption would not lower the receipts very much, and would help those that have barely a living wage.

(Consistory, Hawarden.)

(The above overture comes to Synod *without the approval of Classis Orange City.*—C. Groot, S. C.)

38. The Consistory of the Christian Reformed church of Sunnyside, Washington, feels constrained to call your attention to a grave inconsistency in the report of the Emeritus Fund Committee, found in the Agenda, Part I, pp. 78 ff., especially in re Article 5, p. 79.

The inconsistency is that in the introductory paragraph these words are found, "The Synod of 1932 decided that 'the support of the Emeriti Ministers, their widows and orphans, founded upon the Word of God and prescribed in Art. 13, C. O., is not a matter of charity, but is the right of the parties named and the duty of the churches as a whole'." (Acts of Synod 1934, p. 166.)

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And in Art. 5 of the report we read, "The Pension Fund shall be disbursed as follows:

a. All ministers who have served the Christian Reformed Church of America **ten years or more . . .**" (bold face ours.)

c. All widows of ministers who have served the Christian Reformed Church **ten years or more . . .**" (bold face ours.)

d. Orphans of ministers who have served the Christian Reformed Church **ten years or more . . .**" (bold face ours.)

Our question is, Is not an ordained minister entitled to these irrespective of the length of time he has served the Church in the ministry of the Word? If the basic principle is correct, which even the committee does not seem to doubt, must not then the words **ten years or more** be deleted?

We believe this to be a serious error and a denial of the basic principle enunciated by Synod, found in our C. O., Art. 13, and revealed to us in God's Word. For, "The support of the Emeriti Ministers, their widows and orphans founded upon the Word of God and prescribed in Art. 13 C. O., is not a matter of charity, but is the right of the parties named and the duty of the churches as a whole" (Acts of Synod, 1934, p. 166).

(Consistory, Sunnyside, supported
by Classis Pacific.)

39. Classis Muskegon overtures Synod to change the rule about consistorial and classical recommendations for support from the Emeritus Fund. It seems necessary at present for recipients to obtain recommendations from both the original consistory and Classis to which they belonged when first the application for aid was made and also from the consistory and Classis under whose jurisdiction they now reside. This seem unnecessary duplication and Classis petitions Synod to change this. The consistory and Classis under which they reside would be the logical ones to make the required recommendation and not the original consistory and Classis with which they may not have been in contact for years.

(Classis Muskegon.)

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40. Classis requests continuation of emeritation with allowances as follows: **Mrs. E. Breen**, \$500.00 plus \$100.00 to defray extra expenses on account of illness; **Rev. M. Borduin**, \$700.00; **Rev. J. Homan**, \$700.00; **Rev. A. Guikema**, as previously.

(Classis Pacific.)

41. The Consistory of the Third Christian Reformed church of Paterson, N. J., recommends **Rev. J. Westervelt** to the Emeritus Board for the sum of \$600.00 per annum. Classis Hackensack approved of this recommendation.

(Classis Hackensack.)

42. Rochester recommended **Mrs. Temple** for an allowance of \$500; Rochester recommended **Rev. H. C. Bode** for an allowance of \$800; Midland Park recommended **Rev. J. B. Hoekstra** for an allowance of \$700; Paterson IV recommended **Rev. J. Timmermann** for an allowance of \$600; Lodi recommended **Mrs. P. Yff** for an allowance of \$500; Paterson II recommended **Mrs. P. Steen** for an allowance of \$600.

Classis gave its approval in each case and recommends the above mentioned beneficiaries to the Emeritus Board and Synod for these amounts.

(Classis Hudson.)

43. Having heard the advice of the respective consistories, Classis Minnesota recommends the following for continued support from the Emeritus Fund to the amount mentioned: **Rev. J. A. Gerritsen**, \$650.00; **Rev. J. Gulker**, \$600.00; **Mrs. A. W. Meyer**, \$150.00; **Mrs. J. Schultz (Anna Schultz)**, \$200.00.

(Classis Minnesota.)

44. Requests for aid from the Emeritus Fund: (These will be sent to the Secretary of the Emeritus Committee, **Rev. J. O. Bouwsma**).

(Classis Ostfriesland.)

