

AGENDA

Synod Christian Reformed Church

*To convene June 14, 1945
at Grand Rapids, Mich.*

REPORTS AND OVERTURES

CHRISTIAN REFORMED PUBLISHING HOUSE
Grand Rapids 2, Mich., U. S. A.

P R E F A C E

This Agenda for the Synod of 1945 contains Reports, Overtures, Appeals, etc.

Tuesday evening, June 13, 1945, at 8:00 o'clock, D. V., Prayer Meeting for Synod will be held in the Franklin Street Christian Reformed Church of Grand Rapids, Michigan, led by the Rev. G. Hoeksema, president of the Synod of 1944.

Wednesday, June 14, at 10:00 a. m., in the Calvin College Library building, the president of the previous Synod formally opens the synodical meeting with an appropriate address, prayer, and roll call.

On the preceding Sabbath, according to established custom, our congregations are requested to remember prayerfully the forthcoming meeting of Synod.

R. J. DANHOF, Asst. S. C.
14 E. 14th St., Holland, Michigan, U. S. A.

< Blank Page >

Reports

REPORT NO. 1

REPORT ON ECUMENICITY AND CORRESPONDENCE WITH OTHER CHURCHES*

To the Synod of 1945.

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

THE Synodical Committee on Ecumenicity and Correspondence with other churches was charged to report on three matters: I. Ecumenical Council; II. Correspondence with Foreign Churches; III. Correspondence with Churches in our United States.

I. ECUMENICAL COUNCIL

Our report to the Synod of 1944 requested specifically two things relevant to an Ecumenical Council: 1. The committee be instructed to initiate the studies of the problems involved; 2. The committee receive authorization to make preliminary preparations for a council in consultation with the Reformed Church of South Africa.¹ This report received a whole-hearted endorsement. Consequently, Synod gave your committee this mandate: "Synod continue the present Synodical Committee and instruct it to proceed in the several studies proposed in its own report."² Your committee has addressed itself to this twofold task: investigation of problems and preliminary preparation.

SYNOD OF SNEEK, 1939³

To get a clear-cut picture of the lay of the land, and to appreciate the background your committee had to take into account, it may be profitable to incorporate in our report the decisions of the 1939 Synod of Sneek of the Netherlands.

The church will recall that the Rev. Dr. H. Beets and the Rev. I. Van Dellen were delegated by our church to attend this Synod for the purpose of coming to an agreement as to the how, the where, and the when of an ecumenical synod. The South African church likewise delegated two of its members. This Synod resolved all the conversations regarding this matter into three questions: a. Who will convene an ecumenical council?

*Our committee has reluctantly released the Rev. Prof. D. H. Kromminga of his secretarial work. The request for his release was his right since he also served Synod in the capacity of Secretary of the Publication Committee (Acts of Synod, 1944, p. 19, Art. 44, 3c.). The present secretary is Jacob T. Hoogstra of Holland, Michigan.

menical synod? b. Which churches should be invited? c. How shall "the delegating" take place?⁴

The point that must be kept in mind is that a previous Christian Reformed Synod has delegated the major arrangements of an ecumenical synod to the churches of the Netherlands, and that these churches have spoken. The decisions taken are answers to the three specific questions given above.

Question One: The special committee at Sneek suggested that the Church of Amsterdam convene said Synod, possibly in 1942, A. D. This committee realized that this date was problematic since the war was still in its infancy.

Question Two: Synod of Sneek adopted the recommendation that only such churches be invited who accept the classical Reformed Symbols as standards of the church. Two cautions are expressed: a. We must have some guarantee that these Churches are Reformed in practice, and not only in name; b. On the other hand, it is improper to judge any church according to any subjective standards. The golden mean is adopted that only such churches be invited with whom our Christian Reformed and the Reformed churches of South Africa maintain church correspondence.

Question Three: Synod of Sneek also adopted the recommendation of its special committee that the same principle of elder-minister representation be maintained, suggesting, however, that great care be exercised in the choice of elders since elders must be masters of a foreign language. It was further adopted that outstanding Calvinistic leaders as Dr. Sebastyen and the late Dr. Lecerf be invited as guests, and that a few representatives of each of our theological faculties be delegated as advisers.

As a result of these decisions a certain proposal to limit the first ecumenical synod to the three churches immediately involved was rejected.

PROGRESS SINCE THE SYNOD OF SNEEK

The incorporation of this report of Sneek, as we have intimated, is necessary from two points of view at least. Our church must have a complete picture of what has been done in the past. Secondly, our church can now appreciate the difficulties under which your committee labored. Definite decisions were taken in 1939, but new and abnormal situations demanded drastic investigations, and, possibly, reversals of judgments. The Netherlands of today is not the Netherlands of yesterday. Nor is there an iota of a wish in our heart to deprive the wounded cradle of our church life of the honor of entertaining the first ecumenical council or synod. We have to approach the present abnormal situation with a modest boldness if we are going to venture forth to realize the goal we believe God has set before us.

Your committee felt that since the world is thinking and planning "globally," since new situations demanding mutual confrontation have

arisen, since the lofty requirements of Scripture reveal that the glory of God and His Son are manifested also in the oneness of the church, no efforts should be spared to realize an ecumenical synod. Such a mind is in harmony with our report adopted by the Synod of 1944.

Our committee studied such questions as: delegation, agenda, authority, place of meeting and defraying of expenses. Still nothing could be decided in isolation. Of necessity, and according to synodical mandate we had to consult the South African churches. This we did. The following is roughly both the mind of the committee and the content of our communication to the South African Church.

We reaffirmed our conviction that an ecumenical council is necessary. Then we informed our South African brethren that we had decided nothing. We were thinking aloud in the hope that they would give us their frank brotherly response. We asked them whether they would tell us what they have been doing on behalf of an ecumenical synod since 1939.

As far as delegation is concerned your committee is of the opinion that our minister-elder representation be maintained. Also that some of our theological professors be either delegated or invited as advisers. Contrary to the decisions of Sneek your committee entertained the thought that it may be advisable to call a synod of the three churches immediately involved only, since new situations have arisen since 1939. Such a limited synod could become a groundwork synod in which men could speak freely and brotherly. Your committee is also investigating particularly these two questions: Shall proposed synod appoint its committee to prepare the agenda, special committees, etc., or shall preliminary work be done in the respective countries so this synod can speak with definiteness? Since the Netherlands is confronted with the herculean task of rehabilitation would it be advisable to hold such a synod in the United States?

The Reformed Church of South Africa was made to understand that these are still questions in our minds. Nothing has been decided.

A reply was received January 29, 1945, from the Rev. Prof. S. DuToit. He informed us that the Synod of the South African Church of 1942 received the report of its delegation to Sneek with a great deal of interest. Somehow, said Synod failed to appoint a committee to continue the good work. He informed us further that our communication would be placed on the Agenda of their Synod, required to convene this year, January 24, and that he would write to us immediately after adjournment.

Our report must be in the hands of the Stated Clerk March 1. Consequently we cannot wait until this communication reaches us. If our committee can come with something more definite we shall take the liberty of sending a supplementary report to our Synod of 1945.

II. CORRESPONDENCE WITH FOREIGN CHURCHES

The Synod of 1944 recognized the defectiveness of our correspondence with foreign churches in the past, and desired to seek improvement in this matter.⁵

Your committee informs Synod that it has discussed the question of correspondence with foreign churches, but because of the present-day situation it is helpless to do anything about it. Besides when the ecumenical council meets this body may then be the logical place to present such a question. If ecumenical synods continue then this question disappears.

III. CORRESPONDENCE WITH CHURCHES IN THE UNITED STATES

The Church no doubt realizes that the application of the principles regarding interchurch correspondence involves weighty considerations.⁶ There are such pertinent questions as method of procedure in applying these principles, and standard(s) to determine which church is Reformed in practice as well as in doctrinal commitments.

Because of incapacities and distance the full committee did not meet to discuss the various aspects of this mandate. The committee consequently requests Synod to instruct your committee to continue its studies and report to an earliest possible Synod.

IV. RECOMMENDATION TO SYNOD

Your committee recommends to Synod to approve of the work thus far accomplished and to authorize your committee to continue its labors according to the decisions of the Synod of 1944.

Yours in our Master,

L. BERKHOF
J. DE HAAN
J. T. HOOGSTRA
D. H. KROMMINGA
I. VAN DELLEN
S. VOLBEDA

1. *Acts of Synod, 1944*, "Supplement 21," p. 367
2. *Ibid.*, Art. 124, 4, p. 85.
3. Transcript copy of Bijlage LV and Art. 258 of the Acts of the Synod of Sneek of 1939 (Netherlands), by courtesy of a member of our committee, the Rev. I. Van Dellen.
4. Hoe behoort de afvaardiging plaats te hebben? We may also note here that there is no agreement as yet whether or no we should call our proposed gathering an ecumenical synod or an ecumenical council. This question will receive its due when we study the question of authority.
5. *Acts of Synod, 1944*, "Supplement 21," p. 365f.
6. *Ibid.*, pp. 360f, 365.

MINISTERS' PENSION AND RELIEF ADMINISTRATION

To the Synod of 1945.

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

THE Board of Trustees of the Ministers' Pension and Relief Administration herewith submits its report to your honorable body.

The membership of this Board consists of: the Rev. R. J. Bos, Pres.; Mr. N. Hendrikse, Vice-Pres.; the Rev. J. O. Bouwsma, Sec'y; Mr. W. K. Bareman, Treas.; and Mr. F. L. Winter, Asst. Sec'y-Treas.

The Alternates are: the Rev. T. Yff, Mr. G. B. Tinholt, the Rev. J. F. Schuurmann, Mr. B. De Jager, and Mr. G. Doornbos.

We have endeavored to administer the Ministers' Pension and Relief Funds in accordance with the Rules adopted by Synod. Our aim has been and is on the one hand to safeguard the interests of the Church, and on the other hand to uphold the rights of the Emeriti, Widows, and Orphans, who according to our Church Order are beneficiaries. Though the work required in administrating these Funds is increasing yearly, the administrative costs for 1944 were less than one per cent of the moneys entrusted to our care.

Since April, 1944, three of our pensionaries passed to their reward: the Rev. S. Bouma, the Rev. P. Jonker, Sr., and Mrs. P. Van Vliet.

Information has been received of the emeritation of the:

Rev. P. D. Van Vliet by Classis Holland on the ground of years of service and age, his emeritation went into effect Oct. 1, 1944.*

Rev. G. Hofmeyer by Classis Grand Rapids South on the ground of ill health, his emeritation went into effect Feb. 1, 1945.

Rev. J. De Haan, Jr., by Classis Grand Rapids West on the ground of ill health.

Rev. F. Doezema of Classis Chicago South on the ground of years of service and age.

Rev. G. J. Haan of Classis Minnesota on the ground of advanced age.

As these brethren had united with the Ministers' Pension Plan, they are automatically entitled to receive the pension.

Since our last report to the Synod, the Rev. I. Westra departed this life. As he had contributed the three per cent of salary to the Ministers' Pension Fund, his widow is automatically entitled to the pension.

A widow informed the Board in 1943 that she waived her privilege to accept a pension but reserved her right to apply for one when in need. In accordance with her request she has again been granted a pension at the rate of \$400 per year. The pension began Oct. 1, 1944.

The Synod of 1944 instructed us:

(1) To advise them (the pensionaries) "of their privilege to make application for aid from the Relief Fund." This has been carried out.

*Synod of 1944 approved of this emeritation.

(2) "To look into Mrs. Van Lonkhuyzen's situation and to act according to her needs in the light of the request of the Netherlands' Churches." We have considered her situation and have granted aid at the rate of \$40 per month as she requested. This money will be refunded when her pension is received from the Reformed Churches of the Netherlands.

There are three matters to which we call the attention of Synod:

(1) The first pertains to the case of a minister, ordained in another Church, installed the past year as a minister of our Church, who had been a member of the Pension Plan of that Church and who, on leaving that Church, was granted a refund from that Pension Fund. He has united with our Ministers' Pension Plan, having contributed to our Fund the money refunded to him by his former Church for the period of time from Jan. 1, 1940, to the date of his installation as a minister in our Church.

(2) The second matter concerns a minister who was ordained in another Church and who has been installed as a minister in our Church, who had not united with the Pension Plan of that Church and hence did not receive any refund when he entered our Church. After considering this at length it was decided to accept him as a member of our Pension Plan providing he contributes the three per cent of his salary from the date of his installation as a minister in our Church and computed according to the Rules adopted by Synod.

(3) The third matter relates to one of our Chaplains. According to the Rules adopted by Synod the wife of a minister is covered by the provisions of the Ministers' Pension Plan only then when she has served in a manse. It is our opinion that as that Chaplain is in active service, his home is a manse and therefore his wife is covered by our Pension Plan.

THE MINISTERS' PENSION PLAN

The Rules adopted by Synod for the administration of this Fund stipulate that the average salary of our clergy shall be determined on or before March 1. It was necessary to ascertain the average salary before that date in order to get this report into the hands of the Stated Clerk before March 1. The 1945 salaries of 236 ministers were reported. The amounts of 46 salaries of additional ministers were obtained from other sources. The average salary of those 282 ministers is \$2,156.13. A statement, containing the names of our ministers in active service and their salaries, is available for Synod.

The 1945 pension for a minister—40 per cent of the average salary and computed at the nearest multiple of 10—is \$860, an increase of \$50 above the pension of 1944. The 1945 pension for a widow—30 per cent of the average salary and computed at the nearest multiple of 10—is \$650, an increase of \$40. We add as a matter of information that since 1940 the pensions have increased approximately 25 per cent.

The list of the 1944 pensionaries and of the pensions follows:

Rev. H. Ahuis	\$810.00	Mrs. M. Botbyl	610.00
Rev. J. S. Balt.....	810.00	Mrs. S. Bouma	305.00
Rev. K. Bergsma	810.00	Mrs. T. De Boer	610.00
Rev. H. Beute	810.00	Mrs. P. W. De Jonge	610.00
Rev. H. C. Bode.....	810.00	Mrs. A. Dekker	510.00
Rev. R. Bolt	810.00	Mrs. H. J. De Vries	610.00
Rev. M. Borduïn	810.00	Mrs. J. Dolfin	610.00
Rev. S. Bouma	388.33	Mrs. S. Eldersveld	610.00
Rev. J. W. Brink	810.00	Mrs. N. Fokkens	610.00
Rev. W. Borgman	810.00	Mrs. N. Gelderloos	610.00
Rev. James Bruinooge	810.00	Mrs. J. A. Gerritsen	610.00
Rev. J. M. Byleveld.....	810.00	Mrs. J. H. Gruessing.....	610.00
Rev. B. J. Danhof.....	810.00	Mrs. H. J. Haarsma	610.00
Rev. J. C. De Bruyn	810.00	Mrs. J. Haveman	610.00
Rev. J. De Jonge.....	810.00	Mrs. H. J. Heynen	610.00
Rev. R. Diephuis.....	810.00	Mrs. G. L. Hoefker	510.00
Rev. H. Dekker	810.00	Mrs. P. J. Hoekenga	610.00
Rev. J. J. Dyk*.....	807.50	Mrs. G. Hylkema	610.00
Rev. B. H. Einink.....	810.00	Mrs. J. B. Jonkman	510.00
Rev. H. Fryling	810.00	Mrs. H. Kamps	510.00
Rev. A. Guikema	810.00	Mrs. R. Karsen	610.00
Rev. H. Guikema	810.00	Mrs. A. Keizer	510.00
Rev. R. L. Haan.....	810.00	Mrs. A. H. Kort	457.50
Rev. J. B. Hoekstra.....	810.00	Mrs. W. Kuipers	610.00
Rev. J. Holwerda	810.00	Mrs. H. J. Mulder	510.00
Rev. J. Homan	810.00	Mrs. H. Oostendorp	420.00
Rev. P. Jonker, Sr.....	607.50	Mrs. W. Plesscher	300.00
Rev. H. Keegstra	810.00	Mrs. J. Robbert	610.00
Rev. J. Keizer	810.00	Mrs. J. A. Rottier	610.00
Rev. J. Kolkman	742.50	Mrs. H. Schultz	610.00
Rev. R. Posthumus	480.00	Mrs. J. H. Schultz	360.00
Rev. F. Schuurmann	810.00	Mrs. F. Stuart	610.00
Rev. J. Timmerman	810.00	Mrs. W. Stuart†	610.00
Rev. I. Van Dellen	810.00	Mrs. H. Temple	610.00
Rev. L. Van Haitsma	810.00	Mrs. H. Tuls	610.00
Rev. T. Van Loo	810.00	Mrs. E. J. Tuuk	610.00
Rev. H. Vander Woude.....	810.00	Mrs. J. B. Vanden Hoek	610.00
Rev. W. Vanderwerp	810.00	Mrs. M. Vander Heide	510.00
Rev. J. M. Voortman.....	810.00	Mrs. S. Vander Heide	510.00
Rev. L. Veltkamp	810.00	Mrs. T. Vander Ark	200.00
Rev. J. Walkotten	810.00	Mrs. H. Vander Ploeg.....	610.00
Rev. G. Westenberg	810.00	Mrs. P. Van Vliet	153.33
Rev. J. A. Westervelt.....	810.00	Mrs. W. P. Van Wyk	610.00
Rev. P. D. Van Vliet	202.50	Mrs. J. Vissia	510.00
Mrs. P. Bloem	610.00	Mrs. A. B. Voss	610.00
Mrs. W. Bode	610.00	Mrs. D. Weidenaar	510.00
Mrs. A. Brink	100.00	Mrs. B. Zwaagman	610.00
Mrs. L. P. Brink†	610.00	Peter Yff, minor.....	25.00

*\$2.50 less due to an overpayment in 1944.

†Pension checks have been returned uncashed.

Some of the pensionaries are not receiving the full pension. That is in accordance with Synodical decisions. We recommend to Synod to add \$20 to each of those pensions because of the higher cost of living and the increase of the other pensions. All of the pensionaries, for whom we ask this increase of \$20, are receiving less than the full pension.

We herewith submit an estimate of the 1945 receipts and disbursements.

Estimated Receipts

From the Quota, at \$1.75 per family.....	\$50,477.00
From the Ministers, 3% of salary.....	19,500.00
From Interest	1,400.00
Total	\$71,377.00

Estimated Disbursements

To Pensionaries	\$66,610.00
For Additional Pensions	2,750.00
For Expenses	750.00
Total	\$70,110.00
Estimated balance	\$1,267.00

This estimated Budget is based on a quota of \$1.75 per family, the same as this year, 1945. We recommend to Synod to adopt \$1.75 as the quota for 1946.

A statement of receipts, disbursements and present assets of this Fund, submitted by the firm, Maihofer, Moore, De Long & Kragt, Certified Public Accountants, is on file with the stated clerk and will be submitted to the Advisory Budget Committee when Synod convenes.

THE MINISTERS' RELIEF FUND

The Rules for the administration of this Fund authorize us to inform the Church as to the needs of this Fund. We have endeavored to do this. We are happy to report that the contributions to this Fund are increasing. For three years the receipts were inadequate so that the large balance with which this Fund started in Jan., 1940, was wiped out. During the last two years a balance has been built up. That balance should be increased, especially during this time of easy money. Hence, we recommend that Synod adopt the quota for 1946 of one free-will offering from all our Churches.

A statement of receipts, disbursements and present assets of this Fund, certified by the auditors, Maihofer, Moore, De Long & Kragt, Certified Public Accountants, is on file with the stated clerk and will be submitted to the Advisory Budget Committee when Synod convenes.

A detailed report of the receipts and disbursements, which according to the Rules shall be submitted to the Advisory Committee and, if Synod so desires, to Synod itself, in Executive Session, is available.

In conclusion, Mr. F. L. Winter became a member of the Board at the death of Mr. H. Hekman. As the Synod of 1944 appointed him a member of this Board, it is our opinion that Synod meant that he should serve a three year term of appointment, which began at this time, 1944.

