

# Acts of Synod

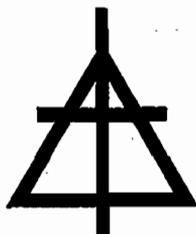


1973

# **ACTS OF SYNOD 1973**

***June 12 to 22, 1973***

**At the Fine Arts Center Auditorium  
of Knollcrest Campus, Calvin College,  
Grand Rapids, Michigan, U.S.A.**



**Board of Publications of the Christian Reformed Church**  
2850 Kalamazoo Avenue, S.E., Grand Rapids, Michigan, U.S.A.

# Prayer Service for Synod, 1973

Sponsored by

**THE FAITH CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH**

REV. JEROME JULIEN, pastor

**Fine Arts Center - Calvin College**

**Monday, 8:00 P.M. — June 11, 1973**

ORGAN PRELUDE: "Song of Faith" ..... *Mueller*  
"Prelude on 'St. Hilda'" ..... *Rasley*

CHORAL PRELUDE: "As the Hart Longs for Flowing Streams"  
(Psalm 42, 43) ..... *Leonard*

SILENT PRAYER

\*VOTUM AND SALUTATION

\*CONGREGATIONAL SINGING:  
"Sing a New Song to Jehovah" ..... 190

PSALM OF PRAISE ..... Psalm 92

CHOIR ANTHEM:

"The Heavens Declare the Glory of God" (Psalm 19) ..... *Marcello*

OFFERTORY: "Pastorale — Forest Green" ..... *Purvis*  
Offering: Christian Reformed Board of Foreign Missions

OFFERTORY PRAYER

\*CONGREGATIONAL SINGING:  
"The Church's One Foundation" ..... 398

SCRIPTURE READING ..... Ephesians 4:1-16

SERMON: "GOD'S PROVISION FOR HIS LOVED ONES"  
Ephesians 4:11-15

PRAYER for a Blessing on the Word and Synod 1973

\*CONGREGATIONAL SINGING:  
"Of Mercy and of Justice" ..... 196

\*DOXOLOGY:  
"Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow" ..... 493

\*BENEDICTION

\*MOMENT OF MEDITATION

POSTLUDE:

"To God Alone Be Highest Praise" ..... *Bach*

\*Congregation Standing

The Faith Church Choir, under the direction of Mr. Dick Gootjes, provides the music this evening. At the organ is Mrs. Reita Julien.

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# ACTS OF SYNOD

of the

## CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH

TUESDAY MORNING, JUNE 12, 1973

First Session

ARTICLE 1

The Rev. Jerome Julien, pastor of the Faith Christian Reformed Church of Grand Rapids, Michigan, the convening church, calls the assembly to order and leads in devotions, leading synod in praying the *Opening Prayer for Ecclesiastical Assemblies*.

ARTICLE 2

On behalf of the convening church, the Rev. Jerome Julien welcomes the delegates to synod and addresses the assembly as follows:

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

On behalf of the consistory and congregation of the Faith Christian Reformed Church I welcome you to Synod 1973 and to Grand Rapids. We are grateful to God for your safe journey and we pray God for his grace and strength for the task ahead.

Be assured that many are concerned about the decisions that you will make and the guidance you will give. In the days ahead—for some, at least—these meetings will be of more pressing importance than Watergate because you will be concerned with the church, loved of every child of God. You will see this love in a physical way: the gallery will have many observers seated in it listening to your every word. Brethren, the church is listening.

Remember the command to be faithful to the Word and therefore the Reformed faith. Take comfort in God's promised blessing to his church. Never flinch from the truth. Be courageous. Act in love for God and his church. Abound in the work of the Lord.

Jerome Julien

ARTICLE 3

The president pro-tem requests the Stated Clerk to call the roll of delegates, and the credentials of our thirty-seven classes indicate that the following delegates are present:

**Classis Alberta North**

Ministers.....J. Vriend	Elders.....D. Tiemstra
N. Knoppers	D. Zy'stra

**Classis Alberta South**

Ministers.....H. De Moor	Elders.....C. Zeilstra
C. H. Salomons	Dr. W. Stolte

**Classis British Columbia**

Ministers.....G. Pols	Elders.....A. H. Cook
J. Van Hemert	J. Camfferman

	<b>Classis Cadillac</b>	
Ministers .....	P. Hogeterp R. Wiebenga	Elders..... Rev. M. Nieboer J. Kloet
	<b>Classis California South</b>	
Ministers .....	A. De Jager M. Zylstra	Elders..... L. Slegers T. Dykema
	<b>Classis Central California</b>	
Ministers .....	P. Yang G. Ebbers	Elders..... L. Sikkema H. Tubergen
	<b>Classis Chatham</b>	
Ministers .....	R. Kooops J. Nutma	Elders..... J. Wiersma M. Steenbergen
	<b>Classis Chicago North</b>	
Ministers .....	A. A. Mulder R. E. Grevingoed	Elders..... Dr. E. Van Reken J. Wassenaar
	<b>Classis Chicago South</b>	
Ministers .....	N. Punt R. Leestma	Elders..... F. Rosier Dr. J. De Jong
	<b>Classis Columbia</b>	
Ministers .....	H. B. Spaan H. Bouma	Elders..... J. H. Bos D. W. Slotemaker
	<b>Classis Eastern Canada</b>	
Ministers .....	W. Gritter D. J. Hart	Elders..... M. Verburg H. M. Bell
	<b>Classis Florida</b>	
Ministers .....	J. Natelborg R. Tjapkes	Elders..... A. Vroon H. Ottenhof
	<b>Classis Grand Rapids East</b>	
Ministers .....	J. A. De Kruyter W. Heynen	Elders..... Dr. J. P. Bosscher G. Key
	<b>Classis Grand Rapids North</b>	
Ministers .....	Dr. L. Greenway E. Knott	Elders..... L. Kloet W. A. Worst
	<b>Classis Grand Rapids South</b>	
Ministers .....	W. D. Buursma J. D. Eppinga	Elders..... Dr. R.S. Wierenga T. Prins
	<b>Classis Grandville</b>	
Ministers .....	A. Bultman L. Bossenbroek	Elders..... N. Idema F. Ritsema
	<b>Classis Hackensack</b>	
Ministers .....	W. C. Boelkins C. Vander Meyden	Elders..... F. C. Style, Sr. G. Schultze
	<b>Classis Hamilton</b>	
Ministers .....	M. De Vries J. Kuntz	Elders..... M. S. Elgersma H. Vander Meulen
	<b>Classis Holland</b>	
Ministers .....	R. Holwerda R. Vermeer	Elders..... G. De Vries J. Van Dyk