45. Classis Orange City recommends the following to receive aid from the Emeritus Fund: **Rev. J. J. Dyk**, \$950.00; **Mrs. M. Vander Heide**, \$400.00; **Mrs. A. B. Voss**, Same as before; **Rev. F. Schuurmann**, \$600.00; **Mrs. H. J. Heynen**, \$450.00; **Mrs. N. Fokkens**, \$700.00; **Mrs. J. H.**

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Schultz, \$200; Rev. J. R. Rozendal, (No request at Classis). Classis decided that in case this request would still come, the Classical Committee could give the recommendation. —C. Groot, S. C.

(Classis Orange City.)

V. PUBLICATION AND LITURGICAL MATTERS

REPORT BOARD OF PUBLICATION; COMMITTEE COMPENDIUM, et al.

46. Classis Pella overtures Synod to instruct the respective Boards to meet at such a time that their reports and proposals and advices can be published in the Agenda, Part. I. so that the Consistories and Classes can consider this material before Synod.

(Classis Pella.)

47. De Classis verzoekt de Synode het herziene Kort Begrip als officieel leerboek onzer kerken te aanvaarden en dan ook in onze Psalter-Hymnal op te nemen.

(Classis Sioux Center.)

48. Classis brings to the attention of Synod its conviction that the answer to Question 9 of Lesson XII in our proposed Compendium is not satisfactory. Classis is desirous of seeing it brought into conformity with the answer as found to Question 31 of our Catechism, and asks Synod to bring about the proper change.

(Classis Sioux Center.)

49. Classis Pella overtures Synod to draft an abbreviated **Form for the Lord's Supper** to be used, if so desired in the place of the long Form in the second service or in the second and third services on the Lord's Day, and also to be used by consistories in institutions if so desired, when the Holy Supper is celebrated, while the churches should remain using the present Form in the first service.
Reasons:

1. The present Form is too long to be used in more than one service;

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2. In the second and third services some churches use no Form at all, and others use a Form which has not been approved by Synod, which is contrary to our ecclesiastical rules and our church unity.

We feel that the abbreviated form should follow the same line of thought as the present Form.

(Classis Sioux Center.)

50. De Classis verzoekt de Synode om de rapporten in de Agenda in eenvoudige taal op te stellen.
Grond:

Vele ouderlingen verstaan de hooge taal niet zooals nu gebruikt wordt.

(Classis Pella.)

51. Classis Pella overtures Synod to devise ways and means whereby our Reformed conception of life be broadcast on a National hook-up of the Radio, as now done by the Lutheran Church in the *Lutheran Hour*."

(Classis Pella.)

52. From the church at Grangeville and supported by Classis:

"Synod urge all the consistories of our churches to write to their Senators and Representatives at Washington, D. C., protesting against the glorification of paganism and discrediting Christianity by the administration of Indian Affairs. *Grounds:*

1. This outspoken glorification of paganism is a hindrance to mission work;
2. It is the duty of the Church 'to let the light shine,' and thus to foster mission work."

(Classis Pacific.)

53. Upon the occasion of a protest presented by a brother against his Consistory for nominating as consistory-member one who performed certain Sunday labor (sold milk) and dealt with at the meeting of Cl. California held in Bellflower February 23, 1938, the Classis among other things **decided:**

"That this rule (of 1881) of Synod that no man engaged in any kind of labor on Sunday shall be allowed to hold the office of elder or deacon in our churches, is in its opinion too sweeping. And since past history gives abundant proof that many consistories have taken a different view than ex-

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pressed in said rule of Synod, and acted accordingly, therefore Synod declare that the labors listed may in some cases be required by necessity or mercy, and that each case be determined upon its own merits."

(Classis California.)

54. **Anent Necessary Sunday Labor.** Our Synod of 1881 adopted six points of the Synod of Dort, 1618-1619, and our Synod of 1926, Art. 136, p. 192, stressed the officially binding character of the last of these six points which reads: "(6) This day must be so consecrated to religion that on that day we rest from all toilsome works, except those of charity and present necessity. Also from all such recreation as hinder religion."

The times in which we live are highly complex. Modern competition in business is extremely acute. The Lord's Day is being encroached upon repeatedly and increasingly in the name of meeting competition. Judgments on what is, and what is not a work of necessity are diverse. This is becoming more apparent as time goes on, in various denominations, including our own. Local Consistories and different Classes, in the same denomination, find it increasingly difficult to act in accordance with a uniform standard in similar cases.