Respectfully submitted,

J. O. BOUWSMA, *Secretary*

P. S. The Secretary was appointed to represent the Board at Synod when and if Synod desires further information or elucidation.—J. O. B.

REPORT NO. 3

DELEGATE LORD'S DAY ALLIANCE

To the Synod of 1945.

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

I AM happy to submit my report to you as your representative of the Lord's Day Alliance of the United States. It is not necessary for me to wholeheartedly recommend the above cause to your continued moral and financial support, because I know that the Christian Reformed Church does feel the need of the sanctity of the Day of the Lord. And our Church does emphasize the fourth commandment as much as all the other commandments as the expression of the will of God, as part of the divine order, and as beneficial for man. As member of the Board of said Alliance we feel your interest in the splendid support you have given the organization and we solicit your prayers upon our efforts. Brethren, you have encouraged us abundantly. Other denominations have shown much more interest in this agency of the churches. But the Christian Reformed Church has contributed more than any other denomination. We take that as an indication that the Christian Reformed Church is faithful to the faith of our fathers.

The work of the Alliance has been carried on with untiring zeal by our General Secretary, H. L. Bowlby, D. D. Recently the Alliance celebrated its fifty-sixth anniversary. Your representative was asked to preach the anniversary sermon. A synopsis of that sermon is found in the January-March, 1945, number of the *Lord's Day Leader*; a copy of which was sent to all our ministers. The issue of the *Leader* gives a good deal of information of the activities of the Alliance.

On account of more liberal support during the past year, we have been able to reduce our indebtedness a good deal. If the churches will continue their support as they did this past year, we will be out of the red in two years. A complete financial report will be in your hands. It will be sent to you from our headquarters at 156 Fifth Ave., New York.

Brethren, accept our sincere appreciation for your interest. And may the Lord incline your hearts to again pledge your prayers and financial cooperation to this cause which is dear to your and our hearts.

Fraternally yours,

Your representative,

JOHN J. HIEMENGA

TESTIMONIAL ON MIXED MARRIAGES

To the Synod of 1945.

ESTEEMED BRETHERN:

SYNOD, believing that the honor of God, the welfare of the church and the happiness of the home demand that we take issue with mixed marriages, directs this testimonial against them, expressing its strong disapproval both when a Christian Reformed church member marries one who professes no faith, and when he marries a member of some sect or other denomination.

Synod feels that mixed marriages are one of Satan's most subtle means for breaking down the church and destroying its purity.

There are several reasons why mixed marriages are no longer the exception among us.

1. Our isolation is rapidly disappearing.
2. Denominational differences are dwindling in the consciousness of the people. The thought is becoming prevalent even in our circles that it makes little difference to which denomination one belongs.
3. Doctrinal lines of demarcation are disappearing.
4. The spirit of the age is influencing us; the spirit of individualism that doesn't want to be bound by rules; and the spirit of materialism by which one is inclined to marry for money, forgetting that there are more important considerations.

PRINCIPLES INVOLVED

Synod emphasizes over against mixed marriages principles that are Scriptural, ethical and practical. Synod sets the demands of Scripture over against the individualism of the age, and on this sound basis holds that man is not free to do as he pleases, and surely not in the choice of a spouse. God is supreme. All must submit to His authority. Man cannot with impunity transgress His laws. All unequally being yoked together with an unbeliever must necessarily meet with God's disapproval.

NEED OF EDUCATION

The need of education in connection with marriage is paramount. It should be positive education, and from the viewpoint of church and religion. God's truth in this matter must be taught in season and out of season. Fundamentals must be emphasized and reemphasized. A well balanced and full-orbed knowledge of the truth must be given. The training of our children must have the higher kingdom purposes in view.

In this education home and church and school must cooperate. All parents and spiritual leaders must give individual direction before courtship has gone too far.

IMPORTANCE OF THE HOME

Synod names the Christian home as the agency of first importance in education, in supplying the spiritual and moral foundation.

Father and mother by showing the proper respect for each other and by their attitude toward God and His service, can be of inestimable value in educating the children, in showing them that God wants marriage to be a state wherein man and woman help build each other up and prepare each other for the kingdom of God.

In the home all efforts must be bent toward the creation of genuine piety, toward the formation of such an atmosphere that any other than a Christian home would be distasteful to the children.

Particular attention should be given to the friends of the children and to the school which the children attend. Friendships that spring up in the school years often issue in marriage. Christian parents should send their children to Christian schools wherever possible, so that the Christian home training is not broken down but rather built up, and also so that the children may develop friendships with those who are of like faith and ideals.

Not only shall all parents strive through proper means and through our God-given agencies to immunize our youth to improper friendships. Positive efforts should also be put forth by all the members of the family to make the home the Paradise God wants it to be, so that the children in growing up learn to understand that when they marry, their home too must be such a Paradise. All children should be made to feel that the purpose of their training in home and school is Christian manhood and womanhood.

In any covenant nurture the home needs not only the school but also the church. The public service of the Word, the Catechism classes, the Sunday school, the church societies, the work of family visiting should all be powerful factors in assisting the home in this important work. For the home occupies the strategic place in the training of the youth in the things of God's will.

LOVE IN ITSELF IS NOT ENOUGH

Synod emphasizes the need of education because the idea is gaining prevalence among our youth that the only essential for a successful marriage is love. And love is indeed an important factor. No one should marry without it; but love is not almighty. Love cannot be the predominant thing. Love may not supercede what God has made known as His will. Love as such is not normative, though it is required. Love needs constantly to be tested by God's Word that it may become more and more the sanctified love that God requires. Love in itself without God may not determine marriage for the Christian.

Many a wife thinks at the time of marriage that she can by her love and example win her husband over to her convictions, only to find that after marriage religious matters form the sorest bone of contention.

Love is often so blind it doesn't reason things out. It deceives its victims into believing they are exceptions, so that what is conceded as a general rule does not apply to them; the experience of others need not necessarily determine their conduct; at least, their marriage need not necessarily be unfortunate just because others were.

If there is between husband and wife in marriage no more than a natural affection and a mutual idolatry, if God is left out of the picture, the marriage is not as God wills it. If the truth is not by both husband and wife adhered to from conviction, there is very little that will guarantee a lasting happiness. When the Christian in marrying entirely ignores matters of truth, he overlooks the one thing that more than anything else can make a man and woman one.

BIBLE PROOF

The Bible gives ample proof that God forbids one who has true faith to marry with an unbeliever. Both Old and New Testaments make that plain.

God Himself says that "he (the heathen) will turn away thy son from following Me, that they may serve other gods: so will the anger of the Lord be kindled against you, and he will destroy thee quickly" (Deut. 7: 4). Thus God Himself points out the danger that the heathen spouse will draw the believing one away from the covenant, away from God and His service. And the history of the church throughout the ages shows that this danger is real.

Throughout the whole Old Testament God exercises a sovereign claim upon all covenant children, forbidding them to marry with those who are not in the covenant.

At the very dawn of history God laid down a line of cleavage dividing the human race into two parts, putting enmity between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent (Gen. 3: 15).

The outstanding sin before the Flood was that of mixed marriages, which led to apostacy from God, and brought down on mankind God's curse. "The sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all that they chose" (Gen. 6: 2).

Abraham, remembering God's covenant with him, caused his servant Eliezer to take an oath that he would not secure a wife for Isaac from among the Canaanites (Gen. 24: 3).

Isaac in blessing Jacob gave similar direction (Gen. 28: 1).

Moses, re-affirming God's covenant with Israel at Horeb gave the specific command, "Neither shalt thou make marriages with them (the Canaanites); thy daughter shalt thou not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son" (Deut. 7: 3).

Balaam knew well that mixed marriages would bring a curse upon God's people, even when curses as such might not be uttered. At Balaam's suggestion Balak gave a feast at Baal-Peor and invited the Israelites. The consequent immorality brought God's curse upon Israel (Numbers 25).

Samson's parents, remembering the covenant, were reluctant to grant Samson a Philistine wife (Judges 14: 3).

Solomon was wise, but Scripture reveals his great folly in marrying many strange wives, who, though he was wise, drew his heart away from the service of God (1 Kings 11).

Ezra regarded the taking of strange wives as an increasing of the guilt of Israel (Ezra 10: 10). The matter of mixed marriages simply confounded him. "When I heard this thing, I rent my garment and my robe and plucked off the hairs of my head and of my beard, and sat down confounded" (Ezra 9: 3).

Nehemiah took active measures against those who made themselves guilty of the sin of mixed marriage. "In those days also I saw the Jews that had married women of Ashdod, of Ammon, and of Moab: and their children spake half in the speech of Ashdod, and could not speak in the Jews' language, but according to the language of each people. And I contended with them, and smote certain of them, and plucked off their hair, and made them swear by God, saying, Ye shall not give your daughters unto their sons, nor take their daughters for your sons, or for yourselves" (Neh. 13: 23-25). He calls the marrying of foreign women a trespassing against God (Neh. 13: 27).

Perhaps the most lofty expression of the Old Testament against mixed marriages is given by Malachi where Scripture says of God, "He sought a godly seed" (Malachi 2: 15). The thought of Malachi is that God made the covenant husband and wife one in order that there might be a godly seed. There must be no corruption. Covenant parents may not surrender their covenant offspring to an anti-covenant marriage.

The teaching of the Old Testament is abundantly substantiated in the New. That is what could be expected. For we deal here with a fundamental principle, not with that which to the Jews was only of ceremonial and therefore of passing significance.

New Testament Christians are called in the things of marriage to take the same attitude toward the heathen as Israel was called to take toward the surrounding nations. Paul certainly does not tone down the Old Testament position. He draws the line sharply, just as sharply as the Old Testament.

Paul admonishes in the church at Corinth those contemplating marriage that they should marry "only in the Lord," that is, in a Christian way and to a Christian. The Christian, living in that sphere in which the Lord is recognized, living in fellowship with Christ, may marry only in accordance with the will of Christ (1 Cor. 7: 39).

Paul warns the Corinthian Christians against being unequally yoked with unbelievers. He gives point to this warning by putting questions whose answer is obvious. "What fellowship have righteousness and iniquity? or what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what portion hath a believer with

an unbeliever? And what agreement hath a temple of God with idols" (2 Cor. 6: 14-16)?

Paul describes the beauty of Christian wedlock in Ephesians 5: 22-33, holding up to man the example of Christ who loved his church and gave himself for it. And in Colossians 3: 18 he says to the wives, "Wives, be in subjection to your own husbands, as is fitting in the Lord."

INTERDENOMINATIONAL MARRIAGES

There can be no doubt as to the teaching of Scripture concerning the marriage of one who is in the covenant with one who is not in the covenant. Scripture plainly brands such a marriage as sinful; but does the church also have a duty when both husband and wife are covenant members but are affiliated with different denominations?

Decidedly, for this too is a matter that concerns the truth, though no definite texts can be cited for the simple reason that no such situation arose in Bible times.

The difference between our denomination and others is to us so vital that we feel justified in our separate existence. Our separate existence as a denomination is with us a matter of truth. When therefore one who is of our faith marries someone of another faith, the truth is involved.

The Christian Reformed Church seeks to remain loyal to the Word of God. It encourages our people to be true to their own church for the sake of the truth. It indoctrinates our youth for the sake of the truth trusting that by conviction they will seek their life partners from the same church.

When matters of truth are thus involved in marriage, no one should ever permit his marriage to make him untrue to his God, to His Word, or to the church.

Because the truth is involved here synod feels that to successfully counteract mixed marriages we should first of all prayerfully and humbly seek to be a true church. We should maintain a healthy isolation and develop a consciousness of our covenant calling. We should show that we by the grace of God are a church that holds fast to the teachings of the Apostles and Prophets, a church that stands for pure doctrine and holy living, a church that demands the whole of life in all its relationships for God.

We must convince our young people that in making profession of faith they pledge themselves to their church, but that they violate their pledge when they compromise with error in any form. We must cause them to see that not even marriage may make one untrue to the faith.

Then there are practical considerations against interdenominational mixed marriages, which, though practical, nevertheless are linked up with the truth. There is a fundamental in church polity which applies here, namely, the welfare of the churches. Churches like nations have the natural tendency toward self-preservation, toward guarding themselves against loss. Our church wants to do this by maintaining purity of

doctrine, by fostering sound religious life, by striving for the godly conduct of its members, all things that can be gravely endangered by mixed marriages.

Mixed marriages in a denominational sense are bound to cause a loss in membership, which in our conviction must often at least be considered as a loss to the cause of truth. When such mixed marriages, however, result in a gain in membership, those from the "outside" may become such a powerful influence that our church loses its distinctiveness. Those who enter the church only because of marriage and not out of conviction are bound to exert a collective influence away from the truth.

It is true that God has blessed some mixed marriages by causing the "outsider" through marriage to gain contact with the truth and by then giving him grace to accept it; but our conduct may not be regulated by what God sometimes does. Our standard must be what He expresses as His will. God can and sometimes does use our sin for His glory, but that doesn't mean that He ever approved of that sin.

So mixed marriages in a denominational sense, which are the most common of all, constitute a real danger to the truth; they mean loss to the church; but they also are hindrances to a truly Christian marriage.

Love for the church in which one has been born is deep-rooted and will not tolerate even the just criticism of the church the one has left for the sake of the other.

When there is between husband and wife a difference in religion, no tenderness, no affection, can bridge that gap. There may be outward harmony and apparent contentment; yet often there are beneath the surface inbred fundamentals in connection with which neither party feels capable of submission. Many homes have felt a little denominational fox gnawing at the vine of home joys.

No one can estimate the sacrifice of happiness in a home in which husband and wife take opposite views on religion. No house thus divided against itself can produce essential harmony. There is bound to be either active or passive opposition of principle against principle. And such differences in principle do not work for peace and harmony in the home; they do not foster mutual love and understanding.

Unless husband and wife have essentially the same faith, their home life is bound to be far from ideal; the service of God in the home cannot successfully be maintained; the children cannot be properly educated; conversation can hardly be spiritually profitable.

If husband and wife continue each to attend his own church, a situation is created that does not make for family unity. If both attend one church one Sunday and the other's church the next, that too is far from ideal. And when children are born the problems multiply.

If the member of our church gives up his church for the sake of his spouse, such surrender of one's denomination to affiliate with another must be regarded as revealing a certain measure of indifference to the things for which our church stands.

We conclude that unity of faith is of inestimable value in founding a home. Only the conviction that is based on truth can lead to deep understanding when both have it. Only such conviction can foster mutual appreciation, can create the spirit of unselfishness. Unity of faith does more than anything else to bring both father and mother to the resolution of Joshua, "As for me and my house, we will serve Jehovah" Joshua 24: 15.

TO OUR YOUNG PEOPLE

Synod advises you, young people of our churches, on the matter of mixed marriages with a purpose. We seek herein the honor of God, the extension of His cause, the maintaining of His covenant, the true spirituality of the church, and the happiness of your future home.

With all the warnings of God before you, dare you still go contrary to God's command? Can you do so and yet expect God's blessing? Dare you thus put the most precious things in life at stake and risk the only happiness that is real? And can you wilfully forget that in the choice of a mate you decided not only for yourself, but also for the children the Lord may give you, and thus also for generations that are to come?

You young people who are contemplating marriage with those who love not God's truth, won't you search the Scriptures and see what God thinks of such marriages? Won't you look round about you and see to what misery such marriages have usually led? Won't you consider the children that may be born from such a marriage?

Christian young people who find in their hearts love for unbelievers would do best to pray for grace to tear this affection from their souls.

TO OUR MINISTERS

Synod hereby warns all our ministers against uniting in marriage at a public service of the Word any covenant member with one who is not of the covenant; anyone who is a member of the church either by baptism or profession with one who has no connection with any church; anyone who professes faith in the triune God with one who does not so profess.

In the case of a mixed marriage with a Catholic or with a member of some sect, synod advises its ministers to consider that such marriages are contrary to the plain teaching of Scripture expressed or implied.

When a minister functions in marriage merely as a servant of the state, he is nevertheless to realize that he officiates also in the name of the God who in the beginning instituted marriage, and that therefore there is on his part a definite responsibility to God as well as to the state.

The minister is called to let every man and woman entering into marriage feel that God's blessing can be expected only when in marriage God holds the first place.

Synod exhorts all ministers (and consistories) to counteract the increasing evil of mixed marriages by teaching, preaching, and private admonition.

TO ALL OUR LEADERS

Synod exhorts all our leaders to warn unceasingly against the prevailing spirit of the age in connection with marriage, setting forth clearly the principles of God's Word.

Synod urges all our leaders and parents to constantly pray and labor for the deepening of spiritual life among our young people, for their training in covenant consciousness, for their increase in the knowledge of the Scriptures, which things are the best anti-dote against mixed marriages.

Humbly Submitted,

P. DE KOEKKOEK

A. JABAAY

R. BRONKEMA, Sec'y

According to the decision of Synod, 1944, Rev. P. De Koekkoek was requested to serve as secretary. Due to the moving to more distant parts and the resultant extra work of two members of the Committee, Dr. R. Bronkema served as secretary.

REPORT NO. 5

ARTICLE 36

To the Synod of 1945.

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

THE committee in re Article 36 of our Confession which was appointed in 1943 and instructed to submit its report to the 1945 Synod is sorry to report that we found it impossible to complete our task within the time limit set by the 1943 Synod. We have met several times and various sub-committees have performed a great deal of work but as yet we are unable to offer to Synod a report that is a finished product. So we request Synod to continue our committee in order that we may be given the opportunity to complete the work assigned to us.

May God grant the 1945 Synod an abundant measure of the wisdom that is from above in dealing with the various matters that will be brought to its attention.

Humbly submitted,

H. KUIPER, *Secretary*

REPORT NO. 6

THE REFORMED BIBLE INSTITUTE, GRAND RAPIDS, MICH.

Financial Report (January 1, 1944, to December 31, 1944)

Receipts:

Cash on hand January 1, 1944.....		\$ 2,376.99
Individuals	\$6,446.45	
Churches	9,445.11	
Societies	2,634.33	
Registration Fees	458.00	
Room Rent	1,129.00	
Correspondence Course Fees	146.00	
Miscellaneous Receipts	143.69	
Employees' Withholding Tax.....	603.96	
Notes Receivable	4,900.00	
Interest Earned	100.00	26,006.54
Total		\$28,383.53

Disbursements:

Salaries	\$9,045.72	
Rent	300.00	
Electricity	302.66	
Gas	172.30	
Coal	475.86	
Telephone	76.84	
Repairs and Improvements.....	111.63	
Books	281.84	
Travel Expense	141.87	
Miscellaneous Expense	341.82	
Printing and Supplies.....	818.27	
Water Tax	39.77	
Correspondence Course Expense.....	159.00	
Advertising	79.17	
Employees' Withholding Tax.....	551.16	
Interest	50.56	
Notes Payable	4,000.00	
Investment—War Bonds	5,920.00	
"Quarterly" Expense	232.44	
Cleaning and Decorating	53.13	
Insurance	52.05	
Furniture and Fixtures.....	23.60	23,229.69

Cash on hand December 31, 1944.....\$ 5,153.84

NOTE: Not less than 216 of our Christian Reformed churches have made one or more contributions during 1944. We accept this as an evidence of their interest in and love for the R. B. I.

Assets:

Cash	\$5,153.84	
War Bonds—Series F.....	5,994.00	
Building and Grounds.....	6,000.00	
Furniture and Fixtures	3,009.46	
Deposit with Grand Rapids Water Works.....	40.00	\$20,197.30

Liabilities:

Employees' Withholding Tax.....	\$ 182.19	\$ 182.19
Assets over Liabilities		\$20,015.11

GEORGE J. STOB, *Treasurer*

REPORT NO. 7

REPORT OF MISSION SUNDAY SCHOOL PAPER LESSON PLANNING COMMITTEE

To the Synod of 1945.

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

THE following schedule of lessons for mission Sunday schools completes, per our original plan (see Acts 1943, p. 370; 1944, p. 403) a circuit of the entire Scripture within a three-year period.