<b>Classis Hudson</b>	
Ministers.....F. Bultman I. J. Apol	Elders.....P. Watzek G. Keessen
<b>Classis Huron</b>	
Ministers.....P. L. Van Katwyk P. J. Boodt	Elders.....W. De Haan, Sr. J. Van Bendegem
<b>Classis Illiana</b>	
Ministers.....H. G. Arnold L. A. Bazuin	Elders.....W. Schipper, Sr. H. W. Simmelink
<b>Classis Kalamazoo</b>	
Ministers.....N. Veltman J. Bultman	Elders.....H. Van Elderen J. Dykehouse
<b>Classis Lake Erie</b>	
Ministers.....C. E. Keegstra R. Peterson	Elders.....B. Vander Lee N. Noordeloos
<b>Classis Minnesota North</b>	
Ministers.....T. Wevers P. Lagerwey	Elders.....D. Buteyn A. Van Someren, Sr.
<b>Classis Minnesota South</b>	
Ministers.....T. Heyboer H. Vanderaa	Elders.....D. Fikse L. Toering
<b>Classis Muskegon</b>	
Ministers.....J. L. Meppelink E. Piersma	Elders.....W. Brouwer M. Hooker
<b>Classis Northcentral Iowa</b>	
Ministers.....F. Walhof J. Entingh	Elders.....L. Meyer A. Brower
<b>Classis Orange City</b>	
Ministers.....J. Hellinga E. Blankespoor	Elders.....Dr. A. Boeve V. Schemper
<b>Classis Pacific Northwest</b>	
Ministers.....J. Stulp B. Huizenga	Elders.....B. Brune H. Mans
<b>Classis Pella</b>	
Ministers.....R. Venema G. Vander Plaats	Elders.....G. Nieuwsma J. VerMeer
<b>Classis Quinte</b>	
Ministers.....G. Corvers D. Los	Elders.....T. Marcus C. Van Ginkel
<b>Classis Rocky Mountain</b>	
Ministers.....G. Negen A. E. Mulder	Elders.....E. Berkompas E. Anema
<b>Classis Sioux Center</b>	
Ministers.....J. Botting J. Engbers	Elders.....W. De Vries A. Koekkoek
<b>Classis Toronto</b>	
Ministers.....J. Vos L. Tamminga	Elders.....J. Holtrop M. Heidenga

		<b>Classis Wisconsin</b>	
Ministers .....	J. A. Hoeksema H. Vanden Einde	Elders.....	Dr. C. B. De Witt H. Kok
		<b>Classis Zeeland</b>	
Ministers .....	E. Los E. L. Haan	Elders.....	C. Dykema S. Staal

## ARTICLE 4

Synod is now declared constituted and proceeds to elect by ballot the following officers:

- a. *President*, Dr. Leonard Greenway
- b. *Vice-President*, Rev. John Vriend
- c. *First Clerk*, Rev. John A. De Kruyter
- d. *Second Clerk*, Rev. Howard Spaan

## ARTICLE 5

The president of synod, Dr. Leonard Greenway, expresses the appreciation of synod to the president pro-tem, the Rev. Jerome Julien, for his service Monday evening and for his services connected with the opening of synod. He acknowledges gratefully the confidence shown to the officers of synod by the delegates and he solicits their prayers for God's blessing upon the work of the officers and of the entire synod.

## ARTICLE 6

The president, having requested the delegates to rise, reads the public declaration of agreement with the forms of unity and the delegates respond with their "amen."

## ARTICLE 7

The president of synod welcomes the presidents of Calvin College and Seminary, the faculty advisers, representatives of denominational boards, and the editors of *The Banner* and *De Wachter*.

## ARTICLE 8

The following time schedule is adopted: morning session, 8:30-11:45; afternoon, 1:30-5:45; evening, 7:30-9:30; coffee breaks at 10:00 a.m., 3:30 p.m., and 9:30 p.m.

## ARTICLE 9

The Stated Clerk presents the Report of the Program Committee, recommending approval of the following Advisory Committees:

COMMITTEE 1—*Appeals*

Chairman, the Rev. J. Kuntz; Reporter, the Rev. N. Punt; the Revs. P. J. Boodt, J. Natelborg, R. Wiebenga; Elders E. Anema, F. Ritsema, S. Staal, H. Tubergen, H. Kok, J. Wiersma; Faculty adviser, Dr. J. Stek.

COMMITTEE 2—*Church Order I*

Chairman, the Rev. R. Holwerda; Reporter, the Rev. A. E. Mulder; the Revs. D. J. Hart, R. Tjapkes, F. Walhof; Elders D. Buteyn, A. H. Cook, Dr. J. De Jong, J. Holtrop, N. Noordeloos, Dr. E. Van Reken; Faculty adviser, Dr. C. Kromminga.

COMMITTEE 3—*Church Order II*

Chairman, the Rev. N. Knoppers; Reporter, the Rev. M. De Vries; the Revs. J. Botting, G. Ebberts, J. Hellinga, P. Lagerwey, A. A. Mulder; Elders J. Bos,

G. Key, M. Steenberg, H. Van Elderen, P. Watter; Faculty adviser, Dr. M. Woudstra.

**COMMITTEE 4—*Church Order III***

Chairman, the Rev. N. Veltman; Reporter, the Rev. H. Vanden Einde; the Revs. J. Engbers, J. Eppinga, P. L. Van Katwyk; Elders A. Brower, G. De Vries, L. Sikkema, F. Style, Sr., D. Tiemstra, M. Verburg; Faculty adviser, Dr. A. Hoekema.

**COMMITTEE 5—*Doctrinal Matters***

Chairman, the Rev. W. Heynen; Reporter, the Rev. J. B. Vos; the Revs. W. Gritter, C. E. Keegstra, M. Zylstra; Elders Dr. A. Boeve, M. Elgersma, D. Fikse, A. Koekkoek, Rev. M. Nieboer, H. W. Simmelink; Faculty adviser, Dr. F. Klooster.

**COMMITTEE 6—*Educational Matters***

Chairman, the Rev. H. Bouma; Reporter, the Rev. H. Arnold; the Revs. J. Bultman, R. Leestma, E. Piersma, J. Van Hemert; Elders M. Hooker, T. Marcus, L. Meyer, D. Slotemaker, D. Zylstra; Faculty advisers, Dr. J. Kromminga, Dr. W. Spoelhof.

**COMMITTEE 7—*Foreign Missions***

Chairman, Dr. R. S. Wierenga; Reporter, the Rev. B. Huizenga; the Revs. G. Corvers, J. Meppelink, H. Vanderaa, R. Venema, P. Yang; Elders J. Dykhouse, V. Schemper, Dr. W. Stolte, A. Van Someren, Sr.; Faculty adviser, Prof. R. Recker.

**COMMITTEE 8—*Home Missions***

Chairman, the Rev. W. Buurisma; Reporter, the Rev. E. Knott; the Revs. L. Bossenbroek, R. Kooops, G. Negen, C. VanderMeyden; Elders H. M. Bell, Dr. J. Bosscher, H. Ottenhof, L. Slegers, B. Vander Lee, J. Wassenaar; Faculty adviser, Prof. R. Recker.

**COMMITTEE 9—*Inter-Church***

Chairman, the Rev. L. Bazuin; Reporter, the Rev. R. Peterson; the Revs. W. C. Boelkins, J. Entingh, E. Haan, C. H. Salomons; Elders H. Mans, G. Nieuwsma, G. Schultze, J. Van Bendegem, C. Van Ginkel; Faculty adviser, Dr. J. Kromminga.

**COMMITTEE 10—*Publication Matters***

Chairman, the Rev. J. Stulp; Reporter, the Rev. L. Tamminga; the Revs. E. Blankespoor, G. Pols, R. Vermeer; Elders C. Dykema, T. Dykema, J. VerMeer, G. Keessen, F. Rosier, H. VanderMeulen; Faculty adviser, Dr. M. Woudstra.