What is, and what is not a work of necessity on the Lord's Day, may not properly be left to the determination of local Consistories. This is a matter that belongs to the major assemblies. Cf. Art. 30, b, of the Church Order: "... or such as pertain to the churches of the major assembly in common."

We respectfully petition Synod to appoint a committee to study the problem of what constitutes legitimate industrial or commercial work on the Lord's Day, according to the Word of God. This Committee should advise our 1939 Synod what broad or general principles it would be wise to adopt, in an effort to give proper guidance to our churches to safeguard them against encroachments of the world.

(Broadway Ave. Consistory.)

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VI. ARREARAGES

55. Classis Sioux Center sends with its recommendation for approval overtures from the congregations: Hull, N. D., Harrison, S. D., New Holland, S. D., and Corsica, S. D., asking cancellation of Synodical assessments.

(Classis Sioux Center.)

a. **Hull, N. D.** "The Consistory of the Hull, N. D., Chr. Ref. church, in pursuance of a decision made at the congregational meeting held Jan. 5, 1938, humbly requests Synod to cancel the arrearages of said congregation to the Synodical Assessments up to January 1, 1938, amounting to \$1,012.47.

We make this request reluctantly, having always in former years been able and willing by God's grace to do our share to the support of God's Kingdom. However, conditions are so that we feel we have a right to ask relief from what is felt to be a burden.

1. All these arrearages have accumulated since 1932 and during this period we have experienced not only the effects of the depression as all have, but have not been able to harvest one normal crop. In fact, for five years we have had virtual crop failures.
2. The congregation is burdened with a debt of approximately \$9,000.00 upon which it is able to pay only part of the promised interest.
3. The congregation, which numbers only some 50 families, is still paying all its local expenses, but has its hands full in so doing. That outside causes are not entirely neglected is largely due to the efforts of certain voluntary organizations in our midst.
4. The congregation hopes, by strenuous effort, to contribute at least something toward the 1938 assessments — special arrangement having been made to that end; but is convinced that many years of good crops would be necessary before the large arrearage which, contrary to our desire has accumulated, could be paid.
5. Should Synod grant our request the congregation would be greatly relieved and very thankful."

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b. **Harrison, S. D.** We as Consistory overture the Synod of 1938 for a cancellation of all our assessments for the year 1937 as found above. *Reasons:*

1. The continual crop failures of the past several years which have caused:
 - a. Increased obligations incurred during these lean years and which will take several good years to meet;
 - b. Extreme discouragements on the part of our people who, as history has proven, have tried to do their best for the support of God's Kingdom;
 - c. Dependence upon the government, for whose graciousness we have been more than grateful, does not rectify the loss of income, loss of property as well as homes.
2. We believe, and know, the cancellation of the above named arrearages would encourage our people to start anew.

(Harrison Consistory.)

c. **New Holland, S. D.** The Consistory of the New Holland Christian Reformed church of New Holland, S. D., requests Synod to cancel all the arrearages of said congregation in the payment of Synodical Assessments up to Jan. 1, 1938. *Grounds:*

1. We have had at least seven successive crop failures, which have made it impossible to pay the assessments. We could do no more than to take offerings for these causes.
2. Due to these crop failures, some much-needed improvements have had to be postponed, which will have to be attended to in the event prosperity should return.
3. At present the majority of the members are being supported by Government relief, barely sufficient to provide living expenses, while indebtedness and depreciation in the value of equipment are ever on the increase.
4. We hope to resume our full share of assessment payments as soon as possible, but would find the burden of previous indebtedness to these funds very discouraging.

(Consistory of New Holland.)

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d. **Corsica, S. D.** The Consistory of Corsica feels constrained to send the following petition to Synod. We humbly request Classis to endorse this our petition.