The first half of the year is made up of New Testament materials that are appropriate to and link together the Christian holidays from Christmas through Pentecost. There is no confusing and sudden digression from the schedule to insert holiday themes that are irrelevant to the regular series.

Following a few lessons of post-Pentecost stories about the New Testament church, the last half of the year treats Old Testament material from Judges to Malachi that offers refreshing variety from the first half-year, rounds out previous Old Testament series, and leads naturally up to Christmas and the subsequent schedule of New Testament lessons on the life of Christ.

- Jan. 7—Jesus' Rejection by His Home Town (Luke 4:16-31)
- Jan. 14—Jesus Calls Fishers of Men (Luke 5:1-11; Matt. 4:18-22)
- Jan. 21—Jesus Heals Body and Soul (Mark. 2:1-12)
- Jan. 28—Jesus, the Friend of Sinners (Matt. 9:9-17)
- Feb. 4—Jesus' Glory and Power (Luke 9:28-42)
- Feb. 11—Jesus Feeds Five Thousand (Mark 6:30-44)
- Feb. 18—Jesus Teaches Humility (Matt. 18:1-14)
- Feb. 25—Jesus Teaches Forgiveness (Matt. 18:15-35)
- Mar. 4—Jesus Heals a Man Born Blind (John 9:1-41)
- Mar. 11—(PRAYER DAY SUNDAY) Jesus Forbids Anxiety (Luke 12:13-34)
- Mar. 18—Jesus Raises His Friend Lazarus (John 11:1-44)
- Mar. 25—(GOOD FRIDAY SUNDAY) Jesus and the Dying Thieves
(Luke 23:33-43)
- April 1—(EASTER) Jesus, the Risen Savior (Matt. 28:1-15)
- April 8—Jesus Commands to Preach (Matt. 28:16-20; Luke 24:44-49)
- April 15—Jesus' Stories about His Kingdom (Matt. 13:31-33)
- April 22—Jesus' Stories about the Cost of Following Him (Luke 14:15-35)
- April 29—Jesus' Story of the Wicked Renters (Matt. 21:33-46)
- May 6—(ASCENSION WEEK) Jesus Ascends to His Throne
(Ps. 110; Acts 1:1-11)
- May 13—Jesus Tells about the Last Judgment (Matt. 25:31-46)
- May 20—(PENTECOST) The Great Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-41)
- May 27—Paul's Conversion (Acts 9:1-19)
- June 3—Paul Worshipped and Stoned (Acts 14:8-22)
- June 10—Paul's Macedonian Vision (Acts 16:6-15)
- June 17—Paul and the Jailer of Philippi (Acts 16:16-40)
- June 24—Paul's Shipwreck on the Way to Rome (Acts 27:9—28:6)
- July 1—Deborah (Judges 2:11-23; 4)
- July 8—Gideon and His Brave Band (Judges 6 and 7)
- July 15—Samson's Daring Deeds (Judges 13, 14, and 15)

- July 22—Samson's Victorious Death (Judges 16)
 July 29—Ruth's Choice (Ruth 1—4)
 Aug. 5—Eli and the Child Samuel (1 Sam. 1, 3)
 Aug. 12—Saul, Man after the People's Heart (1 Sam. 8; 10:17-25; 13:1-16; 15:10-31)
 Aug. 19—David, Man after God's Heart (1 Sam. 16, 17)
 Aug. 26—Saul Seeks to Slay David (1 Sam. 19, 20, 24, 31)
 Sept. 2—King David's Sins (1 Chron. 11:14—12:14; chap. 21)
 Sept. 9—Solomon's Wisdom and Glory (1 Kings 2:1-4; 3:5-28; 2 Chron. 3-5; 9:1-12)
 Sept. 16—Elijah's Faith (1 Kings 17:1-16; 18:21-46)
 Sept. 23—Elijah's Discouragement (1 Kings 19:1-18)
 Sept. 30—Elisha Becomes God's Prophet (2 Kings 2)
 Oct. 7—Elisha and the Syrian Leper (2 Kings 5)
 Oct. 14—Elisha and God's Chariots of Fire (2 Kings 6:8-23)
 Oct. 21—Jonah, the Disobedient Prophet (Jonah 1—3)
 Oct. 28—The Trial of Job (Job 1; 42:10-17)
 Nov. 4—Daniel and His Three Friends (Dan. 1, 2)
 Nov. 11—Daniel's Friends and the Fiery Furnace (Dan. 3)
 Nov. 18—Daniel's Warning (Dan. 5)
 Nov. 25—(THANKSGIVING) Daniel Gives Thanks Amid Danger (Dan. 6)
 Dec. 2—Courageous Queen Esther (Esther 1—10)
 Dec. 9—The Return of God's People to Their Homeland (Neh. 1, 2, 4)
 Dec. 16—Isaiah's Prophecies of the Coming Savior (Isaiah 7:14; 9:6, 7; 11:1-5; 40:1-11; 53:1-12; 55:1-13)
 Dec. 23—(CHRISTMAS SUNDAY) The Birth of the Savior (Luke 2:1-20)
 Dec. 30—Jesus Brought to God's House (Luke 2:21-40)

Respectfully submitted,

REV. HENRY VERDUIN
 REV. ROLF VEENSTRA
 REV. P. JONKER, JR.
 A. VANDER VEER
 T. AFMAN

DELEGATE TO THE AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY

To the Synod of 1945.

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

BIBLES—Not Bombs—for Tomorrow's World," is the slogan of the war-emergency campaign of the American Bible Society. During the two-day conference of the advisory council, made up of the representatives of forty Protestant churches, which was held at the Bible House, New York, December 5 and 6, this emergency work was the main topic of interest. The regular work of the Bible Society has to be carried on, and the cost is higher due to rising prices of material and labor and to greater demand. Super-imposed on this is the emergency work for a four year period.

What is this emergency? It is the need and demand for the Word of God in connection with the war and reconstruction. Let me first present some cold figures and then try to make them real in what they imply in respect to human need and spiritual work among the nations of the earth. The call is for \$600,000 per year for a four year period to print and distribute more than ten million volumes of the whole Bible and parts of it. Much of this work was unnecessary before the war or was done by other Bible Societies.

This includes the needs of our own armed forces, that of the prisoners of war, that of the people of the liberated areas; also rehabilitation funds for various Bible Societies, the Netherlands' Bible Society included, which need machinery, plates, paper, and other equipment, before they can do their part again as in former years.

These plans of the war emergency do not cover by any means all the needs of these various groups, but it is as much as the American Bible Society dares to forecast. The printing presses of our plants in Sweden and Switzerland are turning out Bibles in many languages to supply the needs for the European theater of war, for prisoners, and liberated countries. If money is available this work can be increased, especially in Sweden, where they are not troubled with a shortage of paper as in most other parts of the world. The call comes to us to supply these extra funds that the call for God's Word may be answered and that the force of God's Kingdom in those various countries may be enabled to carry on their own work in due time.

Special needs in the far East are also included in the emergency fund. It would be interesting and enlightening to give the specific figures for each country. But I will limit myself and mention only the large groups. Our armed forces.—Prisoners of war. (requests for Bibles in forty languages)—European nations (eighteen countries)—Far East

countries, including Japan and various Pacific islands—and the rehabilitation of local Bible Societies and agencies.

It is interesting and encouraging to note that, in spite of the opposition to Protestant mission work in Central and South America, the demand for Bibles from these countries has constantly increased, and we should certainly try to respond to this call.

The task of the American Bible Society is threefold. First, to *print* Bibles in the languages of the many nations and tribes of the world. Secondly, to *distribute* them to the various countries and have them at hand when they are needed. Thirdly, to have them *read*. The Bible reading course sponsored by the Bible Society last winter aroused a great deal of interest. One million V mail forms and thirteen million bookmarks with the selected passages were distributed. Requests for a broader set-up this winter came in during the last campaign.

I am glad to report that our church has well responded to the appeal for funds for this Kingdom cause. During the past year \$4,817 was contributed for the regular and \$100 for the emergency fund.

We recommend this cause to our churches for added support in view of the special needs and to the Synod of 1945 to place it again on the list of accredited causes.

Respectfully submitted,

HESSEL BOUMA

Delegate to the American Bible Society.

REPORT NO. 9

REPORT ON CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY

To the Synod of 1945.

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

TO clarify the mandate assigned to your Committee requires a brief review of certain facts and materials contained in the Agenda and the Acts of the Synod of 1943. To the Synod of 1943 a Committee rendered a detailed report on Labor Unions. The Committee was especially charged to remove apparent inconsistencies appearing in various Synodical decisions. In the Acts of Synod, 1943, pages 383-390, all the decisions of our Church dealing with the problem of Labor Unions are given. The Committee reporting to the Synod of 1943 also formulated a complete revision of all these decisions, and summarized these decisions in a number of principles. The Synod of 1943 reiterated the decisions of the Synods of 1916, 1928, and 1930, and consequently the position of our Church on the question of Labor Unions was clarified. The Synod of 1943 adopted the five principles proposed by the Committee, and also exhorted the ministers of our Church to emphasize these principles in their preaching. It may not be amiss once again to bring these decisions of the Synod of 1943 to the attention of our Church. The decision reads as follows:

A. The Synod of 1943 adopt in re Labor Unions the position taken in 1916 and 1928, and the conclusions of the report "Christian Social and Industrial Organizations," as adopted by the Synod of 1930.

B. Synod expressly declare itself in agreement with the following principles:

1. Church membership and membership in a so-called neutral labor union are compatible as long as such union gives no constitutional warrant to sins, nor shows in its regular activities that it champions sin.
2. The Biblical doctrine of corporate responsibility and the Biblical teaching of the Christian's separation from the world make it imperative for members of neutral labor organizations to discontinue membership in any of such unions whose common practices are clearly in conflict with the principles of the Word of God.
3. Christian conscience cannot condone membership in a neutral organization if it continues and approves its sinful practices in spite of protests against them.
4. The doctrine of corporate responsibility does not imply that membership in unions which have engaged in sinful practices of itself makes one liable to ecclesiastical censure; however, when members of the Church render themselves guilty of acts which are contrary to the Word of God, the usual application of the rules for discipline shall be vigorously applied. Corporate responsibility may render one worthy of discipline, but the degree of guilt must be determined by the local consistories.
5. Consistories and Classes should take careful note of the practices of all organizations existent in their respective communities to determine whether membership in our Church and membership in such organizations are compatible.

C. Synod exhort the ministers of the Church to emphasize the Scriptural principles of the Christian's separation from the world, and of the sinful consequences of putting on an unequal yoke with unbelievers to obtain right and justice through means condemned by the Word of God. Further, Synod admonish the membership of the Church to break with all organizations which by repeated activity reveal an anti-Christian spirit. In short, Synod urge upon ministers and elders by vigorous use of the keys intrusted to them to declare the principles of the Word of God which must guide the members of the Church in their relation to the world and the organizations of the world.

D. Synod exhort the churches to give moral and financial support to all Christian organizations in the social sphere.

(Acts of Synod, 1943, pages 102, 103)

A brief clarification of the above decisions are necessary to understand the mandate which has been assigned to your Committee. Our Church has consistently maintained in all of its decisions in re Labor Unions, that church membership and membership in a so-called neutral Labor Union are compatible. A neutral Labor Union was deemed to be an organization which in its constitution was not contrary to the Word of God. In other words, membership in a neutral Labor Union was not considered to be sinful as long as such an organization did not in its practice champion and perpetrate sinful acts. The charge has been repeatedly made, and again as late as the Synod of 1939, that so-called neutral Labor Unions may be neutral in their constitution and statutes, but are decidedly unchristian in their practices. This fact, apparent to all, led to the question whether members of our church should not be disciplined and ecclesiastical censure applied, simply on the grounds that they were members of a labor organization guilty of sinful practices. It was argued that mere membership in a so-called neutral Labor Union makes all members equally guilty of the overt acts perpetrated by a few, and that ecclesiastical censure should be exercised on these grounds. In reply to this question, and others of a similar nature, the Synod of 1943 once again reiterated the Scriptural doctrine of corporate responsibility, and stated what is found under B, 2 and 4 above. When the report of the Committee in 1942 was reviewed by Classes and Consistories, the Classis of California was of the opinion that the Synod of 1943 should declare the recommendations of the Committee contradictory. The Synod of 1943, however, did not concur in the decisions of Classis California, and stated, "The full recognition of corporate responsibility is quite consistent with the position that mere passive corporate responsibility does not yet make one an object of censure, but that one becomes an object of censure (as distinguished from discipline of the Word) only by the performance of censurable acts. Active participation in censurable acts may make one an object of ecclesiastical discipline. But even so the degree of participation may be so slight that the church would not think of applying censure" (Acts of Synod, 1943, page 105).

The Synod of 1943 did recognize one request of Classis California, that the "church is evidently not clear on the question of how far corporate responsibility extends, Synod appoint a committee to study the

question of corporate responsibility further." The Synod of 1943 appointed a Committee, "whose task it will be to make a study of 'Corporate Responsibility' in industrial, professional, and business organizations" (Acts of Synod, 1943, page 105). The Committee reporting to Synod in 1943 clearly recognized that the question of corporate responsibility required greater clarification. The report stated, "The subject of social responsibility is one that has come to the foreground in recent times, and has not yet come in for careful consideration by authorities in Church government. The usual position is that one becomes an object of censure only when one actively perpetrates some evil, either singly or jointly with others. And it would certainly be a dangerous thing for our church to lay down a general rule in a matter that is so complicated and that calls for careful discrimination. Only a period of careful study can prepare the Church for any proper decision on this point" (Acts of Synod, 1943, page 396). More than once the members of our Church have been reminded of the implications of the doctrine of corporate responsibility. The Synods of 1928 and 1930, and again by the Synod of 1943, the attention of the Church has been called to the fact, that membership in a so-called neutral Labor Union makes one corporately liable for all the acts of an organization.

Your Committee has undertaken as its task a study of the principle of corporate responsibility, and will endeavor to apply this principle to the industrial, professional, and business organizations existing in the world. The question of corporate responsibility is also closely connected with the subject of ecclesiastical censure, and our Classes and Consistories are in need of Scriptural light to deal properly and wisely. The members of our Church must also know their calling and responsibility regarding various organizations in the industrial, professional, and business spheres, existing in a sinful world.

The question before your committee is not: "Does the believer ever have the right to belong to an organization which does not adopt a positively Christian point of view?"

The question, however, is this: "To what extent and under what circumstances is a Christian who belongs to or who joins such an organization responsible for its decisions and practices?"

This question must be answered on the basis of Scripture.

The mandate of your Committee has already been stated.

Further light is shed on the purpose of appointing this committee by what is found on p. 17 of the Agenda, Part 1, 1943, where we read:

"The same Synod (i.e., the Synod of 1928), on the advice of its committee, appointed a committee to consider the question, 'what might be done to revive Christian organizations in the social sphere.'" This committee reported to the Synod of 1930. It came to the conclusion that the church could best promote the organization of Christian labor [and other?] organizations by adopting four measures, the third of which is stated in the following words:

“By calling particular attention to the principle of corporate responsibility, clearly taught in the Word of God . . . , affirmed by an enlightened Christian conscience, and recognized by sociologists; and by giving a discriminating answer to the question, whether and in how far one can relieve himself of this responsibility by protesting.”

It becomes clear, therefore, that the purpose of your committee is not merely to study the question of the extent to which one becomes responsible for the decisions and practices of an organization to which he belongs, but also, by means of its report, to promote the organization and well-being of Christian organizations in the social sphere.

Your committee, after careful exegetical investigation, has reached the following conclusions regarding the question placed before it:

(1) **Active participation in the sinful practices of an organization to which one belongs not only renders one guilty before God but may even make one an object of ecclesiastical discipline.**

Scriptural basis for this conclusion:

Rev. 2:20: “But I have this against thee, that thou sufferest the woman Jezebel, who calleth herself a prophetess; and she teacheth and seduceth my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed to idols.” This passage will be used again under heading (3) below. For our present purpose it is only necessary to say the following:

The textual critical variations—see Greek New Testament by Eberhard Nestle, revised by Erwin Nestle, sixteenth edition—, though many do not alter the meaning of the passage from the aspect of the light which it sheds on the question which we are considering. Hence, we shall not discuss them.

In order to understand the quoted passage we must see it in the light of its historical and geographical background. Being a center of communication, with many people passing through it, Thyatira had become a trading city. Here were to be found the trade-guilds: wool-workers, linen-workers, makers of outer garments, dyers—think of Lydia, Acts 16:14—, leather-workers, tanners, potters, etc. See W. M. Ramsey, *The Letters to the Seven Churches of Asia*, pp. 316-326. These trade-guilds were associated with the worship of tutelary deities: each guild had its guardian god. The members of the guild were expected to attend the guild-festivals and to eat food which had been offered to the deity, was consecrated to him, and was received by the devotees as a gift from him. Not only this, but, as the passage distinctly teaches, gross immorality characterized the feast; such immorality as was usual at heathen festivals. Says S. Greydanus in *Kommentaar op het Nieuwe Testament, Deel XIV*, p. 81: “Ook hier hebben wij niet maar aan het eten van het op de markt gekocht vleesch van offerdieren te denken, maar aan het deelnemen aan met afgoderij verbonden maaltijden en feesten, door de genoemde verschillende gilden aangericht. Deze hoererij was tegelijk eigenlijk en geestelijk.”

In this difficult situation what must a Christian do? If he refuses to engage in the evil practices of the guild, he loses his position in society. He may have to suffer want, hunger persecution. On the other hand, if he attends the immoral feasts, eating things sacrificed to idols and committing fornication, he denies his Lord.

The prophetess Jezebel pretended to know the real solution of the problem, the way out of the difficulty. She, apparently, argued thus: "In order to conquer Satan, you must know him. You will never be able to conquer sin unless you have become thoroughly acquainted with it by experience. In brief, a believer should learn to know 'the deep things of Satan.'" Her advice seems to have been: "By all means attend the guild-festivals, and commit fornication . . . and still remain a Christian; nay rather, become a better Christian."

But if church-members can persuade themselves that this course is right, they cannot deceive the One who has eyes "like a flame of fire" and feet that are ready to trample upon the wicked.

In the light of the explanation just given we can now understand the meaning of the words:

"But I have this against thee that thou sufferest the woman Jezebel, who calleth herself a prophetess; and she teacheth and seduceth my servants to commit fornication and to eat things sacrificed to idols."

Such active participation in the sins of an organization is here condemned in no uncertain terms, and the church is rebuked for its refusal to exercise discipline with respect to the one who is carrying on the work of seduction; namely Jezebel, a real, historical person, whose name, as here given, is a synonym for seduction unto idolatry and immorality, 1 Kings 16:31; 18:4, 13, 19; 19:1, 2.

Whereas in all Scripture there is not a closer parallel to present-day dangers in connection with membership in organizations of this character, we devoted considerable space to the discussion of the passage. It clearly teaches that also today active participation in the sinful practices of an organization to which one belongs renders one guilty before God; that the discipline of the Word should be vigilantly exercised in such matters; and that ecclesiastical discipline may be in order; beginning, of course, with the leaders, as is clearly indicated here.

This stand is also in full agreement with the decisions of the Synod of 1928. See Acts of the Synod of 1928, pp. 90-93. Also Agenda, Part I, 1943, p. 11. Synod decided as follows:

"The church must exercise church discipline in the case of members who are also members of organizations that are not essentially in conflict with the Word of God, but in which is found much that is worthy of disapproval and in conflict with our Christian principles, when it is evident that such members of the church are parties to and guilty of actions that are in conflict with the command of God. Here, too, the rule shall be applied that only if one is personally guilty of censurable sin shall one become the object of church discipline."

Essentially the same position was taken by the Synod of 1930. See Acts of the Synod of 1930, pp. 234, 235. Also Agenda, Part I, 1943, p. 12.

This is also in harmony with the stand of the Synod of 1943. See Acts of the Synod of 1943, p. 105, from which we quote:

“The full recognition of corporate responsibility is quite consistent with the position that mere passive corporate responsibility does not yet make one an object of censure, but that one becomes an object of church censure (as distinguished from discipline of the Word) only by performance of censurable act. Active participation in censurable acts may make one an object of ecclesiastical discipline. But even so the degree of participation may be so slight that the church would not think of applying censure.”