**COMMITTEE 11—*Varia***

Chairman, the Rev. A. De Jager; Reporter, the Rev. I. Apol; the Revs. H. DeMoor, R. Grevengood, P. Hogeterp, G. VanderPlaats; Elders W. Brouwer, B. Brune, J. Camfferman, W. De Vries, Dr. C. B. De Witt; Faculty adviser, Dr. J. Stek.

**COMMITTEE 12—*Appointments***

Chairman, the Rev. E. Los; Reporter, the Rev. A. Bultman; the Revs. T. Heyboer, J. Hoeksema, J. Nutma, T. Wevers; Elders E. Berkompas, W. De Haan, Sr., T. Prins, W. Worst.

**COMMITTEE 13—*Budget Matters***

Chairman, Mr. A. Vroon; Reporter, Mr. W. Schipper, Sr.; the Revs. F. Bultman, D. Los; Elders M. Heidenga, N. Idema, J. Kloet, L. Kloet, L. Toering, J. Van Dyk, C. Zeilstra.

**ARTICLE 10**

The Rev. L. J. Hofman, Secretary of the Calvin College and Seminary Board of Trustees presents the following:

1. Upon recommendation of the seminary faculty and after interview by the Board of Trustees, the board recommends that synod declare the

following as candidates for the ministry in the Christian Reformed Church:

Henry Admiraal	Arie C. Leder
J. George Aupperlee	L. Bryce Mensink
Donald G. Belanus	Peter Plug
John Bolt	Frank Pott
Dennis J. Boogerd	James Stoel
Carl Bosma	Daniel Tigchelaar
Ronald Cok	William Vanden Bos
Calvin Compagner	Edward Vander Berg
James Cooper	Thomas Vander Ziel
Robert De Lange	William Van Hal
William C. De Vries	Siebre Van Houten
Eric Evenhuis	Duane Van Loo
Gerrit Haagsma	John Van Regenmorter
Adrian Helleman	Thomas Van't Land
Tjepke Hoogsteen	Ronald Van Zomerem
Henry Jonker	Gerrit P. Veenstra, Jr.
Donald Klop	Peter Veltman
Wayne Kobes	William Verhoef
Lee Koning	Harold J. Westra
Robert Koornneef	Peter Winkle
Leslie Kuiper	Carl Zylstra
Harry Kuperus	David A. Zylstra

2. Candidates are to be eligible for call on June 26. The recommendation is adopted.

The morning session is closed with prayer.

## TUESDAY AFTERNOON, JUNE 12, 1973

### Second Session

#### ARTICLE 11

After opening devotions, it is reported by the chair that Mr. B. VanderLee, elder delegate from Classis Lake Erie, will not be able to be present at synod until the Thursday session.

#### ARTICLE 12

The president of synod announces the following appointments:

- a. *Obituary Committee*: the Revs. T. Heyboer and J. Entingh
- b. *Reception Committee*: the Rev. L. A. Bazuin and Dr. J. Bosscher
- c. *Devotion Assignments*: Dr. E. Van Reken
- d. *News Releases*: the Revs. John Vriend and Wm. Buursma

Synod recesses until 3:30 p.m.

#### ARTICLE 13

Synod convenes in executive session.

Advisory Committee 6, *Educational Matters*, the Rev. H. G. Arnold reporting, presents the following:

APPEAL OF MR. ROBERT R. BROEKEMA

A. *Material*: Unprinted Appeal 5

B. *Recommendation*:

Having interviewed Mr. Robert Broekema in person, your committee recommends that synod declare that Mr. Broekema's candidacy be considered only when he has satisfactorily completed the required work for the B.D. degree.

—*Adopted*

(The report of Advisory Committee 6 is continued in Article 19.)

The afternoon session is closed with devotions.

WEDNESDAY MORNING, JUNE 13, 1973

Third Session

ARTICLE 14

The session is opened with devotions.

The roll is called. The Rev. J. Hoeksema and the Rev. E. Piersma are absent with notification.

The minutes of Tuesday's sessions are read and approved.

ARTICLE 15

Advisory Committee 11, *Varia*, the Rev. I. Apol reporting, presents the following:

SYNODICAL DEPUTIES' REPORTS ON THE CLASSICAL EXAMINATION OF CANDIDATES

Alberta North	John Visser	H. De Moor, Alberta South J. Van Dyk, British Columbia G. Pars, Pacific Northwest
British Columbia	Peter Nicolai	H. De Moor, Alberta South J. Hofman, Jr., Pacific Northwest J. D. Pereboom, Alberta North
Cadillac	William VandenBosch Kenneth Van Wyk	H. De Wolf, Grandville T. C. Van Kooten, Holland E. Oostendorp, Muskegon
	Stephen Sietsma	M. Doornbos, Grand Rapids North H. De Wolf, Grandville E. Oostendorp, Muskegon
	Marvin VanderVliet	E. Oostendorp, Muskegon T. Vander Ark, Grand Rapids East L. Bossenbroek, Grandville
California South	Donald Hekman Russell Palsrok	E. Boer, Rocky Mountain G. Pars, Pacific Northwest H. Petroelje, Central California
Chatham	Harry Bierman Siebren Van Daalen	H. De Bolster, Hamilton G. Nonnekes, Huron A. Vanden Pol, Toronto
Chicago North	Robert De Vries	J. Verbrugge, Wisconsin J. A. DeKruyter, Grand Rapids East H. G. Arnold, Illiana

Columbia	Ronald Fynewever	H. Petroelje, Central California G. Pars, Pacific Northwest E. Boer, Rocky Mountain
Eastern Canada	Fred Heslinga John Posthuma David Tigchelaar J. H. Lamsma	R. Kooistra, Toronto R. W. Popma, Quinte E. Bradford, Hackensack J. G. Klomps, Hamilton R. W. Popma, Quinte P. M. Jonker, Toronto
Grand Rapids East	James F. Remeur Peter J. Niewiek	G. Rozenboom, Grand Rapids North L. A. Bazuin, Illiana J. Malestein, Lake Erie
Grand Rapids North	Calvin Bremer	J. D. Eppinga, Grand Rapids South H. De Wolf, Grandville H. Vander Ark, Grand Rapids East
Grand Rapids South	Merle Den Bleyker Terry Lapinski	M. Doornbos, Grand Rapids North J. Blankespoor, Zeeland J. A. Mulder, Kalamazoo
Holland	Jack Vanden Heuvel	M. Doornbos, Grand Rapids North J. A. DeKruyter, Grand Rapids East J. A. Mulder, Kalamazoo
Hudson	Neal Rylaarsdam George Cooper	E. Bradford, Hackensack H. DeBolster, Hamilton J. Malestein, Lake Erie
Huron	Jacobus Corvers	P. Sluys, Chatham H. DeBolster, Hamilton R. Kooistra, Toronto
Illiana	Edwin Roels Donald Lagerwey Alfred Lindemulder	T. Van Kooten, Holland J. Bylsma, Chicago South W. R. Witte, Chicago North
Lake Erie	Ed Dykstra Carl Kammeraad Paul Kortenhoven	H. De Wolf, Grandville P. Sluys, Chatham H. Vander Ark, Grand Rapids East
Minnesota North	Ben Becksvoort	T. Medema, Wisconsin J. Rubingh, Orange City T. Heyboer, Minnesota South
Muskegon	Gerald Postema Harvey Stob	J. Bylsma, Chicago South A. Poel, Cadillac H. Vander Ark, Grand Rapids East
Northcentral Iowa	Mark Davies	L. A. Bazuin, Illiana H. De Groot, Orange City S. Kramer, Pella
Orange City	Joel Boot Peter De Haan Peter Holwerda	T. Heyboer, Minnesota South H. Hollander, Northcentral Iowa P. Y. De Jong, Sioux Center
Pacific Northwest	Stanley De Vries	H. Petroelje, Central California J. Van Dyk, British Columbia K. Slager, Columbia
Pella	Gerald Erffmeyer	H. Hollander, Northcentral Iowa J. Rubingh, Orange City P. Y. De Jong, Sioux Center

