

AGENDA

Synod
Christian Reformed Church

*To convene June 14, 1944
at Grand Rapids, Mich.*

**[PART I:
REPORTS]**

Office of the Stated Clerk
1137 Turner Avenue, N.W.
Grand Rapids, Mich., U.S.A.

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P R E F A C E

This booklet is Agenda, Part I, of the Synod of the Christian Rformed Church which is to convene in Grand Rapids, Mich., June 14, 1944. It contains a few of the reports which will be brought to the attention of Synod.

Agenda, Part II, is to be published the first of May, 1944. "Material for the Agenda must be in the hands of the Stated Clerk a month before the date of publication." (Acts, 1934, p. 298). "Synod further advises all Classes to meet early in the year, in order that all material for the Agenda, Part II, may be in the hands of the Stated Clerk by the first of April." (Acts, 1937, Art. 145, p. 110).

Our Classes are kindly requested to get the material for Synod to the Stated Clerk as soon as possible. War conditions make this even more necessary than heretofore. Please furnish the addresses of the elder delegates.

J. DE HAAN, JR., S. C.,
1137 Turner Ave., N.W.,
Grand Rapids, Mich., U. S. A.

CONTENTS

Reports of Committees in Regard to:

| REPORT No. | PAGE |
|--|------|
| I. Mission Sunday School Paper Lesson Planning | 5 |
| II. Reformed Bible Institute..... | 8 |
| III. National Christian Association..... | 12 |
| IV. Radio | 14 |

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AGENDA

PART I

REPORTS

REPORT I.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON MISSION SUNDAY SCHOOL PAPER LESSON PLANNING

To the Synod of 1944.

ESTEEMED BRETHERN:

A NUMBER of minor criticisms in re the arrangement of lessons in last year's schedule have been received, and beneficial cognizance taken of same. The matter of lesson explanation, outlines, and Sunday school paper proper, it might be mentioned, does not lie within the assignment of this particular committee.

We take the liberty of prefacing the 1944 schedule of lessons with mention of the following desirable features in the system we have followed in drawing up the lesson plan:

1. The calendar period from Christmas to Pentecost, in timely and logical fashion, is devoted to the study of the life of Christ, with alternating stories from year to year;
2. Pentecost is followed by a brief series of lessons from the Early Church;
3. The last half of each calendar year, up to the Christmas period, is devoted to Old Testament history;
4. A three-year cycle of the above series covers the complete Bible, while each year within that cycle presents a different set of lessons from the previous and succeeding years.

| | | |
|---------|----|--|
| January | 2 | Jesus Heals the Sick, Luke 4:38-44; 5:12-16. |
| | 9 | Jesus Teaches His Disciples, Matt. 5:1-12. |
| | 16 | Jesus Cleanses the Temple, John 2:13-25. |
| | 23 | Jesus Befriends Sinners, Luke 7:36-50. |
| | 30 | Jesus Casts Out Demons, Mark 5:1-20. |