(2) In order to be responsible for the sinful deeds of the organization or the group with which one is associated it is not necessary to be an active participant, in the usual sense of that term. By requesting, promoting, encouraging, or in any manner abetting the wrong-doing one is rendered responsible, even if the support which one gives amounts to no more than consent or approval. In connection with all this the discipline of the Word should be vigilantly exercised.

Scriptural basis:

Romans 1:32 is pertinent to the matter at hand only insofar as it indicates responsibility for consenting to the evil practices of other members in the group to which one belongs and with which one associates. It should be observed, however, that the individuals in question not only give their consent but actually practice the indicated sins, and that it is specifically the “practice” which is here said to render them “worthy of death.” The passage is as follows:

“who, knowing the ordinance of God, that they that practice such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but also consent with them that practise them.”

If even heathen—see the entire preceding context—are held accountable for consenting unto evil, how much more is this true with respect to those who have received the oracles of God and are members of his church. The “consent” of which the passage speaks need not even be expressed in words; even the attitude of the heart, approving of the evil deed, renders one accountable. The original, in our passage, has *SUNEUDOKOUSIN*, a late verb which indicates hearty approval. Although in Greek literature the term is often used in the sense of “giving one’s consent,” yet at times the root-meaning is clearly indicated; namely, sympathizing with the acts of another. The Dutch Statenvertaling gets rid of the ambiguity of the English translation by translating both here, in Rom. 1:32, and also in Acts 8:1 and 22:20: “een welbehagen hebben aan . . . of in.” That is exactly the meaning of the original.

Acts 8:1; 22:20: “And Saul was consenting unto his death.”

“And when the blood of Stephen, thy witness, was shed, I also was standing by and consenting, and keeping the garments of them that slew him.”

We have already discussed the meaning of the verb which is rendered “consent” in our English versions. Here let us give the comments of A. T. Robertson, *Word Pictures in the New Testament*, pp. 100, 392: Acts 8:1: “Was consenting . . . periphrastic imperfect of SUNEUDOKEO, a late double compound that well describes Saul’s pleasure in the death of Stephen.” Acts 22:20: “Consenting . . . Koine word for being pleased at the same time with.”

It was evidently this “being pleased with” the murder that was being committed by others, with whom Paul was loosely associated, that rendered him guilty not only in the eyes of God but even before the bar of his own conscience.

Sometimes the manner in which evil practices are encouraged or abetted takes a different form. Acts 3:13, 14 is very instructive in this connection. We read:

“The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified his Servant Jesus; whom ye delivered up, and denied before the face of Pilate, when he had determined to release him. But ye denied the Holy and Righteous One, and asked for a murderer to be granted unto you, and killed the Prince of life.” See also the somewhat similar passages Acts 2:23, 36.

This passage (Acts 3:13, 14) is taken from the discourse of Peter to the people in Solomon’s Porch, after the healing of the man who was “lame from his mother’s womb.” Peter here charges this multitude with responsibility for the death of the Prince of life. The passage is very vivid; the language very striking: the people had put to death the Prince of life, and had demanded that death-dealing Barabbas be given another lease on life. Bengel calls this “the magnificent antithesis.”

But how could the Jewish people be charged to their faces with the death of Christ? Wasn’t it Pilate who issued the order that Jesus be crucified? Yes, but the people were associated with Pilate in this murder. How? In a threefold manner: a. by “delivering him up.” Some priests entered while Peter was speaking, Acts 4:1; b. by “denying” him before the face of Pilate, when the latter was determined to release him. Not only the members of the Sanhedrin had done this, but the people had taken part in it. The best commentary of the meaning of this “denial” is found in the Gospel of John 19:13-16, which passage also indicates very clearly how this denial stood in direct relation to Pilate’s decree that Jesus be crucified; c. by asking for a murderer to be released.

Thus, in every conceivable manner, the Jews, led by their priests, had abetted the evil deed. Scripture, accordingly, holds them fully responsible. The fact, moreover, that this deed was included in “the determined counsel and foreknowledge of God” did not in any way cancel their responsi-

bility. The one who promotes evil or asks that it be accomplished is held responsible as well as the one who actually issues the decree.

A somewhat similar type of responsibility is discussed in 1 Tim. 5:22. Here, too, one becomes involved in the sin of another. Yet, there is a difference: while in Acts the Jews are charged with responsibility for the death of Jesus because they directly encouraged and therefore brought about his crucifixion, in the passage before us now the connection is of a more indirect character; that is, Timothy would become responsible for evil by ordaining unworthy men.

The passage reads as follows:

“Lay hands hastily on no man, neither be partaker of other men’s sins: keep thyself pure.”

The term *CHEIRAS EPITITHEI* refers to ordination, as is clear from the context and Acts 6:6. Although the passage itself leaves room for minor differences of interpretation—see A. T. Robertson, *Word Pictures*, vol. IV, p. 589—yet, the context clearly indicates that we have here a warning against hasty ordination of untried and unworthy individuals. If Timothy neglects to exercise care in this matter, he will himself become responsible, at least in a measure, for their sins. We are in complete agreement with the exegesis given by Dr. C. Bouma in his *Korte Verklaring der Heilige Schrift*, the volume dealing with I and II Timothy, Titus, and Philemon. Says the author, on pp. 100, 101:

“Handoplegging werd in verschillende gevallen gebruikt, voor een bepaald ambt, Hand. 6:6, bij een bepaalde opdracht, Hand. 13:3; in later tijd bij de wederopneming van gevallen in de gemeente. Maar het vorige maakt het duidelijk, dat hier is bedoeld de inzetting in het ambt van ouderling. Wanneer ergens de ambten moeten worden ingesteld, mogen alleen zulke personen worden genomen, over wie eerst nauwkeurige informaties zijn ingewonnen. Dan blijft men voor latere pijnlijke teleurstellingen bewaard, die hadden kunnen zijn voorkomen, indien eerst goed werd onderzocht. Deze vermaning wordt nog nader aangedrongen door de volgende waarschuwing: en heb geen deel aan vreemde zonde. Door overhaast iemand in het ambt te zetten, die een zondig leven leidt of een ketter is, zou Timotheüs aan die zonde deel hebben, want dat ze door een ouderling nu werden bedreven, zou zijn schuld mee zijn. Dat iemand zondigt, kan hij niet verhoeden; wel, dat een ouderling zijn vroeger zondig leven blijft voortzetten; want die man had geen ouderling moeten worden. Dan zijn het wel vreemde zonden, zonden, door een ander begaan, maar Timotheüs gaat niet vrij uit. En daarvoor moet hij zorg dragen, zoals het slot zegt: *bewaar uzelf rein*, ook door zoo geen deel aan anderer zonden te hebben.”

Of a similar nature is 2 John: 10, 11.

The central theme of 2 John is: Do not show hospitality to those who deny the truth. The theme of 3 John is: Show hospitality to those who proclaim the truth. We are dealing with the former. The passage which we are considering reads as follows:

"If any one cometh unto you, and bringeth not this teaching, receive him not into your house, and give him no greeting: for he that giveth him greeting partaketh of his evil works." See also Rom. 16:17.

It is clear from the original—which uses the indicative mood *ERCHETAI, LAMBANETE*—that John is not describing a mere possibility, as if he were saying: "If it should ever happen that deceivers come to you." No, such men are actually arriving and demanding the attention of believers. They are vending their pernicious doctrines. Now, John here commands that believers must not receive under their roof such deceivers nor even greet them. Literally we read: "Do not say greetings to them." We find the same expression in James 1:1; Acts 15:23; 23:26; John 19:3, etc. Often this word meant no more than our "hello," but in a Christian environment it may have been filled with more definitely spiritual sentiments (the word "grace" has the same root). This, however, is difficult to establish fully. At any rate, believers are forbidden to extend even the most superficial hospitality to such deceivers, inasmuch as this may encourage them. And thus believers would become co-responsible for the "evil works" of deceivers.

The passages of which we have given an exegesis under this heading—namely, Rom. 1:32; Acts 8:1; 22:20; Acts 3:13, 14; 1 Tim. 5:22; and 2 John 10, 11—establish the rule which is stated in the preceding: not only by actively engaging in but also by promoting or encouraging or even taking delight in the evil acts of others with whom, in some way, we are associated, we become co-responsible for sin. This general principle, clearly established by a careful study of Scripture, is of abiding validity. It should guide us today in our relations with those with whom we are associated in the social sphere.

(3) **In order to be responsible for the sins of the group one need not even be an abettor; mere passivity or silence also renders one guilty: failure to protest vigorously makes one accountable before God.**

It is altogether probable that at least some of the individuals present in that crowd to which Peter directed his discourse—Acts 3:13, 14; see under (2) above—had not been guilty of any *active* participation in the crucifixion of Jesus. Yet, they were guilty inasmuch as they had remained silent. They had done nothing about it.

Ephesians 5:11 clearly indicates that it is a person's duty to actively reprove the practices of evil. The passage is as follows:

"and have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather even reprove them."

Under headings (1) and (2) we have discussed the various ways in which one can have fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness; that is, either by being actively engaged in them (1) or by promoting them (2). But one may be guilty neither of the one nor of the other, and still be responsible for such "unfruitful works" *by not reprovng them*. Hence, it is the second clause of Eph. 5:11 which is relevant to our present discussion.

With respect to exegesis the question to be answered is this: exactly what is meant by the term ELEGCHETE? The term has a very wide range of meanings, as is evident when one examines Liddell & Scott (unabridged) *Greek-English Lexicon* and Abbott-Smith *Manual Greek Lexicon of the New Testament*. Of the many meanings which the word can have the choice in our passage is limited to these two: *expose* or *reprove*. Many prefer the former. So e.g., A. T. Robertson, *op. cit.*, p. 543, who opines that the word here refers to the act of turning on the light and thereby exposing the works of darkness. Van Leeuwen in his *Kommentaar op het Nieuwe Testament, Deel X*, p. 119, endorses the opposite view. Says he:

“De betekenis ‘bestraffenis’ is, in verband met vs. 13, hier te verkiezen boven tentoon-, aan de kaak stellen, die ook mogelijk is.”

Lenski combines the two, and on this point we agree with him. When the light of the Word of God exposes the works of darkness, they stand condemned. By causing this light to shine into the darkness we “reprove” the works of darkness. Verse 13 supports the interpretation here given.

In complete harmony with this teaching of Scripture is the decision of the Synod of 1928—see Acts of the Synod of 1928, pp. 90-93—which reads as follows:

“A Christian who is a member of a union or a similar organization is free from personal responsibility only when he has in all seriousness protested against decisions and practises that clearly violate the bounds of justice, and when he has according to his ability sought to suppress the evil.”

Sinful passivity may also take the form of a failure to exercise church discipline with respect to those who seduce unto evil or persist in the practice of it. Thus, those in authority over the church at Thyatira receive a rebuke because they “tolerate” or “let go” the woman, Jezebel, Rev. 2:20. See our discussion of this passage under (2) above. The discipline of the Word, condemning evil *actions*, is not sufficient. Evil *persons* must be disciplined.

(4) It is possible, moreover, that one neither engages actively in the sinful acts of his associates (1), nor promotes them or consents unto them in any manner (2), nor even fails to protest against them (3), and yet involves himself in co-responsibility for these evil practices; namely, if one remains a member of such organizations which refuse to mend their evil ways when the latter have been exposed and reprovved.

The passage to which attention should be called is 2 Cor. 6:14-18:

“Be not unequally yoked with unbelievers: for what fellowship have righteousness and iniquity? or what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what portion hath a believer with an unbeliever? And what agreement hath a temple of God with idols? for we are the temple of the living God; even as God said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them, and I will be their God, and

they shall be my people. *Wherefore come ye out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord.* And touch no unclean thing; and I will receive you, And I will be to you a Father, And ye shall be to me sons and daughters."

Similarly, Rev. 18:4—Agenda, Part I, 1943, p. 12, has a wrong reference here. We read Rev. 8:14; this should be Rev. 18:4:

"And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come forth, my people, out of her, that ye have no fellowship with her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues."

Both of these passages clearly indicate that there is a time when a person by continuing his voluntary association with a social unit which persists in its evil practices involves himself in co-responsibility for these sins.

The Corinthians' passage, to which we shall refer again—see under (5) below—indicates the need of separation. See the words which appear in italics. The passage from the book of Revelation teaches that when one refuses to separate himself from his evil associates he "has fellowship with their sins" and will "receive of their plagues."

The admonition to leave Babylon is addressed to God's people in all ages (cf. Isa. 48:20; 52:11; Jer. 50:8; 51:54; Zech. 2:7; 2. Cor. 2:16-18. From this fact it also appears that Babylon is not only the city of the end-time. It is the world, as center of wealth and seduction, in any age. To be sure, one cannot "go out of the world," but one is able to separate himself from its sins and enticements and from every form of intimate association with it. The duty to separate from associating with those who refuse to listen to such admonitions as are based upon the Word is forcefully emphasized by our Lord in Matt. 10:12-15:

"And as ye enter into the house, salute it. And if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it: but if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you. And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, as ye go forth out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet. Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment, than for that city."

- In harmony with this Scriptural teaching is the decision of the Synod of 1928—see Acts of the Synod of 1928, pp. 90-93:

"If the organization in spite of such vigorous protests persists in perpetrating evil, it is the duty of every Christian member of such an organization to withdraw and renounce his membership in said organization."

(5) Finally, it is even possible that although a person does not become guilty of any of the sins described in the preceding four points, he, nevertheless, becomes responsible, in a measure, for the evil decisions and practices of the group; namely, by becoming a member of the organizations whose aims or practices are known to be evil.

This, evidently, was the stand of the Synod of 1904. See Agenda 1943, Part I, p. 7. Without necessarily endorsing all the details of that

decision, it must be maintained that in principle the position of that Synod was correct and Scriptural.

The clearest passage, in substantiation of this view, is found in the passage already quoted; namely, 2 Cor. 6:14-18. In that passage the believer is not only exhorted to separate himself, but he is also warned against associating himself with such "unions" which are known to be evil. The figure employed is based on Deut. 22:10: "Thou shalt not plow with an ox and an ass together." Such heterogenous unions were condemned. The apostle applies this commandment to the sphere of human relations. Literally he says: "Stop becoming—he uses the present imperative, showing that some were guilty—unequally yoked with unbelievers." Says A. T. Robertson, *op. cit.*, pp. 236, 237: "Marriage is certainly included, but other unions may be in mind. Cf. Eph. 5:7."

One of the best comments on this passage is still Charles Hodge, who, in his *Exposition of the Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, pp. 165, 166, speaks as follows: "After the exhortation to requite his love by loving him, he exhorts them to keep aloof from all intimate association with the evil. The exhortation is general, and is not to be confined to partaking of heathen sacrifices, nor to intermarriage with the heathen, much less to association with the opponents of the apostle. It no doubt had a special reference or application to the peculiar circumstances of the Corinthians, and was intended to guard them against those entangling and dangerous associations with the unconverted around them, to which they were specially exposed. And as we know that their special danger was from idolaters (see 1 Cor. ch. 8, and 10:14-33), whose festivals they were constantly urged to attend, it is to be presumed that it was from all association with the heathen in their worship that the apostle intended to warn them. But this is only one application of the principle here laid down, viz., that intimate associations ought not to be formed by the people of God with those who are not his people. . . . The principle applies to all the enemies of God and children of darkness. . . . The worse a man is, the more openly he is opposed to Christ and his Gospel, the greater the danger and evil of connection with him."

In conclusion, it may be well to restate the principles, governing corporate responsibility, which we have culled from Scripture. They are as follows:

(1) Active participation in the sinful practices of an organization to which one belongs not only renders one guilty before God but may even make one an object of ecclesiastical discipline.

(2) In order to be responsible for the sinful deeds of the organization or the group with which one is associated it is not necessary to be an active participant, in the usual sense of that term. By requesting, promoting, encouraging, or in any manner abetting the wrong-doing, one is rendered responsible, even if the support which one gives amounts to no more than consent or approval. In connection with all this the discipline of the Word should be vigilantly exercised.

(3) In order to be responsible for the sins of the group one need not even be an abettor; mere passivity or silence also renders one guilty: failure to protest vigorously makes one accountable before God.

(4) It is possible, moreover, that one neither engages actively in the sinful acts of his associates (1), nor promotes them or consents unto them in any manner (2), nor even fails to protest against them (3), and yet involve himself in co-responsibility for these evil practices; namely, if one remains a member of such organizations which refuse to mend their evil ways when the latter have been exposed and reproved.

(5) Finally, it is even possible that, although a person does not become guilty of any of the sins described in the preceding four points, he, nevertheless, becomes responsible, in a measure, for the evil decisions and practices of the group; namely, by becoming a member of the organizations whose aims or practices are known to be evil.

These are the principles set forth in Scripture, as we have indicated. They should be faithfully expounded from the pulpit, in personal visits and family-visits, and in the religious press. The question of their application to concretely existing local, state, or national conditions is a matter for the individual Classis and Consistory, and especially for the conscience of each person who becomes involved in it. Scripture lays down general principles, as herein set forth. Further than that Synod should not go.

In conclusion it is hoped that it has become evident that whereas the moral and spiritual dangers to which one exposes himself by active membership in non-Christian organizations are so numerous, there is only one safe solution which should be put into practice wherever this is at all possible; namely, the establishment and promotion of definitely Christian organizations in the social sphere.

Respectfully,

L. BERKHOF
C. BOUMA
R. J. DANHOF
W. HENDRIKSEN
C. HUISSEN

REPORT NO. 10

CHURCH HELP COMMITTEE

To the Synod of 1945.

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

WE herewith submit to you our report for the year 1944. With thanks to God and appreciation for the liberality of our people we can again report a financially prosperous year for the fund. The total income amounted to \$76,171.64. This large income was partly due to the fact that 25 churches paid up entirely. Of these 19 received a substantial discount in accordance with a former rule of Synod. The total amount of discount granted during 1944 was \$8,290.

As a result the outstanding amount was greatly reduced during the year. Even to the amount of \$34,170.

Only three churches failed to make repayment, and very few failed to collect for the fund.

From the church of Shepherd, which ceased to exist, \$1,952.40 was received of the \$2,746.66 which it owed the fund. This leaves a debt of \$794.26. Since the church has ceased to exist, we advise Synod to cancel this amount, in order that the record in the books of the treasurer may be kept straight.

The amount of loans promised was \$28,300. This small amount must be ascribed to war-time restrictions. When these restrictions are removed much more will be needed. Hence we suggest the same quota again, even though there is a large amount of cash on hand.

During the past year we have invested \$18,000 in F bonds. And since new year \$37,000 more. There will be great need of this money when opportunity to build again presents itself.

We herewith attach a report of the treasurer properly audited by the public accountant.