Rocky Mountain	Merle Bierma	T. Heyboer, Minnesota South J. Engbers, Sioux Center J. H. Rubingh, Orange City
Wisconsin	John Van Schepen	W. R. Witte, Chicago North J. Bylsma, Chicago South L. A. Bazuin, Illiana

*Recommendation:* That synod approve the work of the synodical deputies. —*Adopted*  
(The report of Advisory Committee 11 is continued in Article 24.)

ARTICLE 16

Advisory Committee 10, *Publication Matters*, the Rev. L. Tamminga reporting, presents the following:

I. BACK TO GOD TRACT COMMITTEE

A. *Material:* Report 7.

B. *Recommendation:* That synod approve the work of the Back to God Tract Committee. —*Adopted*

II. SERMONS FOR READING SERVICES

A. *Material:* Report 17.

B. *Recommendations:*

1. That synod approve the publication of the *Living Word Sermon Series* from June 1, 1973 through May 31, 1974.

2. That synod recommend the use of the *Living Word* sermons to the churches.

3. That synod continue the committee on Sermons for Reading Services. —*Adopted*

III. FAITH, PRAYER, AND TRACT LEAGUE

A. *Material:* Report 25.

B. *Recommendation:* That synod gratefully acknowledge the work of the League and Mr. Peter Doot, the synodical representative. —*Adopted*

IV. PROOF TEXTS FOR THE HEIDELBERG CATECHISM

A. *Material:* Report 36.

B. *Recommendation:* That synod continue the committee for Proof Texts for the Heidelberg Catechism with the request that it report to the Synod of 1974.

*Ground:* The committee for a New Translation of the Heidelberg Catechism made significant changes in the proposed text which made it necessary for the committee for Proof Texts for the Heidelberg Catechism to review its work from the beginning. —*Adopted*

V. TRANSLATION OF THE HEIDELBERG CATECHISM

A. *Materials:*

1. Report 43.

2. Booklet, *The Heidelberg Catechism - A New Provisional Translation.*

**B. Information:** Synod of 1968 appointed a committee to prepare a new translation of the Heidelberg Catechism (Acts 1968, p. 24, II, B, 3). The Synods of 1970, 1971, and 1972 took grateful note of the progress the committee had made, and requested that the committee publish the complete translation in booklet form for trial use, evaluation, and response from the churches (Acts 1972, Art. 24, IV, 2, 3). The committee now presents a translation of the Heidelberg Catechism in booklet form which was mailed with the 1973 Agenda for Synod.

**C. Recommendations:**

1. That synod express its appreciation for the committee's work in completing the provisional translation of the Heidelberg Catechism.

—Adopted

2. That synod encourage the churches and individuals to inform the committee of their reactions to the provisional translation in order that a final translation may be presented to the Synod of 1975 for adoption. Synod urges the churches to purchase copies for purposes of evaluation. Therefore reactions should reach the committee not later than January 15, 1975.

—Adopted

3. That synod instruct the committee to quote biblical passages from the Revised Standard Version.

**Grounds:**

a. The committee, in the preface to the provisional translation booklet, states, "With respect to the other biblical passages, the committee has made use of various translations. We simply chose the translation which seemed most appropriate for that particular question and answer. Should the church decide that it wants one Bible translation used throughout the Catechism, the committee could make the change that would be necessary."

b. One of the reasons why the Synod of 1968 rejected the 400th Anniversary Edition of the Catechism and had its own prepared was that the Bible quotations in the 400th Anniversary Edition came "from versions not presently approved by synod" (Acts 1968, p. 24, II, B, 2, f).

c. The Revised Standard Version is a synodically approved version.

—Adopted

(The report of Advisory Committee 10 is continued in Article 27.)

ARTICLE 17

Advisory Committee 4, *Church Order III*, the Rev. H. Vanden Einde reporting, presents the following:

REVISE FORM FOR EXCOMMUNICATION

**A. Material:** Overture 23.

**B. Observations:** Classis Muskegon overtures synod to do two things: namely, "to revise the present form for excommunication," and "to study the possibility of providing a method other than excommunication whereby the consistory of a church can terminate membership." There are a number of grounds given in the overture to support their request.

C. *Recommendations:*

1. That synod refer Overture 23, point 1, along with the grounds, to the Liturgical Committee for their consideration.

*Ground:* The Liturgical Committee already has the mandate to review all our liturgical literature and to recommend such revisions as they determine to be necessary. In fact, the report of the Liturgical Committee says "At the present time we are working on a Form for Excommunication. . . ." —*Adopted*

2. That synod, while expressing appreciation to Classis Muskegon for pointing out a problem with respect to methods of terminating membership in the church, return their request mentioned in part 2 of Overture 23 to the classis and request them to initiate a study of this matter.

*Grounds:*

a. It has not been satisfactorily established that the need is as great as the overture implies.

b. Classis Muskegon has not identified the "other methods" for terminating membership, which they say are "neither uniform nor approved." (cf. Grounds under part 2 of Overture 23.) —*Adopted*  
(The report of Advisory Committee 4 is continued in Article 43.)

ARTICLE 18

Advisory Committee 9, *Inter-Church*, the Rev. R. Peterson reporting, presents the following:

I. BIBLE TRANSLATION COMMITTEE

A. *Material:* Report 8.

B. *Recommendation:* That synod thank the Bible Translation Committee for its very helpful review of *The Living Bible: Paraphrased*, recently published in our church papers. —*Adopted*

II. AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY

A. *Material:* Report 21.

B. *Recommendation:* That synod commend the work of the American Bible Society, recognize this organization as deserving of our prayers and continuing interest and thank our synodical representative for his report. —*Adopted*

III. CANADIAN BIBLE SOCIETY

A. *Material:* Report 22.

B. *Recommendation:* That synod commend the work of the Canadian Bible Society, recognize this organization as deserving of our prayers and continuing interest, and thank our synodical representative for his report. —*Adopted*

IV. LORD'S DAY ALLIANCE OF THE U.S.

A. *Material:* Report 26.

B. *Recommendations:*

1. That synod commend the work of the Lord's Day Alliance of the United States, recognize this organization as worthy of our prayers and continuing interest, and thank our synodical representative for his report.

2. That this constitute our answer to recommendation 2 of the synodical representative.

3. That we maintain representation on the Lord's Day Alliance Board.

—*Adopted*

(The report of Advisory Committee 9 is continued in Article 31.)