| | | |
|-----------|----|---|
| February | 6 | Jesus Raises a Dead Child, Mark 5:21-24; 35-43. |
| | 13 | Jesus Tells the Story of the Good Samaritan, Luke 10:25-37. |
| | 20 | Jesus Tells the Story of the Ten Virgins, Matt. 25:1-13. |
| | 25 | Jesus Tells the Story of the Rich Man and Lazarus, Luke 16:19-31. |
| March | 5 | (Prayer Day Week) Jesus Tells Two Stories About Prayer, Luke 11:1-13; Luke 18:9-14. |
| | 12 | Jesus Tells the Story of the Good Shepherd, John 10:1-18. |
| | 19 | Jesus Betrayed by Judas, Matt. 26:14-25; 47-50; 27:1-10. |
| | 26 | Jesus Denied by Peter, Matt. 26:20-35; 69-75. |
| April | 2 | (Good Friday Week) Jesus Crucified, Mark 15:16-38. |
| | 9 | (Easter) Jesus Rises from the Dead, Luke 24:1-12. |
| | 16 | Jesus Shows Himself to Mary Magdalene, John 20:1-18. |
| | 23 | Jesus Shows Himself to Thomas, John 20:19-31. |
| | 30 | Jesus Shows Himself to Peter, John 21:15-25. |
| May | 7 | Jesus Prays For His Own, John 17. |
| | 14 | (Ascension Week) Jesus Returns to Heaven, Mark 16:14-19; Acts 1:1-11. |
| | 21 | Signs of Jesus' Return, Mark 13. |
| | 28 | (Pentecost) The Birthday of Christ's Church, Acts 2:1-21. |
| June | 4 | The First Miracle of Christ's Church, Acts 3. |
| | 11 | Christ's Church Cleansed, Acts 5:1-11. |
| | 18 | The First Martyr of Christ's Church, Acts 6:8-15; 7:54-60. |
| | 25 | The Spread of Christ's Church, Acts 8:26-40. |
| July | 2 | God Leads Israel Out of Bondage, Ex. 12:37—13:22. |
| | 9 | God Delivers His People from Pharaoh, Ex. 14. |
| | 16 | God Feeds His People with Bread From Heaven, Ex. 16. |
| | 23 | God, A Present Help in Trouble For His People, Ex. 17. |
| | 30 | God Prepares His People to Receive His Law, Ex. 19. |
| August | 6 | God Gives the Ten Commandments to His People, Ex. 20. |
| | 13 | God's People Violate His Second Commandment, Ex. 32. |
| | 20 | God's House and Its Furniture, Ex. 25, 35, 40. |
| | 27 | God Punishes Israel's Sin of Lust, Numbers 11. |
| September | 3 | God Tests Israel By Sending Out Spies, Numbers 13. |
| | 10 | God Punishes Israel's Unbelief, Numbers 14. |
| | 17 | God Destroys Three Rebels, Numbers 16. |
| | 24 | God's People Grumble, Numbers 12; 20:1-13. |

- October 1 God Delivers By An Uplifted Serpent, Numbers 21: 1-9; John 3:14-16.
 8 God's Servant Moses Bids Farewell, Deut. 32.
 15 God's Servant Moses Dies, Deut. 34.
 22 God's New Leader, Joshua 1.
 29 God Protects Joshua's Spies, Joshua 2.
- November 5 God Delivers Jericho Into Israel's Hands, Joshua 6.
 12 God's Punishment of the Sin of Deceit, Joshua 7.
 19 God Gives Victory to His Cleansed People, Joshua 8.
 26 God's People Urged to be Thankful, Deut. 8.
- December 3 God Causes the Sun to Stand Still, Joshua 10:1-14.
 10 God's Second Leader of Israel Dies, Joshua 24.
 17 God Prepares For the Coming of His Son, Luke 1:5-25.
 24 God's Son is Born in Bethlehem, Luke 2:1-20.
 31 God Leads the Wise Men to His Son, Matt. 2.

Respectfully submitted,

DR. G. GORIS
REV. ROLF VEENSTRA
REV. P. JONKER, JR.
MR. THOMAS AFMAN
MR. G. DYKMAN

REPORT II.

REPORT OF COMMITTEE APPOINTED TO "DETERMINE WHETHER AND, IF SO, WHERE THERE IS ROOM FOR A CENTRAL NATIONAL R. B. I. (DAY SCHOOL) IN OUR REFORMED SYSTEM"

To the Synod of 1944.

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

THE Synod of 1943 decided to appoint a committee to "determine whether and, if so, where there is room for a central national R. B. I. (day school) in our Reformed System. The report to be presented to the Synod of 1944." Acts 1943, p. 102, Art. 171.

The appointment committee of Synod gave its own interpretation of this commission by appointing the undersigned as the "Committee to study and report on the place of the R. B. I. in our educational system." The appointment was approved by Synod, Acts 1943, p. 146, item 26.