CHURCH HELP FUND — 1944

SCHEDULE "A"

BANK RECONCILIATION

NORTHWESTERN STATE BANK, ORANGE CITY, IOWA

Bank Balance as per statement Jan. 1, 1944.....	\$ 20,666.11
1943 Deposits (late).....	\$11,860.89
1943 Less Checks outstanding.....	6,190.50 5,670.39
Total	\$ 26,336.50
Balance in Canadian Treasury.....	621.63
Our Ledger Balance	26,958.13
1944 Receipts.....	\$ 76,171.64
Total	\$103,129.77

Less 1944 Disbursements.....		28,969.38
On hand		\$ 74,160.39
Cash in the United States.....	\$52,752.97	
Cash in Canada.....	2,907.42	
U. S. Government Bonds.....	18,500.00	
Total	\$74,160.39	
Bank Balance as per statement.....	\$40,831.61	
Deposits (late)	11,921.36	
Total	\$52,752.97	
Cash in Canadian Treasury.....	2,907.42	
Invested in U. S. Government Bonds.....	18,500.00	
Total	\$74,160.39	

SUMMARY

Balance on hand Jan. 1, 1944..... \$ 26,958.13

Total Receipts:

Repayments by Churches (Schedule "B").....\$62,470.00
 Quotas by Classes and Donations (Schedule "C").. 21,991.64

 Total

\$84,461.64

Less Discounts to:

Corsica, S. Dak.....	\$ 160.00	
Third Lynden, Wash.	600.00	
Volga, S. Dak.....	650.00	
Coopersville, Mich.	905.00	
Delavan, Wis.....	1,460.00	
Seymour, Grand Rapids, Mich.....	600.00	
Goshen, N. Y.	800.00	
Artesia, Calif.	400.00	
Tracy, Iowa	100.00	
Ireton, Iowa	25.00	
Cincinnati, Ohio	600.00	
Mt. Vernon, Wash.	800.00	
Holland, Iowa	150.00	
Ackley, Iowa	100.00	
Terra Ceia, N. C.	230.00	
Colton, S. Dak.....	160.00	
Ontario, Calif.	100.00	
Grangeville, Idaho	300.00	
Granum, Alta., Canada.....	150.00	\$ 8,290.00

\$76,171.64 76,171.64

 Total

\$103,129.77

Total Disbursements:

New Loans

\$28,300.00

Administrative Expenses

669.38

28,969.38

Balance on hand Dec. 30, 1944..... \$ 74,160.39

Cash in the United States.....\$52,752.97
 Cash in Canada

2,907.42

U. S. Government Bonds.....

18,500.00

 Total

\$74,160.39

CHARLES R. MULDER, Treas.

SCHEDULE "B"
ANALYSIS — LOANS OUTSTANDING

Church at	Outstanding Jan. 1, 1944	New Loans	Payments	Outstanding Dec. 30, 1944
Artesia, Calif.	\$ 1,700.00	\$.....	\$ 1,700.00	\$.00
Ackley, Iowa	500.00	.....	500.00	.00
Arlene, Mich. ....	.20	.....	.20	.00
Allison, Iowa	800.00	.....	50.00	750.00
Bejou, Minn.	500.00	.....	50.00	450.00
Bemis, S. Dak.	120.53	.....	20.00	100.53
Second Bellflower, Calif. ....	.00	6,000.00	.00	6,000.00
Birnamwood, Wis.	1,311.10	.....	311.10	1,000.00
Brooton, Minn.	847.02	.....	75.00	772.02
Berwyn, Ill. ....	.00	10,000.00	.00	10,000.00
Cincinnati, Ohio	2,850.00	.....	2,850.00	.00
Corsica, S. Dak.	720.00	.....	720.00	.00
Colton, S. Dak.	1,448.76	.....	1,448.76	.00
Chatham, Ont., Canada	2,875.00	.....	25.00	2,850.00
Coopersville, Mich.	5,721.68	.....	5,721.68	.00
Compton, Calif.	1,900.00	.....	100.00	1,800.00
Crookston, Minn.	1,012.90	.....	55.00	957.90
Duvall, Wash.	2,125.00	.....	375.00	1,750.00
Des Plaines, Ill.	2,149.19	.....	105.00	2,044.19
Delavan, Wis.	7,075.00	.....	7,075.00	.00
Decatur, Mich.	3,346.85	.....	109.39	3,237.46
Second Denver, Colo.	6,375.00	.....	375.00	6,000.00
Dorr, Mich.	1,125.00	.....	75.00	1,037.50
East Martin, Mich.	585.00	.....	75.00	510.00
Edmonton, Alta., Canada .....	.00	2,000.00	.00	2,000.00
East Muskegon, Mich.	2,100.00	.....	2,100.00	.00
Estelline, S. Dak.	1,708.42	.....	120.00	1,588.42
Everson, Wash.	5,000.00	.....	250.00	4,750.00
Flint, Mich.	5,050.00	.....	300.00	4,750.00
Grandville, Mich.	5,550.63	.....	310.00	5,240.63
Goshen, N. Y.	3,400.00	.....	3,400.00	.00
Seymour, Grand Rapids	2,700.00	.....	2,700.00	.00
Grangeville, Idaho	775.00	.....	775.00	.00
Goshen, Ind.	1,350.00	.....	150.00	1,200.00
East Leonard, Grand Rapids..	4,250.00	.....	300.00	3,950.00
Godwin Heights, Grand Rapids	1,950.00	.....	150.00	1,800.00
Granum, Alta., Canada	675.00	.....	675.00	.00
Hollandale, Minn.	677.50	.....	60.00	617.50
Hamilton, Ont., Canada.....	2,356.00	.....	150.00	2,206.00
Hancock, Minn.	716.13	.....	500.00	216.13
Hills, Minn.	1,402.70	.....	100.00	1,302.70
Holland, Iowa	1,200.00	.....	1,200.00	.00
Holland, Minn.	2,718.57	.....	125.00	2,593.57
Holland Marsh, Ont., Canada ..	219.00	.....	.00	219.00
Houston, B. C., Canada	270.00	.....	15.00	255.00
Ireton, Iowa	200.00	.....	200.00	.00
Lansing, Mich.	7,125.00	.....	375.00	6,750.00
La Combe, Alta., Canada.....	1,270.00	.....	1,270.00	.00
Third Lynden, Wash.	2,550.00	.....	2,550.00	.00
Luverne, Minn. ....	.00	4,000.00	.00	4,000.00
Lark, N. Dak.	475.00	.....	.00	475.00
Modesto, Calif.	5,400.00	.....	300.00	5,100.00
Momence, Ill.	1,425.00	.....	235.85	1,189.15
Morrison, Ill.	2,325.00	.....	150.00	2,175.00
Milwood, Mich.	2,575.00	.....	175.00	2,400.00
Montello Park, Mich.	6,600.00	.....	350.00	6,250.00
Milwaukee, Wis.	5,000.00	.....	250.00	4,750.00
Mt. Vernon, Wash.	4,000.00	.....	4,000.00	.00

Church at	Outstanding Jan. 1, 1944	New Loans	Payments	Outstanding Dec. 30, 1944
Neerlandia, Alta., Canada	2,761.16		1,510.07	1,251.09
Newton, Iowa	5,700.00		1,015.00	4,685.00
Second Orange City, Iowa	1,275.00		112.50	1,162.50
Ogilvie, Minn.	237.78		.00	237.78
Ontario, Calif.	1,499.32		1,499.32	.00
Preakness, N. J.	650.00		50.00	600.00
Parchment, Mich.	2,125.00		125.00	2,000.00
Purewater, S. Dak.	160.00		160.00	.00
Pipestone, Minn.	1,200.00	2,300.00	75.00	3,425.00
Pine Creek, Mich.	2,175.00		290.00	1,885.00
Plainfield, Mich.	.00	1,500.00	.00	1,500.00
Second Randolph, Wis.	4,700.00		619.78	4,080.22
Raymond, Minn.	2,120.00		125.00	1,995.00
Rock Rapids, Iowa	2,574.50		1,200.00	1,374.50
Fourth Roseland, Ill.	555.00		555.00	.00
Sumas, Wash.	650.00		40.50	609.50
Sully, Iowa	2,950.00		1,000.00	1,950.00
Shepherd, Mont.	2,746.66		1,952.40	794.26
Seattle, Wash.	4,200.00	2,500.00	800.00	5,900.00
Sibley, Iowa	1,064.60		100.00	964.60
Sioux City, Iowa	3,355.00		150.00	3,205.00
Sioux Falls, S. Dak.	1,077.65		314.82	762.83
Sarnia, Ont., Canada	3,000.00		150.00	2,850.00
Terria Ceia, N. Car.	1,215.00		1,215.00	.00
Tracy, Iowa	319.10		319.10	.00
Volga, S. Dak.	2,806.00		2,806.00	.00
Vancouver, B. C., Canada	359.00		309.00	50.00
Vona, Colo.	347.25		.00	347.25
Western Springs, Ill.	1,325.00		225.00	1,100.00
West Branch, Mich.	204.09		89.80	114.29
Winnipeg, Man., Canada	1,138.79		55.00	1,083.79
Worthington, Minn.	554.73		554.73	.00
Totals	\$183,135.31	\$28,300.00	\$62,470.00	\$148,965.31

SCHEDULE "C"
DENOMINATIONAL QUOTAS BY CLASSES AND PERSONAL
DONATIONS

Classis	1943	1944
California	\$ 732.54	\$ 979.13
Chicago North	1,492.61	1,358.89
Chicago South	1,213.58	1,360.60
Grand Rapids East	1,602.67	1,804.30
Grand Rapids South	1,943.25	1,947.01
Grand Rapids West	1,091.25	1,100.25
Hackensack	698.75	707.75
Holland	1,737.05	1,728.94
Hudson	1,116.00	1,163.25
Kalamazoo	791.95	770.98
Minnesota	847.05	854.81
Muskegon	1,764.16	1,722.62
Orange City	715.18	798.64
Ostfriesland	493.91	537.62
Pacific	754.86	783.97
Pella	1,090.09	1,081.33
Sioux Center	932.94	1,188.43

(over)

Classis	1943	1944
Wisconsin	750.93	446.07
Zeeland	1,382.80	1,350.33
Miscellaneous Personal	20.00	15.00
Canadian Churches	647.44	291.72
Total	\$21,819.01	\$21,991.64

Respectfully submitted,
The Church Help Committee,
J. R. VAN DYKE, Chairman
A. WASSINK, Secretary
CHARLES R. MULDER, Treasurer

REPORT NO. 11

REPORT OF THE CHICAGO JEWISH MISSION

To the Synod of 1945.

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

YOUR board of Jewish Mission of Chicago has met in regular session every month of the year 1944, except August, at which time the workers take the bulk of their vacations. We have received a worker's report at each meeting, and disposed of the business of the mission to the best of our ability.

We have four full-time workers now, and the reports indicate that they are performing diligent and faithful labors in the difficult task of seeking to win the Jews. Actual results are very rare, but they labor in the confidence of doing God's will by preaching and tract work.

Rev. Zandstra has worked under a reappointment of one year. Beside the Clinic, Gospel, and Class work, by which the Jews are contacted daily, he has helped in the production of leaflets for distribution, called at many homes, and done deputation work in the churches and Mission fests. The boys' classes which he conducts together with Mr. Huisjen continue to be well attended. They are often difficult and rowdy but the message of the Gospel is constantly brought to the boys from week to week.

Mr. Huisjen labors effectively because of his acquaintance with the Jews and their language. Yiddish is second nature to him, and the Jews respect his intimate acquaintance with their tongue. Every meeting and each contact becomes more effective because our brother can reach the people in their own world of expression. At the Clinic Meetings, where more than 200 people appear a month sometimes, he speaks his message from the Word and comforts in the name of Jesus Christ. The board expressed its appreciation for the 20 years of continued labors done by Mr. Huisjen last May, and held a banquet in his honor. It is the opinion of your reporter that he is as worthy of an honorary degree for his lan-

guage study, and fund of knowledge concerning the Jews, as are some college teachers.

We are happy to report that since her resumption of duty about the middle of the year Miss Vander Meulen has been able to continue without interruption. She has the love and confidence of many Jewish women and girls, and we are glad she may be back in the work.

Miss Tuit, our other full-time worker, labors quietly and thoroughly. She conducts girls classes and makes many calls on the people in our 175,000 population, Jewish community. Miss Tuit has been very successful in her talks at the Mission fests, Missionary Unions, and to smaller groups in the churches. She showed a deep and sincere interest in the work, and in the salvation of the Jews.

We trust that you will join us in our continued prayers for our faithful Mission staff and for their assistants, the Medical staff and its clinic by which a door effective is opened for the Gospel.

We have prepared an anniversary booklet for the Mission since 1944 was its 25th year. The Rev. Van Beek did the bulk of the work on it and has produced a book of enduring value. It will be distributed to all the consistories of the Christian Reformed Church, and we pray for it at least a serious perusal. The problems and difficulties of this work stagger the most confident. The Lord alone is our strength. So assist us with your prayers, people of God.

Financially we have been blessed abundantly. The quotas have come in. The final parcel of the Van Agthoven estate was sold, and so there have been no worries as to finances as there were a few years ago, and salaries have been raised to meet the needs of higher living costs.

We seek approval of the attached budget and request your approval of a quota of 35¢ per family as in previous years.

Humbly submitted,

R. O. DE GROOT, Sec'y

ANNUAL STATEMENT OF THE CHICAGO JEWISH MISSION
OF THE CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH

December 31, 1944

Receipts

Balance on hand, January 1, 1944.....		\$ 2,338.02
Synodical Treasurer	\$ 9,600.00	
Donations and Collections	459.13	
Medical Department	1,200.00	
Rebates	55.84	
Interest on Investments	953.00	
Total Operating Receipts	\$12,267.97	
Other Receipts:		
Principal Payments on Mortgages	\$ 2,460.58	
Escrow Funds:		
Tax Deposits on Properties on which Mortgages and Contracts are Held	246.00	
Withholding Tax on Employees	544.56	15,519.11
Total		\$17,857.13

Disbursements

Operating:		
Salaries	\$ 9,883.10	
Huisjen, Rent	455.00	
Rev. Zandstra, Rent	600.00	
Rev. Zandstra, Auto Expense	300.00	
Mission, Petty Cash	275.00	
Telephone	66.17	
Gas and Electric	88.53	
Medical Supplies	363.68	
Building Supplies	6.12	
Cleaning and Repairs	459.95	
Fuel	398.35	
Service and Traveling Expense	252.35	
Insurance	134.03	
License	77.50	
Printing and Advertising	831.59	
Miscellaneous	10.78	
Total Operating Disbursements	\$14,202.15	
Other Disbursements:		
U. S. Government Bonds (Investment)	\$ 2,000.00	
From Escrow Funds:		
Real Estate Taxes	195.07	
Withholding Taxes	516.12	16,913.34
Cash Balance on Hand, Dec. 31, 1944	\$ 943.79	

STATEMENT OF THE CHICAGO JEWISH MISSION OF THE CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH

January 1, 1945

Assets

Cash on Hand	\$ 943.79
Property and Equipment (Nathaniel Institute)	18,000.00
U. S. Government Bonds	18,000.00
Federal Savings and Loan Assn. Stock	7,000.00
Mortgages and Real Estate Contracts	9,165.56
Total	\$53,109.35

PROPOSED BUDGET FOR 1945

Pastor's Salary	\$ 2,000.00
Pastor's Rent	600.00
Pastor's Auto Expense	300.00
Religious Worker's Salary	2,000.00
Religious Worker's Rent	480.00
Doctor's Salary (part time)	1,430.00
Lady Worker's Salary	1,430.00
Lady Worker's Salary	1,430.00
Nurse's Salary (part time)	720.00
Janitor's Salary	1,020.00
Gas, Electric and Fuel	500.00
Insurance and License	350.00
Repairing and Decorating	350.00
Medical Supplies, etc.	350.00
Traveling and Services	350.00
Supplies and Equipment	100.00
Printing and Advertising	100.00
General Office Expense	275.00
Total	\$13,785.00

Board of Jewish Missions
Christian Reformed Church
Chicago, Illinois

Jan. 23, 1945

Dear Brethren:

In accordance with your request I have examined the books of your Treasurer, Mr. George Ottenhoff, and found the records in excellent condition and well kept.

The scope of my work consisted of the following:

All receipts were accepted as recorded; since it is impractical to verify all receipts; the principal item is from the Synodical Treasurer, in the sum of \$9,600.

All disbursements were examined and appear to be proper charges.

The cash balance was reconciled with the bank statement as of December 31, 1944.

The investments consisting of U. S. Government Bonds, Federal Savings and Loan Association Stock, Mortgage and Real Estate Contracts were examined, and correspond to the financial report of your Treasurer.

I have made a separation in the receipts and disbursements between regular operating transactions and others, and from this it will appear that your operating disbursements exceeded your receipts by \$1,934.18.

For the mutual protection of your Board, and the Treasurer, I should like to recommend that the Treasurer be bonded in the sum of \$10,000.

Respectfully submitted,

LAMBERT BERE

REPORT OF TREASURER—GENERAL FUND JEWISH MISSIONS

To the Synod of 1945.

ESTEEMED BRETHREN: -

ONCE again we have the pleasure of reporting to your honorable body that the General Fund Christian Reformed Jewish Missions is in very good condition. From the chart of figures in this report it will be observed that our balance at the close of the previous year, January 16, 1944, was \$7,147.19. At the close of this year, January 7, 1945, we have a balance of \$8,162.42. This indicates an advance of \$1,015.23. However, we have also purchased during this past year five U. S. Government Bonds—two of the series G and three of the series F bonds—for a total of \$4,220. This gives us a net advance in our funds during the past year of \$5,235.23. For this we herewith express our gratitude to God for His blessings and under Him we also express our thanksgiving to our people for their loyal support in our efforts to bring the Gospel to the Jews in Chicago and in Paterson.

As the funds were received they were booked; acknowledgments were sent to all classical treasurers in each case, and many messages of appreciation with requests for continued prayerful interest were sent to societies, Mission Unions, and individual donors. Monthly disbursements were made to the Chicago Jewish Mission and to the Paterson Hebrew Mission. This was a pleasure, seeing we were so well provided with the funds from the churches. That our missionaries with their helpers may continue this work for us to the glory of our God. We earnestly bespeak for our cause your continued support both with your prayers and with your gifts.

Of the nineteen classes only one failed to contribute the full quota. And that one failed only by \$0.008 per family. Classis California is again way out ahead in a per family contribution of \$0.934. Next in order of highest amounts given per family were the Classes Kalamazoo, Orange City, Zeeland, Holland, Chicago South, with per family quotas of \$0.81, \$0.79, \$0.79, \$0.79, and \$0.78, respectively. On the over-all average the classes gave \$3,355.82 above the stipulated quota of \$0.57 per family without counting the Canadian churches. This indicates love for this cause of the work of the Church. May the Lord continue to prosper us in this love.

We have no account of the funds received from the Canadian churches during this past year. The Canadian government due to the war does not permit these funds to leave its borders. However, we trust these funds are being received and cared for by the Rev. L. Trap, treasurer for our Canadian churches.

The gifts received from Mission Unions, societies, and individuals amounted to \$1,019.93. We express hearty appreciation for this support

and we trust these children of the Lord will continue their sanctified interest and support. From interest on reserve funds we received \$240.

Kindly remember that the quota for Jewish Missions for the year 1945 is again \$0.57 per family.

Here follows a summary of the figures of our report:

REPORT OF TREASURER—GENERAL FUND JEWISH MISSIONS

Classis	No. of Families	Full Quota	Amount Received	More or less than quota	Rec'd per Family
California	1,039	\$ 592.23	\$ 970.61	\$378.38 more	\$0.934
Chicago North	1,771	1,009.47	1,119.69	119.22 more	.632
Chicago South	1,855	1,057.35	1,454.83	397.48 more	.784
Grand Rapids East.....	2,551	1,454.07	1,604.23	150.16 more	.628
Grand Rapids South....	2,596	1,479.72	1,458.76	79.04 less	.562-
Grand Rapids West.....	1,572	896.04	904.31	8.27 more	.575
Hackensack	876	499.32	614.73	115.41 more	.70
Holland	2,197	1,252.29	1,743.66	491.37 more	.793-
Hudson	1,547	881.79	898.07	16.28 more	.58
Kalamazoo	1,107	630.99	896.61	265.62 more	.81
Minnesota	1,230	701.10	848.09	146.99 more	.69-
Muskegon	2,223	1,267.11	1,654.62	387.51 more	.744
Orange City	929	529.53	738.98	209.45 more	.797-
Ostfriesland	679	387.03	402.95	15.92 more	.593
Pacific	1,325	755.25	758.19	2.94 more	.572
Pella	1,436	818.52	968.57	150.05 more	.681
Sioux Center	1,350	769.50	855.40	85.90 more	.634-
Wisconsin	802	457.04	505.38	46.34 more	.63
Zeeland	1,759	1,002.63	1,399.22	396.59 more	.795-

Totals28,844 \$16,441.08 \$19,796.90

Total receipts from classes.....	\$19,796.90
From societies, Mission Unions, individuals, etc.....	1,019.93
From interest	240.00
Balance on hand Jan. 16, 1944.....	7,147.19

Total of all receipts plus balance.....\$28,204.02

Disbursements:

To Chicago Jewish Mission.....	\$ 9,600.00
To Paterson Hebrew Mission.....	6,100.00
U. S. Bonds.....	4,220.00
Gratuity	100.00
Bond-box, stamps, etc.	21.00
Collection charge .....	.50
Balance in bank Jan. 17, 1945.....	8,162.42

Total disbursements plus balance.....\$28,204.02

In Reserve:

Michael Vanden Berg Bonds.....	\$ 1,000.00
Johanna Woltman legacy.....	500.00
Eleven U. S. Government Bonds.....	10,220.00

Total reserve\$11,720.00

Feb. 24, 1945

Audited and found correct as of close of business Jan. 17, 1945, showing a balance of \$8,162.42. Period from Jan. 16, 1944, to Jan. 17, 1945.