#### ARTICLE 19

Advisory Committee 6, *Educational Matters*, the Rev. H. G. Arnold reporting, presents the following: (The report of Advisory Committee 6 is continued from Article 13.)

##### I. PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

A. *Material*: Report 2A.

B. *Recommendation*: That synod grant the privilege of the floor to the Rev. Leonard Hofman, secretary of the Board of Trustees, and to the Rev. Henry Vander Kam, president of the Board of Trustees, to allow them to represent the Board of Trustees on matters pertaining to Calvin College and Seminary.

—*Adopted*

##### II. RETIREMENT OF CALVIN COLLEGE FACULTY MEMBERS

A. *Material*: Report 2A.

B. *Recommendations*:

1. That synod confirm the action of the Board of Trustees in conferring upon three professors who are retiring from the faculty of the college the appropriate titles as follows:

Dr. Cornelius Plantinga, Professor of Psychology, Emeritus

Dr. Tunis Prins, Professor of Philosophy, Emeritus

Associate Professor John Tuls, Associate Professor of Mathematics, Emeritus.

—*Adopted*

2. That synod recognize with appreciation the services of these professors to the college and to the church at a testimonial dinner in their honor to be held on Monday evening, June 18.

—*Adopted*

##### III. 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF TEACHING AT CALVIN COLLEGE

A. *Material*: Report 2A.

B. *Recommendation*: That synod recognize the twenty-five years of service given to Calvin College by Dr. Melvin Berghuis, Dr. Clarence Boersma, and Dr. John L. De Beer at a testimonial dinner in their honor to be held on Monday evening, June 18.

—*Adopted*

(The report of Advisory Committee 6 is continued in Article 25.)

The morning session is closed with devotions.

### THURSDAY MORNING, JUNE 14, 1973

#### Fourth Session

#### ARTICLE 20

The session is opened with devotions.

The roll is called and all delegates are present. Elder B. VanderLee

of Classis Lake Erie rises and indicates his agreement with the forms of unity. The minutes of Wednesday's sessions are read and approved.

## ARTICLE 21

It was moved that synod give expression of its gratitude to Dr. John Hamersma for his delightful organ concert during the noon recess.

—*Adopted*

## ARTICLE 22

Advisory Committee 2, *Church Order I*, the Rev. A. E. Mulder reporting, presents the following:

## I. SYNODICAL INTERIM COMMITTEE

A. *Materials:*

1. Report 19.
2. Report 19-A.

B. *Recommendations:*

1. That synod grant the privilege of the floor to the president of the Synodical Interim Committee, the Rev. Oliver Breen, when matters pertaining to the committee are discussed. —*Adopted*

2. That synod take cognizance of the fact that the entire synodical committee now comprises the Christian Reformed Synod Trustees. —*Adopted*

3. That synod approve the interim appointments made by the Synodical Interim Committee (see Report 19, Section VII, A and B, Report 19-A, Section II). —*Adopted*

4. That synod, in accord with the request of the Synodical Interim Committee, affirm the position that all appointments of synod committees shall be made by synod itself with the exception of those which are interim in character and necessitated by resignation, vacancies, or unusual circumstances arising between the time of synodical meetings. (See Report 19, Section VII, C, and Rules for Synodical Procedure, Section VI, B, 4, b.) —*Adopted*

5. That synod request all classes, when nominating members of denominational boards or committees, to designate the term of the alternate to coincide with the term of the delegate. When an alternate replaces a delegate, or when a new delegate is nominated by a classis, the term of office shall begin in the year a delegate assumes the office and shall terminate on September 1 three years later.

*Grounds:*

a. This will effectively clarify the term of office of members of denominational boards and committees.

b. This will promote greater continuity of membership on denominational boards and committees. —*Adopted*

6. That synod adopt the following policy statement re proper use of official bodies and channels of communications:

a. Individuals, organizations, and churches are urged to use official bodies and channels for official business and communications only.

b. Attention is called to the impropriety of individuals, organizations, or churches sending communications to consistories in support or criticism of, or appeals for or against reports or proposals. —*Adopted*

7. That the above policy statement be announced to the churches periodically. —*Adopted*

8. That synod, with respect to agencies seeking the endorsement of synod for financial support, clarify the requirements as listed in the Acts of Synod, 1950, page 91, by adding the requirement that any new organization requesting support must first submit to the Synodical Interim Committee a statement of its aims and purposes, and be approved as to program.

*Ground:* The surveying of such programs already is required of the Synodical Interim Committee. —*Adopted*

9. That synod appoint Mr. Anthony Vroon as Denominational Financial Coordinator for a three-year term. (See Acts of Synod 1971, Article 141, and Report 19A). —*Adopted*

## II. LODGE AND CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

### A. *Material:* Report 41.

B. *Observation:* The committee informs synod that it is unable to report in 1973, but does hope to report in 1974. The committee also notes the disabling automobile accident sustained by the reporter, the Rev. Allan Dykstra.

### C. *Recommendations:*

1. That synod request the Stated Clerk to communicate to the Rev. Allan Dykstra and family the prayerful concern and support of the synod on their behalf. —*Adopted*

2. That synod continue the committee for one more year to complete its mandate and report to the Synod of 1974. —*Adopted*

(The report of Advisory Committee 2 is continued in Article 64.)

## ARTICLE 23

Advisory Committee 3, *Church Order II*, the Rev. M. De Vries reporting, presents the following:

### I. MINISTERIAL INFORMATION SERVICE

#### A. *Materials:*

1. Report 15.

2. Letter from the Ministerial Information Service (May 11, 1973)

#### B. *Recommendations:*

1. That the Rev. Anthony De Jager be granted the privilege of the floor when this report is considered by synod. —*Adopted*

2. That synod accept this report with gratitude. —*Adopted*

3. That synod commend the committee for its work. —*Adopted*

4. That synod encourage our vacant churches to use this service.

—*Adopted*

## II. REQUEST FOR TRANSFER OF CLASSICAL AFFILIATION OF THE LYNWOOD CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH

### A. *Material*: Communication 7.

B. *Recommendation*: That synod authorize the transfer of classical affiliation of the Lynwood Christian Reformed Church (formerly the First Christian Reformed Church of Roseland) from Classis Chicago South to Classis Illiana.

### *Grounds*:

1. The Lynwood Christian Reformed Church is now located in the geographical area of Classis Illiana.

2. This request is endorsed by Classis Chicago South and Classis Illiana.

—*Adopted*

(The report of Advisory Committee 3 is continued in Article 82.)

## ARTICLE 24

Advisory Committee 11, *Varia*, the Rev. I. Apol reporting, presents the following: (The report of Advisory Committee 11 is continued from Article 15.)