Evidently the difference between the original charge and the interpretation by the appointment committee was not detected by Synod when, in its haste to bring the meeting to a close, the report of the appointments committee was accepted. Consequently we are hindered in our work by the looseness of terminology tolerated by Synod in our charge and in our appointment.

Did Synod, when it spoke of "our Reformed System" in Art. 171 mean, "our Educational System"? Because we were not present at Synod in 1943 we cannot determine this. We shall therefore consider our commission in reference to each of these terms separately.

I. "Our Reformed System" can mean only one thing: our denominational structure as determined by the Formulas of Unity and the Church Order. If Synod had mentioned only "our Reformed System", our task would simply be to determine whether our standards permit the Church to operate "a central national R. B. I. (day school)."

With reference to this matter we declare:

1. When the standards and Church Order were formulated, the authors did not foresee and therefore made no provision for such a thing as "a central national R. B. I. (day school)." Provision was made only for a theological seminary and for Christian day schools for children. The Bible Institute is something which came into being fully two centuries after the formulation of our standards. Therefore, historically, the Bible Institute had no place in our "Reformed System." If the Bible Institute is introduced into our denominational structure a special place must be cleared for it.
2. In the past room has been cleared in our denominational structure for things which are foreign to our standards but were adapted to fit "our Reformed System;" such as the Sunday School and the denominational college. Although not a word concerning them is found and they could not have been foreseen at the time when the standards were formulated, they have become part and parcel of our denominational structure. If the Bible Institute proves itself adaptable to our standards, it, too, may have a recognized place in "our Reformed System".
3. Although the Bible Institute originated not within the sphere of the ideas of the Reformed churches but among the Congregationalists and Baptists, the Bible Institute can be adapted to fit our standards. This has been clearly demonstrated by the R. B. I. We have examined the constitution and method of operation of the R. B. I., and have found the same entirely in harmony with our standards. Safeguards have been set in the constitution to guarantee loyalty to "our Reformed System". Nothing in our standards forbids the Church to clear a place for the R. B. I.
4. Whether or not this place will be cleared for the R. B. I. depends on the conviction of our Church that the R. B. I. will supply an urgent need. This conviction has not been felt. Since 1936 the Church has given moral and financial support to the R. B. I.; but has consistently refused to clear a place for it within the denominational structure and to accept any responsibility for its conduct. The Church is not sure that the R. B. I. will be a liability or an asset, a help or an added burden. A mild interest in the R. B. I. is

present but no enthusiasm. The only thing that will change this attitude is a strong demonstration by the R. B. I. that it supplies an urgent need.

II. We shall now consider our commission with reference to "our Educational System." Immediately the question confronts us: what is "our Educational System"?

Popularly, "our Educational System" means our system of Christian public day schools. If Synod meant that, we can easily declare that Synod has no jurisdiction over that system. We can safely leave to the Union of Christian Schools the determination of the place of the R. B. I. in its system. That is not an ecclesiastical matter.

"Our Educational System" can, however, be taken in another sense, namely, as referring to the educational projects which our Church sponsors. These comprise the Catechism classes, the Sunday School, Calvin College and Seminary, and a small Boarding School at Rehoboth, N. M. Can a "central national R. B. I. (day school)" be given room next to these?

If the five educational projects which we mentioned constitute a system, it is one strangely ordered and strangely come into being. Only the seminary is referred to in the Church Order, (Arts. 18, 19). The remaining four are developments which either quietly entered our denominational life and have then been recognized by Synod, or have been organized by direct synodical action. As a result many decisions have been made concerning Catechism and Sunday School. A College which has pre-dental, pre-medical, pre-engineering and normal courses is financed by denominational quotas. The Mission Board conducts, at denominational expense, a grade school and incipient high school, at Rehoboth, N. M. Whatever Synod has under press of circumstances seen fit to decide, has been decided. Only two of the five projects are related to each other. Only in the cases of Calvin College and Seminary and of the Rehoboth School has there been any degree of planning. To honor this hodge-podge situation with the name of "our Educational System" is almost ludicrous. At any rate, if it is a system, it is so strangely put together that certainly nothing would be thrown out of joint by the addition of the R. B. I.