Was signed: Louis M. Bolt.

CHRISTIAN REFORMED JEWISH MISSION,
OREN HOLTROP, Treas.

NATIONAL CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION ANNUAL REPORT

To the Synod of 1945.

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

WHEN the National Christian Association was organized seventy-seven years ago, the founders defined their organization and the purpose of it in these words:

"The National Christian Association is the title of an incorporated association which was organized in the city of Pittsburgh, Pa., in 1868, by representatives of seventeen orthodox denominations. It holds that faith in Jesus Christ is the sole ground of acceptance with God; and that grace received by faith is the sole power of regeneration. It believes, moreover, that Satan is the god of this world and the god of all false religions, and that the lodge system denies Christ and worships Satan.

"Its object is to keep the membership of the churches out of secret organizations for these among other reasons: 1. Because they are declared to be organized on a basis so necessarily broad as to exclude the idea of Christ as the world's only Redeemer. 2. Because they substitute in their claims and in the minds of many of their membership, the secret society for the Christian church. 3. Because of the relation of the obligation of these secret orders to the oaths and decisions of courts."

During the many years of its existence the organization has remained true to this purpose, and God has blessed the efforts put forth to disseminate the light of His Word.

The year 1944 was a prosperous year in many ways. Several new tracts, pamphlets, and books have been added to the ever growing list of publications on sale at the association.

In July John R. Gilpin, editor of the *Baptist Examiner* published a "Frank Exposure of Masonry." The booklet has been termed, "The best of its kind ever published." In September, 1944, Evangelist John R. Rice editor of the *Sword of the Lord*, published three articles on the "Unequal Yoke." Both publications are now on sale at the office of the association.

During 1944 an amazing amount of literature was sent out to parties requesting information of various kinds about the Secret Empire. The war also brought new opportunities of service to the association. Many young men folded hitherto safely in a Christian home and Church now come face to face with lodgism. In a quiet but very effective way lodge men are exerting their influence in the army and army camps. May God bless the efforts of the association.

At present the Board of Directors lists these names: Board of Directors: Rev. B. Essenburg, Rev. H. Hager, Mr. T. P. Kellogg, Rev. A. H. Leaman, Rev. W. Masselink, Mr. G. Ottenhoff, Mr. J. H. Weir and Rev. E. D. Welsh; general officers: Pres. Rev. B. Essenburg; Secy,

Sarah Essenburg; Recording Sec'y, Mrs. J. Phillips; Treas. T. P. Kellogg; Field Sec'y, Rev. A. H. Leaman.

The Rev. B. Essenburg continues to edit the *Christian Cynosure*. He keeps a watchful eye on various publications and judging from letters received at the office his efforts to keep the *Cynosure* readers informed are greatly appreciated.

The Rev. A. H. Leaman continues to serve as Field Secretary. His labors, though often discouraging, are not in vain. Rev. Leaman is happy to fill every speaking engagement requested.

We believe the association is doing a very necessary type of mission work and heartily recommend its continued support by all our churches.

Humbly Submitted,

REV. R. O. DE GROOT, (Reporter)

FINANCIAL REPORT OF THE NATIONAL CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION

May 1, 1943 to April 30, 1944

Receipts

Balance on hand, April 30, 1943		\$1,323.98
Accounts Receivable	\$ 122.89	
Contributions*	2,312.97	
Cynosure Subscriptions†	198.80	
Sale of Books	224.93	
Sale of Tracts	74.43	
Interest Received	595.83	
Investment Treasury	1,124.92	4,654.77
Total		\$5,978.75

Disbursements

Office Expense	\$ 85.10
Office Secretary	862.50
Field Secretary	1,150.00
Insurance	97.50
Printing and Supplies	248.09
Books	76.02
General Expense	87.16
Investment Treasury	1,766.17
Editing Cynosure	60.00
Interest on Annuities	28.00
Building Repairs	139.35
Cynosure Printing	618.16
Postage	80.73
Bell Telephone Co. (phone)	54.51
Commonwealth Edison Co. (light)	13.18
J. B. Cook Auditing Co.	45.00
Bank Service and Exchange	16.86
Balance on hand, May 1st, 1944	550.42
Total	\$5,978.75

Respectfully submitted,

SARAH ESSENBURG, Sec'y

*Of this amount, \$1,833.86 was contributed by 97 churches of the Christian Reformed denomination.

†Ministers of contributing churches and friends who sent in contributions, receive the "Cynosure" complimentary.

REPORT NO. 14

FAITH, PRAYER AND TRACT LEAGUE

To the Synod of 1945.

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

WE TAKE pleasure in reporting that our work, under the blessing of God, is continuing, and by means of our tracts we are reaching an ever larger number of people. In how far these Silent Evangelists have been a blessing, only eternity will reveal. On our part there is the demand to be faithful in sowing the seed, and we are doing all in our power to prepare this seed for those who feel the urge to sow it.

That the number of those who are engaged in tract distribution is increasing from year to year is also borne out by the figures in the accompanying statement, indicating that more than half a million have been sent out. No doubt many of these went to those in the armed forces of our country, and we pray that they may prove to be a real blessing to them.

May we renew our request that Synod commend our work to our people and our churches for their moral and financial support, which has always been deeply appreciated.

The following figures are compiled from our Annual Report, as of August 9, 1944.

Receipts

Balance on hand, August 10, 1943	\$2,216.11
Donations	3,350.36
Membership Fees	29.00
Sale of Tracts	1,811.01
Total	\$7,406.48

Disbursements

Printing	\$1,157.00
Advertising	1,385.58
Postage	230.65
Supplies	32.52
Miscellaneous	347.74
Salary	350.00
Victory Bonds	740.00
Balance on hand, August 9, 1944	3,162.99
Total	\$7,406.48

Tracts sent out this year:

Sold	490,869
Gratis	24,650

Total 515,519

Tracts printed this year	366,000
Total tracts printed	6,715,075

Tract Racks sold	29
Cellophane sheets sold	14,948

Humbly submitted,

REV. S. G. BRONDSEMA, Mgr.

REPORT ON "OUTSIDE" SPEAKERS ADDRESSING SYNOD

To the Synod of 1945.

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

THE SYNOD of 1944 assigned the following mandate to the undersigned, that, "Synod decides to refer the question of the feasibility of limiting the number of 'outside' speakers addressing Synod to the officers of Synod and the Stated Clerk. The committee will report at the next Synod" (Acts of Synod, 1944, art. 65, 167, pages 33, 133).

It is evident that the decision of the Synod of 1944 voices a common complaint that "outside" speakers deprive our Synods of much valuable time. In perusing the Acts of Synod, 1944, a number of Articles record addresses to Synod by Chaplains, mission workers, and representatives from various organizations. (Arts. 22, 62, 63, 64, 100, 116)

In the opinion of your committee the Synod of 1944 could not have expressed as its desire to exclude our own Chaplains and mission workers from addressing Synod. These persons cannot be classified as "outside" speakers. The same must also be stated of representatives of corresponding churches according to a decision of the Synod of 1910. (Acts of Synod, 1910, Art. 12, page 10). By the term "outside" speakers the Synod of 1944 must have had in mind a number of representatives delegated by various other organizations and societies, to address Synod with the specific purpose of obtaining moral and financial support for their respective organizations.

Your committee is of the unanimous opinion that our Synods will be able to save time, if organizations not directly under the supervision of our denomination, seeking moral and financial support, present their requests in writing to the Stated Clerk. Representatives from such organizations should be permitted to address Synod only when a very special reason makes this necessary. Such request should be approved by the Advisory Budget Committee before the speaker can address Synod. The Synod of 1944 laid down stipulations for such organizations in Article 165. (Acts of Synod, 1944, page 108.) The Stated Clerk has informed these organizations of the rule adopted by Synod. The written requests for moral and financial support are usually referred to the Advisory Budget Committee, and this custom also prevailed when representatives appearing in person on the floor of Synod came with similar requests for moral and financial aid.

In view of the above considerations your committee recommends that Synod:

1. Instruct the Stated Clerk to inform all the organizations, appearing under Article 164 of the Acts of Synod, 1944, must make their request for moral and financial support in writing.
2. The Advisory Budget Committee shall consider all such requests and advise Synod.

3. The Advisory Budget Committee shall consider when special reasons prevail to permit an "outside" speaker(s) to address Synod.

Humbly submitted,

G. HOEKSEMA

G. GORIS

R. J. DANHOF

E. J. TANIS

REPORT NO. 16

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE OF SYNOD FOR
SOUTH AMERICA

To the Synod of 1945.

ESTEEMED BRETHERN:

IT IS a grand thing that, at a time when the work of missions is interrupted in many parts of the earth, our denominational work in South America has continued throughout 1944 in a very satisfactory manner.

And if Roman Catholic efforts have been made to secure South America rather exclusively for Rome, we are thankful that Protestant and especially Reformed workers still find a congenial field of labor in this great southern continent.

We appreciate the efforts of all Protestant denominations that have lent a hand in keeping the door of South America open for our Protestant co-workers in the Kingdom.

Among these Protestant denominations we have an especially fortunate position in South America; because our work does not depend upon winning people away from Catholicism. We have our co-religionists there whose Reformed backgrounds go back to the Netherlands and to South Africa. These Hollanders are building an increasing number of settlements in Argentina and Brazil. All their pastors must be subsidized by our denomination now that the Reformed churches in the Netherlands are at present unable to extend a helping hand to small but vigorous congregations and Reformed Dutch mission stations in South America.

Yet we now have good hopes that before another year rolls around, correspondence between Classis Buenos Aires and the Reformed Churches of the Netherlands shall have been resumed. For not only has the Southern part of the Netherlands been liberated, but now toward the first of March, when this report goes to press, we feel justified to expect that the liberation of the Netherlands draws nigh, under the gracious providence of God. And we long for the day when young Dutch citizens from Dutch families in Argentina and Brazil, that have gone to fight for the liberation of the Netherlands shall be able to return to their relatives

and friends, after the cause for which they have risked their lives shall have been won.

No less do we long for the day when the repeated request of Classis Buenos Aires for another ordained worker can be fully met. The members of your committee have interviewed persons that showed an interest in going to South America. We believe that we are making progress in this matter. We have also written to Washington, D. C., to Senator Vanden Berg, who forwarded our inquiry to the State Department, and who sent us an answer from the State Department. The answer amounts to this that at present opportunities for sending out men, whether Protestant or Catholic to South America, are very much limited due to the great number of other passengers that must be transported. But we hope for better days and shall keep on interviewing those that manifest an interest in serving the South American churches and fields involved in our synodical mandate of 1912, touching work among the Reformed Hollanders of South America.

These brethren have been served with word and deed, with advice and with finances.

We may record with gratitude that in one matter of an involved church governmental character, on which the Rev. Wm. Muller sought the advice of our Committee, our Committee did not turn in vain to our professor in Church Government for help. The advice of Dr. Samuel Volbeda received the endorsement of our Committee and was forwarded to the Rev. Wm. Muller of Carambehy, Brazil. Our Committee requested, from the ministers of Classis Buenos Aires, one or more elaborate plans, for one year, concerning work expected of the prospective ministers in the general service of Classis Buenos Aires,—among scattered groups of Reformed Hollanders in Argentina. This work would be analogous to that which we here call home mission work, among our Reformed Hollanders in North America. From the Brethren Sonneveldt, Muller and Pott we received two excellent plans which these brethren unanimously endorse. One of these plans is worked out in such a way that it is adjusted to the possibility that the Rev. A. C. Sonneveldt would combine this work with his two annual trips, of some eight weeks each, to the Reformed Boers of Chubut in Southern Argentina. The other plan is elaborated to meet the possibility that some one else would become a full time "home missionary." Under the circumstances, it is clear that the Rev. A. C. Sonneveldt would be willing to assume this work. We believe he is eminently qualified for it.

Although the Rev. Wm. V. Muller was at one time willing to do such work for one year, if necessary, we believe that both the Rev. W. Muller and the Rev. J. Pott can serve best in organized Reformed congregations in South America yet for some years to come, considering both their inclinations and their aptitudes. On the other hand the Rev. A. C. Sonneveldt has for some years entertained a very favorable attitude toward his doing such work, and, as a man who is known very widely

and very favorably in all these Dutch colonies already for several decades, we believe that he would be just the man for the place.

He is called as the minister of Chubut in Southern Argentina, although he at present also serves Buenos Aires. But at meetings of the Classis, Chubut always delegates Rev. Sonneveldt to the Classis, while Buenos Aires delegates two elders. In other words, the Rev. Sonneveldt's ministerial papers are attached to the congregation of Chubut.

In this respect the plan offered would contemplate no change, if the Rev. A. C. Sonneveldt would become "home missionary." That means also that a call would not be in order, but merely an appointment. For a call would, if accepted, sever the tie between Chubut and Rev. Sonneveldt. And it has become abundantly clear to our Committee by this time that the Rev. A. C. Sonneveldt is very wise in desiring that this tie shall not be severed. Hence he would remain the called minister of Chubut, in any case, whether he served Buenos Aires in addition, as at present, or whether he does the work of home missionary in addition, as contemplated.

From Chubut, Rev. Sonneveldt receives a certain financial stipend which he has reported to our Committee, and it is very small. Both Chubut and Buenos Aires have church buildings. Buenos Aires pays a part of Rev. Sonneveldt's house rent.

The Reformed Churches of the Netherlands used to supply by far the larger part of the salary of the Rev. A. C. Sonneveldt, but since the invasion of the Netherlands our Committee has, with the permission of our Synod, granted subsidy to the brother.

The Synod did not require that this subsidy to the Rev. A. C. Sonneveldt should become a loan to the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands. Nor have the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands assumed responsibility for any such loan. But the Rev. A. C. Sonneveldt suggested that the amount sent to him as subsidy by our churches might be regarded as a loan to the Reformed Churches of the Netherlands, and he has signed receipts for the amounts sent him by our Committee with the indication that he regards these amounts as a loan to the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands, which had subsidized him before the invasion of the Netherlands.

We recognize that our Synodical mandate of 1912 gives us sufficient authority to appoint the Rev. A. C. Sonneveldt as "Predikant in Algemeenen Dienst" (Home Missionary). This Dutch term is the name preferred by Classis Buenos Aires and made official by the Classis. And our Synodical mandate of 1912 gives us sufficient authority to make all financial arrangements that would be necessary, in connection with this work, whether it is to be performed by the Rev. A. C. Sonneveldt or by one of the other laborers in the vineyard of our Lord in Classis Buenos Aires.

Accordingly your Committee plans to make progress in this matter, as soon as possible. This progress will eventually mean that, if Rev.

Sonneveldt should no longer serve the congregation of Buenos Aires, this church would then need another pastor. We have good reasons to believe that Buenos Aires would welcome both the Rev. W. V. Muller and the Rev. Jerry Pott, whichever one would be proposed to this consistory by our Committee. Rev. Muller has served his church longer than Rev. Pott, although this consideration would not be determinative. But as soon as your Committee can send out another ordained man to South America, we feel certain that all other details can be worked out satisfactorily.

We know of no one whom we could send out at present, even if Washington, D. C. would give us the green light promptly in the matter of passports. This being the case, your Committee again states that correspondence and conference is cordially invited from our ordained men and our candidates and our students that look forward to the gospel ministry, in case they wish to consider service in South America.

There are a number of men that are considering this matter, but our Committee cannot report that any one is prepared to be sent out at once. Again we will have to pray the Lord of the harvest that He send out laborers into His harvest.

The Synod of 1944 has authorized your Committee to send out another ordained man to Classis Buenos Aires. In harmony with this authorization, we expect to go forward with this work as soon as possible. We may have to wait until certain students now interested in South America are prepared to go. There is one Junior student in the Seminary and another student in our College that have expressed an interest in South America. We hope to be able to send them out in due time. But Classis Buenos Aires needs men much sooner. The Rev. A. C. Sonneveldt has expressed the hope that this matter may go forward apace in the near future, and Classis Buenos Aires has repeated its request for another ordained man.

As last year, so now again, we have placed a brief notice in our church papers, calling attention to the need of another ordained man for service in one of the congregations of Classis Buenos Aires.

While the work in Argentina will require the use of the Spanish and the Dutch, and the work in Brazil the Dutch and some Portuguese, a new foreign field has come to the attention of your Committee, that requires the English. It would seem that it may be much easier to meet this need, therefore. This field represents a challenge to both young and older ministers, who are invited to contact our Committee, if interested.

This new field represents a considerable body of people of the Reformed faith and of Dutch antecedents. Though they have adopted the English language practically exclusively in their congregational life, they are deeply interested in maintaining the Reformed faith and the Reformed church government.

This field first came to the attention of our denominational Home Missions Board, through a letter addressed to Dr. C. Bouma, and that Board has referred the call for help to our Committee for South America, on the ground that our Committee promotes analogous work in South America. However, this new field is not in South America, but in Ceylon, near India's coral strand. "*The General Consistory of the Dutch Reformed Church in Ceylon*" offers to pay the salary, and transportation and the expense of a furlough transportation every five years.

From the letters of The General Consistory, the following may be quoted: "The stipend offered is Rs. 7200/- per annum, (that is to say, Rs. 4800/- per annum plus an overseas allowance of Rs. 2400/- per annum), approximately £540/-. Free passage to Colombo will be allowed, with furlough and passage home and back every fifth year."

This Consistory seeks "the services of a suitable ordained minister willing to come out to the Dutch Reformed Church in Ceylon under the above conditions of service." The letter of The General Consistory continues as follows: "We would like to point out that the Dutch Reformed Church in Ceylon has had a continuous historical life in Ceylon for over 300 years and dates almost right back to the earliest Dutch occupation of the Island. The main work of the Church is in Colombo where there are five churches with recognized schools attached to each of them. There are also churches in Galle and Matara in the Southern Province of the Island, while Sinhalese Mission work is carried out in the North Central Province and Tamil Mission work in the City of Colombo. The present ministry is entirely locally recruited though some of the ministers have had their training in America. The Consistory feels, however, that it will be in the best interests of the Church to procure the services of a minister from abroad who will, it is hoped, widen the horizons of the congregations and strengthen their connections with the Reformed Church abroad."

Your Committee is well aware that our mandate from Synod limits our work to Dutch people of the Reformed faith in South America. But there is no other committee or Board of Missions of Synod that has a mandate for such work in Ceylon. Even this consideration does not bring the matter within our mandate. However, we agree with the Home Missions Board that we have similar work in foreign lands.

Seeing the Home Missions Board has seen fit to refer this matter to our Committee, we report it to Synod. The correspondence from the Ceylon church is available to Synod, coming from Revd. B. de Kretser, President and C. P. Brohier, Clerk, 142 Baseline Rd., Colombo, Ceylon.

In line with a decision of the Synod of 1944, your Committee decided to give the Rev. and Mrs. Jerry Poff an honorarium for extra work done and extra burdens borne in connection with the Christian school of Tres Arroyos.