### EMERITATION OF MINISTERS

#### A. *Recommendations*:

1. That synod approve the honorable emeritation of the following ministers:

a. Rev. J. T. Holwerda - Classis Zeeland; reason: age; October 1, 1972

b. Rev. Robert Evenhuis - Classis California South; reason: disability; September 21, 1972

c. Rev. Abel Poel - Classis Cadillac; reason: age; June 1, 1973

d. Rev. Andrew Cammenga, Sr. - Classis Florida; reason: age; September 15, 1973

e. Rev. Peter De Boer - Classis Grandville; reason: age; May 31, 1973

f. Rev. Donald J. Drost - Classis Pella; reason: age; August 1, 1973

g. Rev. Allan Dykstra - Classis Orange City; reason: disability; June 1, 1973

h. Rev. Charles Greenfield - Classis Kalamazoo; reason: age; April 1, 1973

i. Rev. William Haverkamp - Classis Grand Rapids North; reason: age; March 1, 1973

j. Rev. Ralph Heynen - Classis Grand Rapids South; reason: age; January 1, 1973

k. Rev. Henry W. Kroeze - Classis Huron; reason: age; November 1, 1973

l. Rev. Garret Pars - Classis Pacific Northwest; reason: age; June 1, 1973

m. Rev. Thomas Van Eerden - Classis Muskegon; reason: age; February 1, 1973

n. Rev. Tenis C. Van Kooten - Classis Holland; reason: age; March 1, 1973

o. Rev. Morris H. Faber - Classis Grand Rapids East; reason: age; September 1, 1973

—*Adopted*

2. That synod again remind the stated clerks to inform synod of the effective date of emeritation and the ground when classis grants requests for emeritation. —*Adopted*

(The report of Advisory Committee 11 is continued in Article 42.)

#### ARTICLE 25

Advisory Committee 6, *Educational Matters*, the Rev. H. G. Arnold reporting, presents the following: (The report of Advisory Committee 6 is continued from Article 19.)

##### I. REAPPOINTMENT OF PROFESSOR ROBERT RECKER

A. *Material*: Report 2.

B. *Recommendation*: That synod reappoint Prof. Robert Recker as Associate Professor of Missions with permanent tenure.

*Grounds*:

1. Although his first three years of teaching were on a half-time basis, his total teaching experience provides an adequate basis for evaluation.

2. His eighteen years of experience on the mission field provides rich resources for teaching in the area of missions.

3. Responses to questionnaires are favorable to an exceptionally high degree.

4. The rules for reappointment allow for the option of recommending permanent tenure at this stage.

5. The possibility of permanent tenure at this time was contemplated by the Board of Trustees and the Synod of 1971 (cf. Acts of Synod, 1971, Supplement, Report 12, II, A, 1, p. 352). —*Adopted*

##### II. REAPPOINTMENT OF DR. MELVIN HUGEN

A. *Material*: Report 2.

B. *Recommendation*: That synod reappoint Dr. Melvin Hugen as Associate Professor of Practical Theology for a term of two years. —*Adopted*

##### III. POSTPONEMENT OF APPOINTMENT TO THE STAFF OF THE PRACTICAL THEOLOGY DEPARTMENT (CHURCH EDUCATION)

A. *Materials*:

1. Report 2.

2. Report 2-A.

B. *Recommendation*: That synod postpone a regular appointment to the staff of the Practical Theology Department (Church Education) for one year.

*Grounds*:

1. Clarification of the job description and finding suitable candidates for the job require further study and time.

2. The immediate need in this field is being met for the year, 1973-74.

—*Adopted*

##### IV. THE MASTER OF DIVINITY DEGREE (M.Div.)

A. *Materials*:

1. Report 2.

2. Report 2-A.

B. *Recommendation*: That synod endorse the action of the Board of Trustees in authorizing the seminary faculty to proceed with granting the Master of Divinity (M.Div.) degree.

*Grounds*:

1. The M.Div. degree will involve the existing B.D. curriculum along with an increase in quantity and improvement in quality of field education.

2. The further stipulations submitted by the faculty to the Board of Trustees adequately safeguard the quality of the seminary's academic program. —*Adopted*

#### V. VISITING LECTURER IN THE AREA OF MISSIONS

A. *Materials*:

1. Report 2.
2. Report 2-A.

B. *Recommendation*: That synod approve the appointment of Dr. Richard De Ridder to teach in the area of missions, as well as assist in divisional responsibilities during the 1973-74 academic year. —*Adopted*

#### VI. STUDENT FIELD WORK REMUNERATION

A. *Material*: Report 2-A.

B. *Recommendation*: That synod revise the 1947 synodical stipulation (cf. Acts of Synod 1947, Art. 98, p. 53) which ties student field work remuneration to the scale operative in the work of the Board of Home Missions and authorize the faculty to set guidelines for remuneration for field work. —*Adopted*

#### VII. EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE TO CHURCHES ABROAD

A. *Material*: Report 11.

B. *Recommendations*:

1. That synod approve the work done by this committee. —*Adopted*
2. That synod commend this committee and its work to the prayerful support of the churches and encourage the membership to contribute surplus used and valuable books for the library assistance program abroad. —*Adopted*

#### VIII. DORDT COLLEGE

A. *Material*: Report 24.

B. *Recommendations*:

1. That synod commend Dordt College on indications of growth and development as a Christian college as outlined in the report to synod by the synodical representative. —*Adopted*
2. That synod assure Dordt College of our prayers for continued blessings of God on her progress. —*Adopted*

#### IX. REFORMED BIBLE COLLEGE

A. *Material*: Report 29.

**B. Recommendations:**

1. That synod take grateful note of indications of growth and development of the Reformed Bible College as indicated in the report to synod by the synodical representative. —*Adopted*

2. That synod commend the Reformed Bible College to our churches for continued prayerful support. —*Adopted*

3. That synod take cognizance of the fact that the Rev. J. H. Schaal is finishing twenty-five years of service at the Reformed Bible College and is completing his tenure with that institution in December, 1973, and that synod acknowledge with gratitude the blessings we have received as a denomination through his dedicated labors. —*Adopted*

**X. UNITED CALVINIST YOUTH****A. Material:** Report 31.**B. Observations:**

As indicated in the reports of our synodical representatives, the United Calvinist Youth organization continues to perform a valuable service for our denominational ministry to youth. This organization, with its various divisions and staff members, is to be commended for dedicated service and fine work.

The four youth divisions within the United Calvinist Youth organization which are supported by the generous gifts and offerings of our people are:

1. Calvinettes
2. Calvinist Cadet Corps
3. Young Calvinist Federation
4. Young Calvinist Servicemen's Ministry

**C. Recommendation:** That synod gratefully acknowledge the work of the United Calvinist Youth organization. —*Adopted*

**XI. QUOTA PROPOSED FOR UNITED CALVINIST YOUTH****A. Material:** Overture 10.**B. Recommendations:**

1. That synod do not accede to the overture of the Anaheim Christian Reformed Church which requests a quota for the United Calvinist Youth organization.

**Grounds:**

a. The United Calvinist Youth organization is not an ecclesiastical organization.

b. The United Calvinist Youth organization is not soliciting a quota. —*Adopted*

2. That synod declare this to be its answer to Overture 10 from the Anaheim Christian Reformed Church. —*Adopted*

(The report of Advisory Committee 6 is continued in Article 30.)