Moreover, in the development of this grotesque system, the Church has already swallowed several large camels

without asking seriously whether there was room for them in "our Reformed System." Why should there be a straining to swallow a small gnat like the R. B. I.? Synod did not clear room for the R. B. I. among our denominational projects because the R. B. I. has not convinced Synod of its usefulness for the Church. The perennial appointment of committees charged grandly to determine whether there is room for the R. B. I. in the "Reformed System" was only to ease the conscience of Synod for not deciding more favorably to the R. B. I. and to let the R. B. I. down softly. This is deplorable because the R. B. I. continues to cherish the hope of being given a place within the denominational structure. Synod has found enough good in the R. B. I. to promise moral and financial support, but not enough to warrant acceptance of responsibility for the R. B. I. as another denominational educational project.

Moreover, we cannot escape the conclusion that in effect Synod from 1936 to 1943 has itself already answered the question which we were charged to answer. By deciding year after year as noted above, Synod has decided that the place now occupied by the R. B. I. as a school sponsored by an association, is a perfectly proper and satisfactory place, and that no argument thus far advanced justifies the acceptance of the R. B. I. within the denominational structure.

III. Summary of Conclusions:

1. Historically there is no room for "a central national R. B. I. (day school)" in our denominational structure erected on the basis of our Formulas of Unity and Church Order.
2. The R. B. I. has adapted itself to our Formulas of Unity and Church Order so as to be completely in harmony with these standards.
3. Practical considerations alone determine whether or not room shall be cleared for the R. B. I. next to the other denominational educational projects.

IV. Recommendation: Synod should in justice to the R. B. I. decide definitely in 1944 what the policy of our Church toward that Institution shall be.

Respectfully submitted,

W. GROEN
A. VAN DYKEN
D. HOLLEBEEK

REPORT III.

THE NATIONAL CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION

To the Synod of 1944.

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

AS Synodical reporter for the National Christian Association, the undersigned requested the Board to supply the necessary data for a report. Several days later the following report was received from the president of the Association:

"The Board of Directors of the National Christian Association is happy to report that with the help and blessings of our Covenant God the Association is privileged to carry on the work as usual. Only a few things deserving special mention occurred since the writing of the report rendered at Synod in June, and published in the 1943 Acts of Synod on page 338.

"The Rev. T. Ver Hulst, who accepted the call to Second Pella, will be obliged to resign from the Board. The Board takes this occasion to thank the Rev. Ver Hulst for assistance to the Association rendered in various ways during his ministry in Archer Avenue, Chicago. When official resignation of Rev. Ver Hulst has been received the committee of nominations will, no doubt, propose the name of another Chicago pastor in the Christian Reformed Church.

"The task of editing *The Christian Cynosure* has now been assigned to the Rev. Benjamin Essenburg, member of the Board since May, 1929, and chairman of the Board since May, 1932. No drastic changes in *The Cynosure* must be expected inasmuch as the Rev. Essenburg in unofficial capacity performed the duties of editor for the past two years. The newly-appointed editor earnestly requests the prayers, assistance and suggestions of everyone in the Christian Reformed Church and of all who are interested in the work of the Association.

"The Rev. A. H. Leamen continues to serve as Field Secretary. His many years of experience in the ministry and his wide acquaintance among the Evangelical churches of our country is very helpful, but even so the secretary finds his work extremely difficult. Churches, schools and

colleges, which welcomed an anti-secret message twenty-five years ago, refuse discussion of the subject today, "lest peace and good-will be disturbed." There seems to be a general letting down of the bars in the Evangelical churches of our land. The field secretary will be glad to receive your invitation to address any society or group in your church, large or small.

"In addition to serving as field secretary, the Board has appointed the Rev. Leamen to serve as general secretary for the Association. Miss Sarah Essenburg will continue to serve as office secretary, and Mr. T. P. Kellog continues to serve as treasurer.