The Rev. W. V. Muller has investigated a field of Reformed people of Dutch antecedents in Rio de Janeiro and was given authority to

investigate a similar field in Sac Paulo. Rev. Muller hopes to have another opportunity to spend more time on the field in Rio de Janeiro, which he considers promising. Quite a few Dutch families at Rio were visited of whom half a dozen or more are reported by Rev. Muller to be definitely interested in the Reformed faith and in further ministrations from him.

The basic salary has been raised from \$1,200 to \$1,500 for Rev. Muller and Rv. Pott, in view of the fact that the treasury permits this and that these brethren have made many sacrifices in the past and that various other salaries in our denomination have been raised.

But the rising cost of living is another problem in South America, and to meet it your Committee decided to give Rev. W. V. Muller and Rev. Jerry Pott each a bonus of 20% for 1944 and of 30% for 1945. These percentages are figured on the full salaries including the raise of \$100 after five years of service, and therefore they apply on \$1,600 annually, but not on the children's allowances paid by our treasury, nor on the transportation allowances paid by the South America churches.

Our President, Dr. Henry Beets, has raised for discussion the question whether our denomination should not eventually assume the full financial responsibility for the work in South America, among our Dutch people of Reformed persuasion. The matter was discussed without a motion. The seventy-fifth birthday of our President was celebrated in our Committee, by a brief speech from the Vice-President, Rev. D. D. Bonnema, expressing great appreciation of the advice of our President concerning South America, some of whose fields were visited by him.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- I. Synod continue to support the work in South America with an annual offering of thirty-five cents per family.
- II. The following budget for 1946 is presented for our denominational work in South America, all in United States currency:

Basic Salary, Rev. W. V. Muller	\$1,500.00
Salary Raise, Rev. Muller after five years	100.00
Child's Allowance, Rev. Muller	150.00
Bonus, Rev. Muller, 30 per cent of \$1,600	480.00
Basic Salary, Rev. J. Pott	1,500.00
Salary Raise, Rev. Pott after five years	100.00
Children's Allowance, Rev. Pott	300.00
Bonus, Rev. Pott, 30 per cent of \$1,600	480.00
Subsidy Rev. A. C. Sonneveldt serving Chubut and Buenos Aires	900.00
Basic Salary, another ordained worker	1,500.00
Bonus, this ordained worker, 30 per cent of \$1,500	450.00
Children's Allowance according to schedule and Transportation to South America	1,000.00
Administrative Expense	125.00
Furlough Reserve, and other expenses	250.00
Total	\$8,835.00
Expected from Tres Arroyos for Rev. Pott's Salary	240.00
Total	\$8,595.00

III. Synod take the request of Ceylon under advisement.

Respectfully submitted,

Committee for South America,

HENRY BEETS, Pres.

MARTIN J. WYNGAARDEN, Sec'y and Treas.

DAVID D. BONNEMA, Vice-Pres.

HARRY BLYSTRA,

PETER JONKER.

REPORT NO. 17

PROGRAMS FOR MUTUAL SUPERVISION

To the Synod of 1945.

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

THE Committee on *Programs for Mutual Supervision*, appointed by the Synod of 1944, is not required to report until 1946 according to the decision of Synod pertaining to special committees (cf. Acts 1936, p. 132). However, the Committee believes that it can serve Synod best by suggesting to the intervening Synod of 1945 to reconsider its mandate to the Committee—if it so desire, in the light of the Committee's preliminary studies herewith submitted.

The mandate of the Committee, and the overture which gave rise to this mandate, are found in the Acts of 1944, p. 29. The overture calls attention to it that almost all the questions under Article 41 are asked both at classical meetings and also in church visiting. The overture says that the psychological effect of asking these questions three or four times annually is harmful. It calls attention also to *censura morum* which, in addition, is conducted four times annually within the Consistory.

The mandate of Synod calls upon the Committee to "make a comparative study of our present programs for mutual supervision as these are contained in the Acts of Synod 1942, Art. 110, p. 111 (Art. 41 C. O.), and the Acts of Synod, 1922, Art. 40, pp. 79, 249-253 (Ch. Vis.), and to attempt to integrate them in such a way that unnecessary duplication be avoided and each cover its own field."

The Committee has difficulty, particularly, with the last phrase that "each cover its own field." In so far as the contents is concerned of the questions of Art. 41 and those of church visiting, the Committee believes that history shows that there is no distinction, and that these two have been duplicates from the start. The Committee feels also that its way is blocked by recent decisions of Synod, should the Committee come with a proposal departing from the line of history as to the content and the use to be made of these questions.

HISTORY AS TO THE QUESTIONS OF ARTICLE 41

Historically the questions of Art. 41 are four in number and they concern the following matters: the holding of Consistory meetings, the exercise of discipline, the care of the poor and the school, and the need of the help or the advice of Classis. These date from 1581 on, and they were adopted in that year in the Netherlands by the Synod of Middelburg. They were in use in fact for ten years previous to that date but were accompanied during that decade by two additional questions as to heretics and doubts as to main doctrines. The above historic four questions were adopted also by the National Synod of Dort, 1618, 1619, and remained in use for hundreds of years. Upon the secession of 1834, the Reformed churches continued to use them, and they are the four questions of Art. 41 used by the Reformed Churches of the Netherlands to this date. In America they were similarly used in our Christian Reformed Church from the year of its organization in 1857 to 1930. In the latter year a slight change was introduced that increased the number to five questions by splitting the question as to the care of the poor and the schools. Against this background we should view the great change that was introduced by our Synod in 1942 when the number of questions was more than doubled by increasing them from five to eleven. And by this increase the duplication between the questions of Art. 41 and those of church visiting was also doubled. If one have regard to history, one may therefore with reason ask whether we were moving in the right direction when we decided as we did in 1942.

HISTORY AS TO THE RULES FOR CHURCH VISITING

Our Rules for Church Visiting have the dignity of almost as great an age as the original four questions of Art. 41. The earliest edition of our present Rules was made as far back as 1621 in the Netherlands by the provincial Synod of South Holland but was never adopted by a national Synod. It was revised in 1724. Five of our present questions under Art. 41 were already in that set of 1621 and one of them dates from 1724. Upon the secession of 1834 in the Netherlands, the secession churches used that set of 1724 which by them was subjected to a revision in 1882. Since 1893 The Reformed Churches in the Netherlands leave to the discretion of the Classes what set of rules they wish to follow. Our Christian Reformed Church in America, upon its organization in 1857, used the set of 1724 and after 1884 the Netherlands revised set of 1882. Our Church slightly augmented it in 1912 and 1922, and also translated it into the English language in the latter year.

ANALYSIS OF PRESENT QUESTIONS OF ARTICLE 41

To what extent the eleven questions under Art. 41 are a duplication of the questions asked in church visiting, and to what extent these belong to those respective fields in the light of history, appears from the

following analysis. The questions are numbered as they appear in the list adopted in 1942.

1. *Whether Consistory meetings are held regularly*
3. *Whether discipline is exercised faithfully*
5. *Whether deacons discharge their office faithfully*
6. *Whether the schools are cared for*
11. *Whether the help or the advice of Classis is needed.*

These five questions in substance have ever belonged to Art. 41—ever since 1571. (In question 5 the deacon's office is substituted for the care of the poor.)

The first four of these questions have, however, always belonged also to the rules for church visiting—question 1 ever since 1724; and questions 3, 5, and 6 ever since 1621.

In the past, when church visiting was carried on annually rather than biennially, and when classes met four or more times annually rather than two or three times, these questions were asked about twice as often as they are now.

As to question 11, about the help or the advice of Classis, though there is no duplication involved, it may well be asked whether its retention can be justified. Classes as far back as 1912 have overtured Synod to delete this question because it serves no purpose since it has become customary to enter the instructions on the credentials.

7. *Whether Kingdom causes are faithfully supported*
8. *Whether separation from the world is promoted*
9. *Whether there are non-resident members to report.*

Question 7, about supporting Kingdom causes, finds its counterpart in the present Rules for Church Visiting. In so far as history goes, it belongs neither to the field of church visiting nor to that of Art. 41. Without difficulty therefore, it could be assigned to either the one or the other if its repetition should be deemed inadvisable.

Question 8, about separation from the world, is a phase of question 3, about faithful exercise of discipline. In that sense it is duplicated in the Rules for Church Visiting, and in those Rules goes back to 1621. However, the duplication in this case is not sufficiently evident to be irksome.

Question 9, about non-resident members, is not duplicated in the Rules for Church Visiting, but it no doubt ought to be. From a practical point of view, if it were really carried out everywhere, it would prove to be one of the very finest rules we have. Steps ought to be taken to make this rule effective.

2. *Whether the Word and the Sacraments are administered faithfully*
4. *Whether the elders discharge their office faithfully*
10. *Whether the task of evangelization is attended to.*

These three questions are duplicated in the Rules for Church Visiting; and in those Rules the questions 2 and 4, about the faithfulness of pastors and elders, go back as far as the year 1621. These therefore, in so far as history goes, belong properly to the field of church visiting. That is evident also from Art. 44 of the Church Order of 1618, 1619, wherein it is assigned as the task of the church visitors "to take heed whether the minister and the consistory faithfully perform the duties of their office, and adhere to sound doctrine."

As to question 10, the same can be said as is said above of question 7, namely, that it may without difficulty be assigned to either the field of Art. 41 or to that of Church visiting.

The special committee, in connection with Art. 41, did not propose these three questions to Synod in 1942. These were proposed *only* by the advisory committee on the matter in 1942, and forthwith adopted by the Synod of that year. (Question 5, wherein the emphasis was transferred from the poor to the office of deacon, also was the work of that advisory committee only, and not that of the special committee.)

The present Committee believes that Synod will appreciate its difficulty in view of the argument of history, to integrate the questions of Art. 41 and those of church visiting so that "each covers its own field," seeing that there was duplication from the start.

And we call again attention to this that the increase of the questions of Art. 41 in 1942, from 5 to 11, doubled the amount of duplication. Formerly there were four questions that were duplicated at classical meetings and in church visiting; now there are eight.

RECENT DECISIONS AS TO ARTICLE 41 AND CHURCH VISITING

To eliminate some of the duplication that now exists the Committee could possibly propose that the steps be retraced which were taken in 1942 when the questions of Art. 41 were increased from 5 to 11. But Synod might not feel for such a proposal since that decision is of so recent date. Moreover, the following year it was decided "we do not deem it desirable to reformulate the questions which have just been adopted at the previous Synod" (Acts 1943, p. 131).

If the Committee should propose a different method of church visiting, involving a different set of rules, Synod might well reply that this has already been considered and the idea rejected as recently as 1936 (Acts 1936, pp. 122, 123; cf. Agenda 1936, pp. 538-548).

In 1943 the slight change was proposed to add in Art. 44 of the Church Order to the words "once a year" the phrase "or once every two years" on the basis that the questions of Art. 41, as now revised, "covers the same ground as the questions asked by the church visitors." Synod refused to accede to this request on the grounds: "(1) our church fathers did not think it superfluous to have both church visiting and Art. 41; (2) the difference between church visiting and Art. 41 is adequate to warrant continuance of both" (Acts 1943, p. 132). And the

year previously Synod declared, as to the significance of the questions of Art. 41, "an inquiry on the part of Classis into the spiritual state of the several congregations constitutes the central and principal task of Classis" (Acts 1942, p. 110).

By these decisions the Committee is also warned against making any proposal affecting the number of times the questions are asked either in church visiting or at classical meetings.

SUGGESTIVE REMARKS

The effectiveness of *censura morum* would likely be considerably enhanced if it were conducted at a time apart from the Lord's Supper. The rather minor influence of *censura morum* lies not a little in this that rather generally there is an erroneous and somewhat naive conception as to what it stands for; and this in turn is not a little due to the rule that it must take place before the Lord's Supper. That *censura morum* must take place before the Lord's Supper is stated in Article 81 of our Church Order but not in the original Article of the Synod of Dort, 1618, 1619, nor in the present Church Order of the Reformed Churches of the Netherlands.

If the questions of Art. 41 are asked by the questionnaire method, the danger that this be done in a perfunctory way could be largely avoided if the signature of all the members of the Consistory were required.

When the supervision of Classis is done through a committee studying the questionnaires, it may with reason be asked whether this answers, historically considered, to the purpose of the questions of Art. 41, and to the decision of 1942 that this inquiry "constitutes the central and principal task of Classis."

There is a difference between the supervision of Classis as conducted at its meeting, and that done by church visitors, as to the place, as to the method, as to the possible thoroughness, as to the number of persons examining, and as to the general atmosphere.

Church visiting is conducted today in a very superficial way as compared to the manner in which it was conducted in the not recent past.

When church visiting is carried on, as is the custom, by granting an hour or so for each visit, which must necessarily be terminated in order to meet the next consistory, that method defeats the very purpose of church visiting. Church visiting should not be done under such compulsion of the time element.

The supervision that can be exercised in the way of church visiting *can be made* to be tremendously effective.

As to methods of church supervision it should be borne in mind that *no method is better than its administrators*. The great need today is not a better method but better administrators.

May the King of the Church guide the brethren assembled in Synod in their deliberations upon the material of this report and no less in all the other matters that come before them.

I. D. COUWENHOVEN

J. L. SCHAUER

J. O. SCHURING

REPORT NO. 18

THE YOUTH COMMITTEE

To the Synod of 1945.

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

THE Youth Committee was called into being by action of the Synod of 1943 (See Article 59, Agenda 1943) in response to the recommendation of a Synodical study committee on youth organizations. This youth committee, to consist of six members, two representing Synod, two the A. F. R. Y. M. S., and two the A. F. R. Y. W. S., was charged with these three duties:

1. To seek the coöperation of our educational institutions and of our church press in a greater concern for our youth and their organizations.
2. To develop the means by which the ideal of a united youth movement could be realized.
3. To devise ways by which the youth organizations can be made more effective.

4. To report to each Synod.

The committee has the following report to make:

I. In regard to its first task,

A. The editors of our church papers had their attention called to the decision of Synod. They were thanked for their interest in and support of youth organizations and their continued interest was solicited. The editors are to be commended for their timely editorials pertaining to the activities of our youth.

B. The educational institutions were asked to give attention to the need for training in leadership for our youth organizations.

1. The authorities at Calvin College met with the youth committee and presented a number of reasons why they did not deem it feasible to attempt a separate course in Christian Leadership:

- a. The general college student is not interested in such training.
- b. The program for teacher-training is already filled with courses required by the state for certification.
- c. For pre-seminary students it would fall in the already crowded program in educational psychology.
- d. Such leadership is the result of natural ability rather than training.

2. The committee on Educational Policy at Calvin College did however wish to acknowledge its obligation to train Christian leaders and promised to make this responsibility a more conscious part of its program.

3. The faculty of Calvin Seminary is of the opinion that youth organizations are not ecclesiastical matters and hence do not come within the scope of Practical Theology.

4. The Reformed Bible Institute reported that it has a course in practical church work and one in leadership for laymen in which the matter of leading the youth organizations is considered. It hopes to make these courses available to all by correspondence.

5. The training course given under the direction of some of the classes do not concern themselves with youth organizations.

II. In regard to its second task, that of promoting the United Youth Movement:

The committee recognizes the difficulty of dividing responsibility for the youth organizations between an autonomous federation board and an ecclesiastical governing body. Yet at the same time it realizes that the spiritual welfare of the youth of the Christian Reformed Church is of such paramount importance that every responsible group and individual should give their prayers and their labors in behalf of their needs. The committee believes that the problems facing our youth will be even more acute after the war is over. The organizations now working need the wholehearted support and coöperation of every minister and every consistency in the denomination.

The committee recommends the following:

A. The appointment of a committee to effect a coöperative program in facing the problems of our youth.

B. The coördinated program within the Christian Reformed Church shall be called the United Youth Movement.

C. The committee on direction shall be known as the United Youth Committee. It shall consist of six members, two selected from and by the board of the A. F. R. Y. M. S., two from the A. F. R. Y. W. S., and two, one man and one woman, to be appointed by the Synod. The term of office shall be two years with all members eligible for reappointment.

D. The committee is to meet quarterly, or oftener if necessary, to discuss and act upon matters pertaining to the welfare of the Christian Reformed young people, their organizations and their publications. The committee shall have advisory power in matters pertaining to the specific affairs of the two existing federations, guarding carefully that these organizations do not overstep their bounds or instigate erroneous policies or principles. Together with the federations it shall seek to arouse interest among all the young people of the denomination in Christian Reformed youth activities.

E. The committee is to make an annual report to Synod.

III. In regard to its third task, that of making the youth organizations more effective, the committee believes the effecting of this machinery for coöperation will be a step toward making the youth organizations more effective and will insure continued concern about their needs as they arise.

The Youth Committee:

REV. CORNELIUS WITT, Chairman
MR. NICK HENDRIKSE
MISS JOHANNA TIMMER
MISS DENA KUIPER
MR. RICHARD POSTMA
MR. CLARENCE DE GRAAF, Secretary

REPORT NO. 19

COMMITTEE TO STUDY THE EXAMINATIONS REQUIRED
OF SUCH AS DESIRE TO ENTER THE MINISTRY

To the Synod of 1945.

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

THE committee to study the examinations required of such as desire to enter the ministry, begs to report to Synod:

1. That it has taken note of the decision of the Synod of 1944, Acts, Article 35, page 15.
2. That the committee has labored on a report to Synod but has not succeeded in attaining unanimity in respect to certain important phases of its work and problems connected with this subject.
3. That the committee has been hampered in its work, since it has not been able to meet together—which is in part due to the exigencies of the times—and was compelled to confer by way of correspondence.
4. That if Synod should see fit to continue the committee, it plans to meet as soon after Synod as is feasible, and expects to have its report ready for the Synod of 1946.

Humbly submitted,

E. F. J. VAN HALSEMA
N. J. MONSMA, Sec'y
J. BEEBE
S. VOLBEDA

OVERTURES

DIVORCE

To the Synod of 1945.

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

I The consistory of the First Christian Reformed Church of Cicero, Illinois, has given earnest and prayerful consideration to the decision of the last Synod, in support of a protest of four of our members, refusing membership to two divorced and remarried parties. (See Acts 1944, p. 57, ff.)

The consistory is unanimously of the opinion that this decision of the last Synod is contrary to Scripture, and hence does a grave injustice to two penitent and believing sinners. Hence we feel constrained by conscience to overture Synod 1945 to rescind the action of the previous Synod, and the decisions of former Synods upon which it is based, and to approve the decision of our consistory to admit these parties to membership in our church and to the communion of the sacrament of the Lord's table.

A. *Brief history.*

The two parties involved. We shall call them Mr. A and Mrs. A. We give only the bare facts that bear on the fundamental question involved, namely, the remarriage rights and admission or non-admission of the *guilty* parties in divorce cases. A fuller history of the case is appended to this overture for Synod's inspection.

1. Mr. A was divorced by his first wife on the ground of adultery (uncontested). Later he married Mrs. A, and afterwards his first wife married again.

2. Mrs. A divorced her first husband on the grounds of repeated cruelty. She later married Mr. A and rather recently her first husband married again.

3. Both parties are therefore the guilty parties, Mr. A through adultery before divorce, Mrs. A through her act of contracting a second marriage after un-Scriptural divorce.

4. Both parties have confessed their sins, have convinced our whole consistory of their sincere sorrow and continue to love our church and worship with us, even after the painful disappointment of Synod's decision to refuse them membership, though our consistory had decided to admit them and was upheld by Classis Chicago North.

As already stated, the consistory in this overture, requests Synod 1945 to rescind the action of the previous Synod. However, our *first* request is not to rescind 1944, but to rescind 1890 and 1908. We readily admit that the action of 1944 may have been technically correct, since 1890 and 1908 had never, in a formal technical way, been repealed. However

we cannot but feel that, aside from the question of technical correctness the labors of the previous Synod were far from satisfactory.

Consider, for instance, the strange procedure that the Synodical decisions appealed to by a few protestants were printed in full in the report of the advisory committee to Synod. But the Synodical decisions on which a *whole classis and a consistory* based their action were, yes, referred to with a few words, but not printed. The result was, of course, that the Synodical decisions that seemed to give support to the protestants were constantly before the eyes of all the delegates, but the Synodical decisions that justified the consistory and classis did not stand out, and were easily lost sight of.