**ARTICLE 26**

Advisory Committee 7, *Foreign Missions*, the Rev. B. Huizenga reporting, presents the following:

## I. THE LUKE SOCIETY, INC.

### A. *Material*: Report 28.

### B. *Recommendations*:

1. That when The Luke Society report is considered, synod grant the privilege of the floor to William G. Bouman, M.D., secretary of The Luke Society. (Everett Van Reken, M.D., synodical representative, is a delegate to synod.) —*Adopted*

2. That synod commend the work of The Luke Society, recognize this organization as deserving of our prayers and continuing interest, and thank our synodical representative for his report. —*Adopted*

## II. PERSONALIZING DENOMINATIONAL FOREIGN MISSIONS

### A. *Material*: Overture 14.

### B. *Recommendations*:

1. That synod ask the Board of Foreign Missions to take appreciative note of the worthy ideal of personalizing missionary support. —*Adopted*

2. That synod reject overture 14.

### *Grounds*:

a. Quota support need not be "cold and impersonal."

b. The Board of Foreign Missions already carries out a progressing program of personalizing missionary support. —*Adopted*

3. That synod encourage the Board of Foreign Missions to continue the development of personalizing missionary support. —*Adopted*

## III. CHRISTIAN REFORMED WORLD RELIEF COMMITTEE

### A. *Materials*:

Report 6

Report 6-A

### B. *Recommendations*:

1. That synod commend the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee for its dynamic leadership in the ministry of mercy. —*Adopted*

2. That synod grant the privilege of the floor to Mr. T. Prins, president of CRWRC (synodical delegate); Rev. W. M. Van Dyk, board member; and Mr. Louis Van Ess, executive director, when matters pertaining to the CRWRC are discussed. —*Adopted*

3. That synod approve the projected priorities of the planned programming as reported in Report 6. —*Adopted*

4. That synod approve the development and implementation of a long term outreach in Nicaragua and Honduras consistent with needs and practices prevailing in CRWRC's other outreaches.

### *Grounds*:

a. There is ample demonstration of needs that will need long term attention.

b. There are specific needs which CRWRC can address itself to with identifiable programs that will allow for a positive Christian witness.

—*Adopted*

5. That synod commend the work of the CRWRC to our churches and urge them to take offerings on a regular and sustained basis to provide the necessary funds for this ministry.

Explanation: Though benevolent needs are subject to the unknowns of crises, there are benevolent needs which are predictable. —*Adopted*

6. That synod reappoint Mr. Louis Van Ess as Executive Director of CRWRC for four years. —*Adopted*

#### IV. THE EVANGELICAL LITERATURE LEAGUE

A. *Material*: Report 30.

B. *Recommendation*: That synod commend the work of The Evangelical Literature League as deserving of our prayers and continuing interest, and thank David W. Bosscher, our synodical representative, for his report. —*Adopted*

#### V. THE BACK TO GOD HOUR

A. *Material*: Report 1.

B. *Recommendations*:

1. That synod grant the privilege of the floor to Dr. J. Nederhood and either the Rev. Donald Negen, president, or the Rev. Neal Punt, secretary, when Back to God Hour matters are discussed. —*Adopted*

2. That synod grant Dr. J. Nederhood opportunity to address synod in behalf of the Back to God Hour. —*Adopted*

3. That synod approve the work of the Back to God Hour Committee and staff and express appreciation for the work done. —*Adopted*

#### VI. CHRISTIAN REFORMED BOARD OF FOREIGN MISSIONS

A. *Materials*:

Report 3

Report 3-A

B. *Recommendations*:

1. That synod grant the privilege of the floor to the Rev. Henry N. Erffmeyer, the chairman of the board; Mr. Donald Zwier, treasurer of the board; and the Rev. Henry Evenhouse, the executive secretary, when matters concerning foreign missions are discussed. —*Adopted*

2. That synod set apart a time for the introduction of missionaries who are home on furlough and those who are preparing to leave for their first assignment in a foreign country. —*Adopted*

3. That synod grant the request of the Board of Foreign Missions to be given some time to present to synod the concept of "Faith Promise Giving." —*Adopted*

(The report of Advisory Committee 7 is continued in Article 53.)

#### ARTICLE 27

Advisory Committee 10, *Publication Matters*, the Rev. L. Tamminga reporting, presents the following: (The report of Advisory Committee 10 is continued from Article 16.)

## I. FOOTNOTES FOR THE HEIDELBERG CATECHISM

A. *Material*: Overture 6.B. *Recommendations*:

1. That synod adopt Overture 6 to the effect that pertinent footnotes referring to the Belgic Confession and the Canons of Dort be added to the new translation of the Heidelberg Catechism.

*Ground*: It will stimulate the use of all three creeds and demonstrate their interrelatedness. —*Adopted*

2. That synod mandate the present committee for Proof Texts for the Heidelberg Catechism to prepare these footnotes and that the committee report to the Synod of 1974, so that the footnotes may be included in the provisional translation of the Heidelberg Catechism to be submitted to Synod of 1975. —*Adopted*

3. That this constitute the answer of synod to Overture 6. —*Adopted*

## II. PSALTER HYMNAL SUPPLEMENT

A. *Material*: Report 37.

B. *Explanation*: Synod of 1971 appointed a committee to provide a wider range of music and songs by way of a supplement to the Psalter Hymnal and report to the Synod of 1972 (Acts 1971, page 48, I, B, 2). The committee submitted a provisional copy of such a supplement containing 66 songs to the Synod of 1972. The synod requested the committee to send two copies of the supplement to the churches and that the churches send reactions to the committee no later than February 1, 1974. Problems in the areas of copyrighting and harmonization have delayed production, but the committee is hopeful to finish its task this fall.

C. *Recommendations*:

1. That synod receive the report of the committee for the Psalter Hymnal Supplement for information. —*Adopted*

2. That synod authorize the committee to make enough copies available for denominational use and evaluation and that the churches be invited to send their reactions to the committee no later than February 1, 1975, with a view to approval or disapproval by the Synod of 1975.

*Ground*: This will give the churches more time for evaluation without delaying the actual availability of the proposed new songs. —*Adopted*

(The report of Advisory Committee 10 is continued in Article 33.)

## ARTICLE 28

Advisory Committee 8, *Home Missions*, the Rev. E. Knott reporting, presents the following:

## HOME MISSIONS MATTERS

A. *Material*: Report 4.B. *Recommendations*:

1. That synod grant the privilege of the floor to the president of the board, the treasurer, and the Minister of Evangelism when matters pertaining to home missions are discussed. —*Adopted*

2. That synod approve the following Grants-in-Aid for the year 1974:

## a. Renewal of previous requests:

1. Oak Harbor, Wash. ....	\$ 4,000.00
(Provided close review and evaluation during 1973 brings a favorable recommendation for continuing.)	
2. Rapid City, S.D. ....	2,500.00
3. Paterson, N.J. (Madison Ave.) .....	10,000.00
4. Classis Northcentral Iowa (Ames) .....	3,000.00
5. Eastern Canada (Seaway) .....	4,500.00
6. Classis Cadillac (Mt. Pleasant) .....	7,000.00
7. Lansing, Michigan .....	5,000.00
8. Denver III, Colorado .....	6,500.00
9. Zion-Oshawa (Y.E.S.) .....	5,500.00
10. Bellingham, Washington .....	5,500.00
11. Paterson, N.J. (Bethel)	
First Staff Person .....	7,500.00
Second Staff Person .....	2,500.00
12. Vermillion, S. Dakota .....	6,000.00
13. Toronto, Ontario .....	8,000.00
14. Vancouver, B.C. ....	5,000.00
(Includes \$500.00 toward expense of summer seminarian.)	
15. First Los Angeles (Staff) .....	7,000.00
16. First Denver (Indian work) .....	7,500.00
17. Chicago, Ill. (Lawndale) .....	9,000.00
18. Classis Hamilton (Campus) .....	7,000.00
19. Springdale, Holland Marsh, Ont.	
River Drive Park .....	4,000.00
(With the understanding this grant to be decreased \$1,000.00 per year beginning in 1975)	
20. Visalia, California .....	2,500.00
21. Chicago, South Pullman Chapel .....	8,000.00
b. New requests:	
22. Classis Lake Erie, Ann Arbor Chapel .....	4,000.00
(With the understanding that the Ann Arbor campus chapel committee appeal to the Michigan Classes for increase in support before this amount is granted.)	
*23. Cedar Falls, Iowa (Campus) .....	7,000.00
24. Alto, Wis. (Beaverdam) .....	2,500.00
(With the stipulation that this support will be phased out by December, 1976)	
25. Pease, Minn. (St. Cloud) .....	8,000.00
26. Sacramento, California .....	8,500.00