"The Consistory of Corsica petitions Synod to cancel our arrearages in Synodical Assessments up to January 1, 1938. We make this request with reluctance; these assessments were made for the benefit of causes that are very worthy and have the love of our people, and we would fain pay them if in any way possible. But conditions here are such that we feel constrained to ask for cancellation nevertheless. For:

1. Our territory has been visited with a long series, all of seven years, of crop failures. We are well aware of the fact that all our churches have had more or less difficult going these past years, due to the depression and attendant misfortunes. But we wish to remind Synod of the fact that although that calamity is as much in evidence here as it is elsewhere, we have had a still greater handicap to contend with, in the series of crop failures.
2. Even if it should please God to reward the labors of the husbandman here from now on, and reward them liberally, we would still be unable to pay these arrearages for a long time to come. So many obligations will have to be met when a measure of prosperity returns, that they will consume our earnings for some time to come. Most of our people owe the government for Feed and Seed Loans; and these are considered preferred claims in the eyes of the law. The buildings and the equipment of our farmers are in a sad state of disrepair; if the earning power of these farms is to be restored much will have to be spent in putting them in shape.

We are happy to be able to inform Synod that, by heroic effort, our people have succeeded in providing in a way for our local needs in Kingdom work."

(Consistory, Corsica, S. D.)

56. **Columbus Arrearages.** The small church of Columbus, Mont., asks to be relieved from the payment of three-fourths of the arrearages which are booked against it. As there are only five families left, they are not able to pay the full amount, but they are willing to pay 25%, which comes to about \$53.00.

(Classis Pacific.)

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VII. VARIA AND PROTESTS

57. Classis overtures Synod to appoint a committee to make **Rules and Regulations** covering Protests, Complaints, and Appeals. We offer herewith a pertinent document that appeared on our Classical table, which may be useful to your Committee if appointed.

(Classis Sioux Center.)

(Documents in hands of S. C. of Synod.)

58. Protests of Waupun Consistory, aggrieved through the action of Classis Wisconsin in the case of the Rev. K. W. Fortuin.

Ditto Rev. C. R. Veenstra.

59. Document of Englewood I, as its answer to the report of the Committee of Synod, printed in Agenda I, pp. 36-43, as follows:

To the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church, June, 1938.

HONORABLE BRETHREN OF SYNOD:

"The Consistory of the First Christian Reformed Church of Englewood, Chicago, urges Synod not to approve the report or accept the recommendation of the Committee on 'members whose beliefs deviate from our doctrinal position.' (Agenda 1938, Part I, pp. 36-43.)

"The Consistory thus overtures Synod for the following reasons:

"I. *The Committee goes beyond its authority.* Without any charge from Synod (which it itself admits) the Committee takes up a local disciplinary case which Synod itself had not received or taken up.

"Let us explain. The Consistory of Englewood I had requested a study by Synod of the general problem how members who deny certain doctrines, such as water baptism, 'can be removed from the Church without being declared to be excluded from the fellowship of Christ,' and accounted a 'Gentile and a publican.'

"In our overture (see Agenda 1936, II, p. 480) we referred plainly to a particular case in our own congregation as an illustration of the need of Synodical enlightenment on this problem. We had naturally hoped that a study of the general problem would have shed light on the question what further course *we as Consistory* must pursue in this local case.

"Synod correctly understood our overture. It appointed a committee to 'study the problem thoroughly' (Acts 1936, p. 122). It did not take up the local disciplinary case as such. It did not authorize the Committee to take it up. As the Committee itself admits, 'the Committee was not instructed to advise concerning the specific case' (Agenda 1938, I, p. 39).

"Nevertheless, strange as it may seem, that is precisely what the Committee proceeded to do. It took up the local disciplinary case. It sat in judgment on the Consistory, though it had received no authority to do so and frankly admit this.

"The Committee even attempts to defend its course. It goes so far as to accuse the Synod of 1936 of 'conveniently sidestepping a very difficult problem' (p. 39 of Report). That is not true. Synod acted

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properly, understood our overture, and squarely faced the general problem presented.

"But even if it were true, the action of the Committee would still not be justified. It is not for Committees of Synod to decide that they received wrong instructions, and then to go ahead as they believe Synod should have instructed them; even to the point of thrusting themselves without authority into local disciplinary cases. It is for committees of Synod to follow instructions, or to ask a following Synod for better instructions, but not to *set themselves and their judgment above the Synod that appointed them.*

"It will be understood by Synod that the Consistory would have accorded all right of the Committee to refer even extensively to this local case, by way of illustration and elucidation. But it is a very different thing to take this disciplinary case *out of the hands of the Consistory* and sit in judgment on our Consistory before the whole Church.