But the greatest mistake made by the advisory committee, and therefore by Synod, was this, that the *problem* created by the conflict between 1890-1908 and 1936 was not courageously faced. Yet that conflict is plain and undeniable. 1890 and 1908 both take the position that adultery on the part of one party to a marriage frees and gives re-marriage rights to the innocent party, but the *guilty party is not free*. He may not marry again. If he does, he lives in adultery, and cannot be admitted to the church.

1936, on the other hand, held, in what has become known as the Alpine Avenue Case, that "if to the satisfaction of the Consistory this person confesses his sins of unbiblical divorce and adulterous remarriage, and manifests true godliness in his life, he may be admitted to membership in our Church" (Acts 1936, p. 145).

In other words, the *guilty party* could be and *was* admitted to the church.

Here you have a plain, direct and undeniable conflict. And Synod 1944 does not face the problem created by this conflict. And this weakness of Synod's work is all the more regrettable in view of the fact that the decisions to which it appeals were taken, as far as any official records show, *without a thorough Scriptural* study of the important questions involved. But Synod 1936 decided as it did after some twenty years of exhaustive study by a very able committee. And the action taken by 1936 was in conformity with the advice asked and received of the Synod of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands.

Small wonder indeed that our consistory, after a renewed study of the question, is convinced that the decision of 1944 is in conflict with Scripture. And surely all will agree that Synod 1945 must courageously face this conflict, and consciously and intelligently choose between the two positions *on the basis of thorough Scriptural study*. Then, and then alone, can we expect unity and peace in the church.

One more remark before presenting our two-fold request with proper grounds and reasons. In our first request, we ask for the rescinding of both 1890 and 1908. In other words, we join them together instead of keeping them separate. The reason is that 1908 is really nothing but an attempt to interpret and amplify 1890. Of the reasons or grounds

adduced by us as basis for rescinding, some will refer particularly to the language of 1890, or the reasoning of 1908. But the fundamental position is the *same*.

It is this, that the guilty party is *not free*, while the innocent party is. That is the very core and heart of both 1890 and 1908. Therefore both decisions stand or fall together, and therefore we have joined them together in one request to rescind both.

B. The consistory of the First Christian Reformed Church of Cicero herewith overtures Synod to rescind the decisions of 1890 (Acts, p. 24, Art. 66), and 1908 (Acts, p. 39, Art. 54) reading as follows:

“Een andere vraag uit het agendum komt aan de orde: Mag een man van wien de vrouw zich wettig liet scheiden omdat hij overspel bedreef, ingeval hij bij het leven zijner eerste vrouw weer in het huwelijk treedt, lid der gemeente zijn? De Synode antwoordt ontkennend.”

“En dan komt het ons voor, dat zulk een man geen lid der gemeente kan zijn, omdat zijn overspel wel zijn beleedigde vrouw heeft vrijgemaakt, maar niet hem. Hij bleef desniettemin voor God aan die vrouw gebonden, en zijn tweede huwelijk is mitsdien een leven in overspel. Ware dit niet zoo, dan stond voor ieder de weg open, om door overspel zich van zijn wettige vrouw te bevrijden, en een andere die het voorwerp is van een overspelige begeerte, te huwen, en toch in vrede met de Kerk te blijven, door nadat alles met goddeloos opzet geschied was, door een openbare belijdenis zich met de Kerk te verzoenen. De spits van de Goddelijke ordinantie: Wie zijn vrouw verlaat anders dan om hoererij, die doet overspel, ware dan afgebroken; zij ware van haar kracht beroofd. Er zou naar de wijze der Schriftgeleerden een weg gevonden zijn om Gods gebod te ontduiken, en een besluit, dat zoo iemand wel lid der Gemeente zou kunnen zijn, zou het karakter dragen van een instelling, waardoor Gods gebod krachteloos werd gemaakt.”

Grounds:

1. This position is in conflict with Scripture. Matthew 19:9: “And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: And whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery.”

The main thought is very plain. If a wife is put away for minor reasons (not fornication) two things follow: (1) if the man remarries he commits adultery; (2) if someone marries the woman, *he also* commits adultery. And the reason for the adultery in each case can only be this, that the first marriage was still binding in God's sight for both man and wife.

However, there is an exception: “except for fornication.” *Then*, if namely the divorce is on the ground of fornication, *then* the two statements made do not hold. Then the man, if he marries another, does *not* commit adultery, and then, *if* someone marries the woman, *he* does not commit adultery. *But*, this latter man *would* commit adultery, if she, the guilty party, were still *bound* by the first marriage. Therefore she, the guilty party, is not bound. The first marriage is evidently broken for both, for it is legitimately broken, broken before God, on a ground Jesus recognizes (fornication).

This point, which decides the whole question before Synod, the point namely of the breaking of the tie for *both parties* if it is broken on the

ground of adultery, is established most convincingly by Matthew 5:32: "But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery." Here the re-marriage of the innocent party in legitimate divorce is not referred to, only the remarriage of the *guilty party*. And Jesus teaches (a) if the woman is put away for a minor cause (not fornication) then the husband maketh her an adulteress (that is, is responsible for her seeking the fellowship and protection of another husband and by marrying him committing adultery) and whoever marries her also commits adultery; for she was still before God the wife of the first husband. *But* there is an exception "saving for the cause of fornication." Then the statements made do not hold. Then he does not make her an adulteress, and the man that marries her does not commit adultery. In other words, that guilty party is no longer bound to her first husband. For the first marriage is broken, broken for both parties.

The consistory of First Cicero calls Synod's attention to the fact that both 1890 and 1908 are in conflict with this plain teaching of Jesus, and therefore we ask that they be rescinded.

Before proceeding to give secondary reasons why 1890 and 1908 should be rescinded we must make two remarks.

The position the consistory takes on this question is, we believe, supported by the teachings of men who have made it their special task in the past, to give careful exegesis of the Word of God. See Report of Committee on Divorce; Agenda 1934, Part II, especially pages 243 to 247, and pages 251 and 252. Report signed by Prof. L. Berkhof, Rev. W. P. Van Wyk, Rev. H. Keegstra, Prof. D. H. Kromminga, Prof. H. Schultze, Rev. G. Hoeksema. We quote from page 252:

"This passage refers, of course, to the re-marriage of a divorced party guilty of adultery *before* divorce. And our problem concerns the party that commits adultery by marrying again after illegitimate divorce. But the principle, it will be agreed, is the same in both cases. It is the principle that a marriage that is dissolved because of adultery binds neither the guilty nor the innocent. It cannot, because having been dissolved on grounds that Scripture recognizes it has ceased to exist."

Secondly, the opposite view, since it contradicts Scripture, inevitably leads to all kinds of absurd and impossible and even dangerous positions. We here briefly enumerate a few of these absurdities, as secondary, though important grounds for the request to rescind 1890 and 1908.

1. The position of 1890 and 1908 stands condemned before the bar of sound logic and ordinary common sense. It simply *cannot* be true that one party to a former marriage (the guilty party) is still bound, while the other party is free. If one is still bound by the marriage, *then it still exists*. Then it must and does bind both parties. On the other hand, if one party is free, then he or she is *no longer married*. But that means that the marriage is broken. And if it is, it of course no longer

binds the other party. We ask in all earnestness, does the Christian Reformed Church desire any longer to give Synodical support to the manifest absurdity that a woman (innocent party) is no longer married to her husband, but her husband is still married to her, or vice versa?

2. The statement of 1908 that "his adultery did free his wife, but not him" is not true and is even dangerous. His act of adultery did *not* free her of the marriage tie, nor give her the freedom to marry again. After he had committed this sin, *they were still married*. Had she married another, merely on the basis of his adultery, she would have made herself guilty of bigamy.

She could and did gain her freedom and re-marriage rights only by procuring a divorce on Biblical grounds—in other words, by breaking the tie. His adultery did not of *itself* give her her freedom.

And the fallacy that it *did* is largely responsible for the whole false view that the innocent may marry again, but not the guilty. For if the adultery of the one gives freedom to the other, the conclusion is at hand that the adulterer does not free himself. But as soon as it is recognized that the adultery of the one party *does not of itself free either party*, that only the breaking of the tie gives freedom, the whole fallacy: one party is free, but the other is bound, falls to the ground. For if the tie is broken, neither is married to the other, and therefore remarriage for either cannot be a living in adultery. And as we have shown above, *that is the teaching of Jesus*.

3. The reasoning of 1908 that to admit such guilty parties would make the command of God of none effect is utterly false. The commands of Christ are fully upheld by the church of Christ if (a) the sin is condemned, (b) the guilty are refused admission except they repent. This is true of the command not to commit adultery, just as it is of the prohibition against drunkenness, stealing, and every other sin.

4. To say as 1908 reasons: we must uphold the commands of Christ by refusing admission to the guilty, regardless of their penitence, is a *denial of the gospel*. If the church must do that in the case of one sin (adultery) it must do it in the case of every other sin. Then the church must close its doors, for the very heart of its task is to call sinners to repentance and to offer salvation to *all penitent sinners*, whatever the nature of their sin.

The consistory of Cicero I feels very deeply on this point. That is one of the most regrettable consequences of getting away from the plain teachings of Christ on this question. The result is that there is one class of sinner, the adulter who remarries, for whom we have no gospel, no message of hope. *He is out*, not because of present sins, but because of his past sins, even though he is deeply penitent. And thus our preaching and our singing: "Though your sins be as scarlet they shall be as white as snow" offer no hope to them, and become a mockery of grieving sinners seeking peace for their souls.

And nothing can give them hope, except some poor little sinful mortal (former partner or present partner) dies. Then they can be admitted. What a travesty of the precious gospel. Not the atoning death of the Son of God, with its abounding power to save all penitent sinners, but the death of some poor sinner, the only door of hope.

In the expectation that 1890 and 1908 will be rescinded

C. the consistory of Cicero I further requests Synod to rescind the decision of 1944 (Acts, p. 59), not to admit two parties guilty of "divorce and adulterous remarriage as members of one of our churches"; and to advise that these parties be admitted by our consistory to the full communion of our church.

Grounds:

1. There is no basis for this decision in our synodical rules apart from the (rescinded) decisions of 1890 and 1908.

2. The action refusing membership to these parties is contrary to Scripture. Scripture promises forgiveness and the fellowship of Christ and His church to all penitent sinners.

Our whole consistory is convinced that these parties are sincerely penitent. That judgment of the local consistory must be honored, except proof be furnished that there is little or no evidence of penitence (in other words, that the consistory erred in judgment) or that the parties are today living in sin. But the charge that they are living in adultery as man and wife is not supported by any Scriptural proof, and is condemned and refuted by the teaching of our Lord in Matthew 5:32 and Matthew 19:9.

3. The decision to refuse them membership is in conflict with the precedent set in the Alpine Avenue Case (see Acts 1936, p. 145).

"if to the satisfaction of the Consistory this person confesses his sins of un-biblical divorce and adulterous remarriage, and manifests true godliness in his life, he may be admitted to membership in our Church."

This action involves principles, and the *acceptance* of certain principles by our church, even though it was technically a decision on a concrete case. The *principle* was approved that parties to a marriage who make themselves guilty of un-Biblical divorce and adulterous remarriage (the guilty parties) can be received into the church, if to the satisfaction of the local consistory such persons confess their sins of an un-Biblical divorce and adulterous remarriage, and if they manifest true godliness in their life. Now *that* is precisely the marriage and divorce status of these two parties who seek membership in our church. The fundamental principles involved are precisely the same as in the Alpine Avenue Case. In both instances the question is: may parties guilty of un-Biblical divorce and adulterous remarriage, be admitted upon confession? Synod 1936 said, yes. It thereby opened the door to all penitent sinners of that class, and virtually repealed 1890 and 1908.

And no other pertinent factors enter into this case that would distinguish it from the Alpine Avenue Case. Even if it were true and proved that these two parties were in the past exceptionally great and even deliberate sinners (see Acts 1944, p. 61, top of page), this could not bar them from the church if they sincerely repent. Did not David *deliberately* take another man's wife, and deliberately plot the death of the woman's husband? And was he not forgiven, even though chastised?

We preach, do we not, a gospel of forgiveness for all penitent sinners, small and great and *exceptionally great*? And we are confident that Synod 1945 will not permit the sinful past of these two parties to obscure the simple fact, that as to all fundamental principles involved the Cicero I case is identical with the Alpine Avenue Case. And therefore the precedent set in the latter case fully justifies and demands the admission of these two parties.

4. The unity of the church demands that these parties be admitted. There can be happy Christian fellowship and mutual trust and confidence between the various churches of our denomination, only if the same fundamental rules regarding admission or exclusion of members are applied without favoritism in all the churches. As matters stand at present, *we may not*, to quote the language of Synod 1936, "admit to membership a person (or in this case, two persons) who confess their sins of un-Biblical divorce and adulterous remarriage, and manifest true godliness in life." Alpine Avenue has been advised by Synod to *admit such a party*.

The consistory of Cicero I respectfully requests that this injustice be removed. Else our Christian Reformed Church is no longer an ecclesiastical unity in its application of discipline.

5. The spiritual and eternal welfare of these parties demands that the injustice done them by the last Synod be removed. They long for and need the inspiration and comfort of Holy Communion. It is, we believe, a beautiful manifestation of the grace of God that they continue to seek and desire our Christian Reformed Church fellowship even after the stigma placed on them by Synod. But to continue to deny them the fellowship they desire, would be in our firm opinion, contrary to Scripture and the gospel of Him who came, not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. These two parties, man and wife, humbly confessing their sinful past, have heard that call and given their hearts to Jesus as their Savior and Lord. And the consistory of Cicero I longs and prays for the time that there will be joy over their repentance in the church here on earth, as we believe there is joy among the angels in heaven.

Respectfully submitted,

The Consistory of the First Christian
Reformed Church of Cicero, Illinois

< Blank Page >

HIGHER SALARIES OF MINISTERS

To the Synod of 1945.

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

2 Classis Grand Rapids West respectfully overtures Synod to grant more liberal subsidies to needy churches, so that the minimum salary of the ministers of these churches shall be eighteen hundred dollars (\$1800.00) per annum.

Reasons:

1. In many cases the salaries paid to ministers of subsidized churches is inadequate to meet the present high cost of living.

2. As a denomination we are committed to the Reformed principle that ministers must be provided with the means for a good living. This is expressed in the words of every letter of call as follows, "Convinced that the laborer is worthy of his hire, and to encourage you in the discharge of your duties, and to free you from all worldly cares and avocations while you dispense spiritual blessings to us, we promise to pay you the sum of dollars." It is also expressed in the question addressed to every Consistory in Church Visitation, "Does he (the minister) receive a sufficient income proportionate to the needs of a well-ordered family?"

3. In the face of the pitifully small salaries paid to some of our ministers, the reiteration of the foregoing high standards of our Reformed fathers threatens to become mere mockery.

4. Insufficient salaries have resulted in some denominations of our land in the sad situation that the best talent shies away from the ministry and third and fourth rate men occupy the pulpit. Our Reformed fathers took their stand to prevent such tragic deterioration of the ministry. If Synod will set the pace in honoring those standards mentioned above by providing sufficient subsidies for adequate salaries it will do its part in maintaining the high standards which have always been characteristic of Reformed churches and which are not sufficiently honored among us today.

Respectfully submitted,

A. PERSENAIRE, S. C.

PUBLISHING AGENDA

To the Synod of 1945.

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

3 Classis Minnesota hereby expresses its dissatisfaction with the decision of Synod of 1944, p. 110, Art. 110 B. in re publishing of the agenda for Synod not later than April 1.

Ground:

This method does not allow time for discussions of matters demanding Synodical action either in the Church papers nor in Classical assemblies especially in the Mid-West and on the Pacific Coast.

< Blank Page >

We humbly petition Synod to correct this matter by arranging for the publication of the Synodical Agenda, and especially the Reports of Committees of Preadvice, allowing ample time for discussions in Church papers and on the floor of our Classical assemblies before Synod convenes and acts upon the agenda.

Done in Classis Minnesota, meeting at Prinsburg, Minnesota, on the 21st day of February, 1945.

G. A. LYZENGA, S. C.

SYNODICAL EXAMINERS

To the Synod of 1945.

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

4 Classis Pella overtures Synod that Article 4 of the Church Order be so revised as to eliminate the requirement of having three Synodical Examiners present from the neighboring Classes in the examination of a candidate for the ministry *if such a candidate has already been examined by Synod.*

We submit the following reasons for our overture:

1. We believe the required presence of the Synodical delegates *ad examina* at the Classical examinations to be superfluous and unnecessary because Synod has already passed on the fitness of the candidates and declared them to be eligible for the ministry. In 1944 Synod by ballot certified candidates for the ministry and in name of Synod the President extended "heartly congratulations, wishing the candidates a fruitful and blessed ministry in the Christian Reformed Church, to adorn their personal life with honor, to rejoice with them that do rejoice, and to weep with them that weep, and to preach the unsearchable riches of Jesus Christ" (Acts of 1944, Articles 27 to 29, pages 12 and 13).

2. We believe it has become evident that the work of the examiners is so perfunctory in character that it neither warrants the time devoted nor the money expended in these engagements, when Seminary graduates have already been examined and declared eligible for the ministry. This is especially true when the neighboring Classes are very remote from the examining Classis and a week is required to travel back and forth. When these examinations occur in the month of September it has been experienced that they interfere with the catechism schedule, the beginning of which we believe should not be postponed.

E. H. OOSTENDORP, S. C.

< Blank Page >

TREASURERS' REPORTS

To the Synod of 1945.

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

5 Classis Pella overtures Synod to have the respective Classes instruct their Classical Treasurers to report only Classically and Synodically approved funds in our yearbook, the official publication of our Christian Reformed denomination.

Ground:

This would produce greater uniformity in reporting the financial status of the respective churches.

E. H. OOSTENDORP, S. C.

MINISTERS IN NON-ECCLESIASTICAL INSTITUTIONS

To the Synod of 1945.

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

6 Classis Pella overtures Synod to clarify the position of ministers connected with non-ecclesiastical institutions and consider the need of drawing up a proper form for the calling and installation of such men.

Grounds:

1. The present method of calling and installing does not answer the purpose: a. since consistories do not intend nor expect such ministers to function as assistant pastors; b. since the Form for the Ordination (or Installation) is not applicable to ministers serving in non-ecclesiastical institutions.

2. The task of these ministers is distinct and specific.

E. H. OOSTENDORP, S. C.

APPEALS AND PROTESTS

1. Communication from Prof. D. H. Kromminga.

< Blank Page >

CONTENTS

REPORT OF COMMITTEES IN REGARD TO:

Reports	Page
1. Ecumenicity and Correspondence with Other Churches.....	3
2. Ministers' Pension and Relief Administration.....	7
3. Delegate Lord's Day Alliance.....	11
4. Testimonial on Mixed Marriages.....	12
5. Article 36 of Our Confession.....	19
6. The Reformed Bible Institute.....	20
7. Mission Sunday School Paper Lesson Planning Committee.....	21
8. Delegate to the American Bible Society.....	23
9. Corporate Responsibility.....	25
10. Church Help Committee.....	38
11. Chicago Jewish Missions.....	42
12. Report of Treasurer, General Fund, Jewish Missions.....	46
13. National Christian Association.....	48
14. Faith, Prayer and Tract League.....	50
15. Outside Speakers Addressing Synod.....	51
16. Committee for South America.....	52
17. Programs for Mutual Supervision.....	58
18. Youth Committee.....	63
19. Examination of Such as Desire to Enter the Ministry.....	65

OVERTURES

1. Divorce.....	66
2. Higher Salaries of Ministers.....	74
3. Publication of the Agenda.....	74
4. Synodical Examiners.....	76
5. Treasurers' Reports in Yearbook.....	78
6. Ministers Serving in Non-Ecclesiastical Institutions.....	78

APPEALS AND PROTESTS

1. Communication from Prof. D. H. Kromminga.....	78
--	----