"The missionary work of the Association continues to be primarily a work among Christian people who have unwarily been drawn into the ranks of a counterfeit religion. Many of these people, members of Evangelical churches, do not realize that they are actually upholding a system of heathen worship by membership in the lodge. Many do not realize in the least that the words of Jer. 2:14 are entirely applicable to their conduct: 'My people have committed two evils: they have forsaken me, the fountain of living water, and have hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.'

"The Board is grateful for every opportunity of disseminating the light among those in darkness, even now; thanks the Christian Reformed Churches for their generous support and pleads that it be continued. The war is doing much to foster the spirit of lodgism. May the Spirit of God move us with greater zeal to proclaim the Truth as it is in Christ Jesus, our Lord."

Respectfully submitted,
REV. R. O. DE GROOT

REPORT IV.
RADIO COMMITTEE REPORT

To the Synod of 1944.

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

THE undersigned is pleased to submit a report of the Radio Committee activities as requested by Synod.

THE NEW SEASON

The 1933-1944 season of broadcasting is now in progress. Both speakers and Committee are endeavoring to benefit from past experience and responses to the six broadcasts of this new season have been very gratifying.

War conditions are bringing new opportunities of service. Parents and Churches are requesting copies of the addresses to send to their sons in service. Several men in service have expressed their appreciation of our "splendid Christian program". Some have suggested to your Committee the possibility of having phonographic recordings made of the programs to be used in the service men's centers.

BROADCASTING STATIONS

This year your Committee gave preference to larger and fewer stations. Services of the following nine stations have been secured and are now in use:

| | | |
|-----------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| KJR (1000 kc.) | Seattle, Wash. | 4:30- 5:00 p.m. Sun. P.W.T. |
| KOB (770 kc.) | Albuquerque, N. M... .. | 4:30- 5:00 p.m. Sun. M.W.T. |
| KXEL (1540 kc.) | Waterloo, Ia | 9:00- 9:30 p.m. Sat. C.W.T. |
| WNAX (570 kc.) | Yankton, S. D..... | 4:30- 5:00 p.m. Sun. C.W.T. |
| WCFL (1000 kc.) | Chicago, Ill. | 9:00- 9:30 p.m. Sun. C.W.T. |
| WOOD (1300 kc.) | Grand Rapids, Mich. | 5:00- 5:30 p.m. Sun. C.W.T. |
| WSOO (1250 kc.) | S. St. Marie, Mich..... | 12:30- 1:00 p.m. Sun. C.W.T. |
| WHBI (1280 kc.) | Newark, N. J..... | 9:30-10:00 p.m. Sun. E.W.T. |
| WORC (1310 kc.) | Worcester, Mass. | 1:00- 1:30 p.m. Sun. E.W.T. |

A fifty-two week contract has been signed with several of these stations in the fond hopes that funds will permit to continue also during the summer months. All contracts, however, can be cancelled after two weeks' notice.

SPEAKERS

For this season your Committee has engaged four speakers for the period of twenty-six weeks. They are: Dr.

Ralph Danhof of Holland, Mich., the first ten weeks; Prof. Wm. Rutgers of Cicero, five weeks; Prof. Henry Schultze of Grand Rapids, six weeks; and the Rev. G. Hoeksema of Roseland, Chicago, five weeks.

The Rev. P. H. Eldersveld of South Holland, Ill., has consented to serve as announcer, and the general management of the programs has been assigned to the Rev. Wm. Kok of Chicago.

FINANCES

At the time of this writing little can be said about finances. In general it may be said that the quota of fifty cents per family meets with good grace among our people. More and more consistories are including the radio work in their budgets.

A REQUEST

The Committee urges all our people to pray for this work; tell others about our programs, and to write their appreciation and comment to the station. Managers determine the interest in a program by the amount of fan mail received. Unless this is done your Committee will find it increasingly difficult to obtain time on the most popular stations.

Respectfully submitted,

REV. B. ESSENBERG