"Finally, we add that whatever right the Committee might seem to have to take up the local case in an indirect way, its task surely was *not to determine whether the Consistory had a right to suspend the right of the brother to partake of Holy Communion.*

"That surely was not the problem Synod had in mind. *That question* was not brought to Synod, either by the Consistory of the member involved. The Committee of Pre-advice of 1936 did not raise that question. The Synod did not raise that question. The *problem*, whether you conceive of it as a general problem or a specific case, was merely how such members can be removed from the Church. In other words, the Committee not only thrust itself into a local disciplinary case without any instructions to do so, but it *created a problem* that nobody had brought either to its attention or to the attention of Synod.

"II. *The Committee does not understand the position of the Consistory nor consistently apply the Church Order on the specific case it saw fit to take up.*

"A. It holds that the Consistory, in suspending the brother's rights as a communicant, 'failed to heed Art. 76 of the Church Order.' 'There the reasons justifying suspension are plainly stated as follows: "Such as absolutely reject (should be *obstinately* reject) the admonition of the Consistory and likewise those who have committed a public or otherwise gross sin shall be suspended from the Lord's Supper".' (Report, Agendum, p. 40.) The Consistory answers:

"1. We suspended the brother's rights primarily on the basis of Art. 72. And the Committee itself admits that according to this Article the denial of the validity of water baptism is a censurable sin (p. 41, B, of Agenda I, 1938).

"2. Article 76 cannot forbid or condemn what Article 72 permits and demands. The Articles of our Church Order do not *contradict* one another. It is the *Committee* that contradicts itself when it holds that Article 72 calls for excommunication in this case, and on the other hand that Article 76 condemns the Consistory for even going so far as to request the brother to abstain from the Lord's Supper.

"3. The Committee holds that we ignored Article 76. But its opinion is based on a wrong *interpretation* that would often, if generally followed, make it impossible for Consistories to apply discipline in case of error in doctrine. The Committee holds that the communicant rights of the brother in this particular case should not have been suspended.

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"In other words, it holds that he does not 'obstinately reject the admonition of the Consistory' (for then suspension would be in order).

"But the brother clings to his views. So, then, according to the Committee, merely clinging, even obstinately clinging to doctrinal errors as flagrant as the denial of water baptism, is *not* a rejection of the admonition of the Consistory.

"Something else seems to be necessary, some more flagrant or open rebellion or propaganda, or the case must become infectious. Merely having such views and holding to them does not justify suspension from the Lord's Supper.

"The Consistory of First Englewood has a very different view. We hold that Article 72 teaches that he who *errs in doctrine* is subject to censure. We hold that the only way such parties can submit to the admonition of the Consistory is to *repudiate* the error. If they cling to their views, they obstinately reject the admonition of their Consistory.

"In other words, in this particular case not only Article 72, but Article 76 also called for disciplinary action by the Consistory.

"B. The Committee, reasoning from the false assumption that we had ignored Article 76, naturally arrives at a completely mistaken conception of our problem. The Consistory, so reasons the Committee, now does not know how to proceed, because it did not first carefully consider the question whether censure was justified. Having taken action which logically leads to excommunication, it is now not at all sure that such action would be right.

"But that is not at all our problem. We suspended the brother on the basis of the Church Order. *And on the basis of the Church Order we know perfectly well how to proceed.* He should finally, after long and patient admonition, be *excommunicated*. And the Committee itself admits this (p. 41, B, Agenda I, 1938).

"But this is our problem: Does the Synod really want a Consistory to excommunicate such parties, using the Form for this purpose, and thereby declaring them to be excluded from the fellowship of Christ, 'and accounting them Gentiles and publicans?' Do we really believe this? Will such a declaration find real response in the hearts of our people, or will it encourage the false view that excommunication from the Church does not mean exclusion from the portals of heaven?

"Is there perhaps a lack here in our rules for discipline? Should provision be made for such cases, so that such members can be removed without being declared outside the Kingdom? That is our problem, the problem on which this Committee should have enlightened our churches, *all* our churches, instead of thrusting itself without authority into a local situation, and declaring that our Consistory has erred because it will not admit to Holy Communion a brother who denies the validity of one of the sacraments instituted by our blessed Lord Himself.

"III. If the position of the Committee would be adopted, the results would be disastrous for our churches. For it would mean that members who deny the validity of water baptism could partake of Holy Communion in all our churches, and would do so, as long as there are no other reasons for censure. But

a. In such a situation the minister and Consistory could no longer effectively oppose and condemn such heresies. Preaching and consistorial admonition in that line would not make a very deep impression, if the people know that those who hold such erroneous views are nevertheless members in good standing.

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- b. A very disordered ecclesiastical life would be the result. For instance, the second sacrament, the Lord's Supper, must be administered to those who deny the first. Young people must be admonished to seal their baptism with public confession. Yet when they do so they must take communion with a fellow-member, 'ailing' but in good standing, who denies that their baptism has any meaning. If a convert should refuse to be baptized, he would not be admitted to the Lord's Supper. But a member who no longer believes in water baptism continues to partake. Again, the Consistory must administer the sacraments 'according to the institution of Christ.' We ask, would we do this if we administer one sacrament instituted by Christ to those who deny the other? In a word, if the position of the Committee be adopted, we would have a disordered, inconsistent ecclesiastical life and fellowship that could not possibly command respect.
- c. We finally ask, where would this strange right end, this strange right to deny doctrines as important as water baptism (one of the *holy sacraments*, let it not be forgotten), and yet partake of Holy Communion? Could a member also deny the validity of Holy Communion, and yet receive baptism for his child? How many errors and how serious errors could men cling to, and yet deserve to sit at the table of the Lord in our churches? Would we not be opening the door wide for all kinds of heresy? Would we still be the pillar and ground of truth? Or would we practically proclaim to Church and world that doctrinal errors are not so serious if men only live right and don't cause too much commotion in the Church?

"In view of the foregoing, it should be plain that the final recommendations of the Committee are altogether unacceptable.

"Point 1 reads: 'The Consistory erred by suspending the member's communicant rights before the Consistory was sure that the conditions predicated by Article 76 of the Church Order existed.'

"This point is completely out of order, because this disciplinary question was not before Synod. Moreover, it is contrary to fact; the conditions predicated by Article 76 *were present*. And the Consistory *was* sure before it acted.

"Point 2 reads: 'Denial of the validity of water baptism is a censurable sin as defined by Article 72 of the Church Order.'

"That point, taken by itself, is absolutely correct. Here the Committee for once stands on the solid ground of the Church Order. If the Committee had only been true to this position, it would never have condemned our Consistory, and would have attacked the problem in a way that would have proved fruitful for the whole Church.

"But — point 2 condemns point 1 (if Article 72 gives ground for censure, Article 76 cannot deny this right.) And, what is worse, point 3 is of such a nature that point 2 loses all its force.

"It reads: '(3) The method to be followed by the Consistory is: (a) Patient ministration to the member as one who is spiritually ill. (b) Censure to the point of excommunication when the spiritual ailment becomes infectious, or when the member refuses to submit to the Consistory.'

"But *this* is no longer Church Order. This is adding to the Church Order, so that it is changed, so that it loses its force. The Church

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Order says, without any further qualification, 'if any one errs in doctrine' he becomes liable to discipline. The Committee says: a member who errs in doctrine must be 'carried as an ailing member' and admitted to the Lord's Supper, as long as the spiritual ailment does not become infectious, and the member does not go further in his refusal to submit to the Consistory than to cling to his views.

"This advice, therefore, is in plain conflict with the Church Order.

"The Consistory, therefore, requests the Synod

"a) not to give its approval to the report or recommendations of the Committee;

"b) to appoint another Committee, on which one or more of our Seminary faculty shall have membership, to serve the whole Church with advice on the question, 'How to deal with members who, because they deny doctrines of great importance (as, for instance, the validity of water baptism), become subject to discipline, but whom the Consistories may hesitate to declare outside the Kingdom of God, since there is no denial of *cardinal* doctrines, such as the Deity of Christ, the atonement, or the infallible inspiration of Scripture.'

Respectfully submitted,

The Consistory of First Englewood,
Chicago, Illinois,

C. HUISSEN, *President*,
J. VANDE WERKEN, *Clerk*.

60. The Consistories of Aetna, Arlene, Highland, Lucas, and Vogel Center appeal to Synod in re proposal of Classis Muskegon relative to classical division (cf. Overture No. 31).

61. Communications of D. Stroobosser, C. J. Scholten(?), and C. E. Voogt(?)

Correct copy.

Henry Beets, S. C.

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