—Adopted

\**Recommendation*: That synod approve a \$7,000.00 Grant-in-Aid to the Cedar Falls, Iowa Church for campus work, subject to favorable action on the appeal of the Cedar Falls Church to the April, 1973, decision of Classis Northcentral Iowa.

*Grounds*:

1. If favorable action is initiated by classical decision, funding will be needed by January, 1974.
2. The Home Mission Board is convinced of the viability of this ministry by virtue of their recommendation of the Grant-in-Aid.
3. Proper procedures were not followed inasmuch as classical approval had not been obtained before seeking synodical endorsement. This was

done inadvertently, and the church should not be penalized by postponement of consideration of its request if classical approval can be obtained.

—*Adopted*

(The report of Advisory Committee 8 is continued in Article 29.)

The morning session is closed with devotions.

## THURSDAY AFTERNOON, JUNE 14, 1973

### Fifth Session

#### ARTICLE 29

The session is opened with devotions.

Advisory Committee 8, *Home Missions*, the Rev. E. Knott reporting, presents the following: (The report of Advisory Committee 8 is continued from Article 28.)

#### HOME MISSIONS MATTERS

##### A. *Material*: Report 4

##### B. *Recommendations*:

1. That synod approve a Grant-in-Aid Contingency Fund for 1974 of \$5,000.00 plus all unused Grant-in-Aid Funds during the year 1974, the use of which shall be approved by the Home Missions Board Executive Committee.

##### *Grounds*:

a. The long time span between the date of application and the year the grant is to be used (14 months) does not allow for revision due to significant changes on the field.

b. This will give the BHM the ability to respond to such changes.

—*Adopted*

2. That synod approve the following requests in regard to the appointment of home missionaries and Grant-in-Aid personnel:

a. The Board of Home Missions requests synod's endorsement for the policy that all denominational home missionaries (excluding teachers) . . . . ordained and unordained . . . . be appointed for an initial term of two years followed by successive three-year terms of service.

—*Adopted*

b. The Board of Home Missions requests synod's approval for the policy that the above appointment and evaluative procedure (including training and vacation allowances) also apply to personnel serving under Grant-in-Aid fields. Decisions on reappointments will be made by the employing body in consultation with the Board of Home Missions.

—*Adopted*

3. That synod declare, with respect to decentralization:

a. That decentralization, defined as an adjustment in present home missions policy to allow congregations and classes a greater share and involvement in the initiation, development, and administration of home missions work in their areas, is a process already operative in various degrees throughout the denomination, which must be continued in a

manner that builds the unity of the denomination and allows for maximum expression of local involvement and activity.

b. That Home Missionaries on General Assignment are key factors in promoting the decentralization process and should be used for the purpose of facilitating good communications between Classical Home Missions Committees and the Board of Home Missions, recognizing that, at present, they are active in assisting the Board of Home Missions to encourage greater involvement on the part of Classical Home Missions Committees in its work.

c. The Grant-in-Aid program has contributed significantly and is playing a strategic role in the process of decentralization.

d. That, therefore, the Board of Home Missions and Classical Home Missions Committees, with the assistance of the Home Missionaries on General Assignment, arrange for joint supervision of all new and existing denominational home missions fields within their boundaries on a timeline and in a manner of operation that best reflects the interests of all parties involved and will not conflict with the Mission Order.

*Grounds:*

1. This allows for the diversity of attitude and initiative that pertains in the various areas of the denomination.

2. This allows for the most personal kind of relationship between the BHM, Classical Home Missions Committees, and fields.

3. The personnel and program designs are already existent for such implementation.

Note: The process of decentralization is already presently evident in the work of the Board of Home Missions in the following:

a. The Grant-in-Aid program in which the funding for salaries is provided by the board and supervision is maintained by the local ecclesiastical body.

b. The board through its staff has always encouraged local initiative and involvement in the establishment of new fields. The staff has always been available for assistance and advice in local programs.

c. The board has scrupulously avoided getting into any area without the request or recommendation of the classis.

d. The board has always encouraged the involvement of the Classical Home Missions Committee in the investigation of a field, the beginning of the field and the supervision of the field. Each committee is requested to visit the fields in its area at least once each year and encourage the missionaries to meet with the committee.

e. The board is making plans to encourage greater involvement on the part of the Classical Home Missions Committees in its work.

f. The Home Missionaries on General Assignment, though reporting to the board, do meet with the CHMCs and have the specific mandate to assist the CHMC and churches in their mission task. Thus their work immediately becomes identified with the classes and area for which they are responsible.

g. The churches established by the board are given much autonomy and encouraged to become calling churches as soon as possible. In the calling of a missionary the local group has been encouraged to be a vital

part of the decision-making. No missionary is called without the consent of the local group. —*Adopted*

4. That synod recognize, with appreciation, the years of service of the Rev. Marvin Baarman, and the Rev. Nelson Vander Zee, in Home Missions. Appreciation should also be expressed to the entire staff, and especially to Mr. G. Borst, for the additional responsibilities they are carrying at present. —*Adopted*

5. That synod endorse the concept of continuing education for Ministers in Mission (Report 4, G, 1) in cooperation with Calvin Seminary; and also the development of a program for leadership training for elders and deacons involving the Board of Home Missions, the Educational Department of the Board of Publications, and the CRWRC. —*Adopted*

6. That synod set apart a time for the introduction of Home Missionaries. —*Adopted*

7. That synod assign to Advisory Committee 8 the matter of the Manhattan Christian Reformed Church for consideration, although it was received late, and was not properly processed.

*Grounds:*

a. The desire of the Manhattan Christian Reformed Church to have the matter resolved.

b. The importance of this matter for the life of the church. Unresolved, the matter has potential of developing into a problem of much greater proportion.

c. The desire of the Home Mission Board to have the matter resolved as soon as possible. It has implications for other home mission stations. —*Adopted*

(The report of Advisory Committee 8 is continued in Article 37.)

ARTICLE 30

Advisory Committee 6, *Educational Matters*, the Rev. H. G. Arnold reporting, presents the following: (The report of Advisory Committee 6 is continued from Article 25.)

I. NEW APPOINTMENTS TO STAFF POSITIONS

A. *Materials:*

1. Report 2.
2. Report 2-A.

B. *Recommendation:* That synod approve the following new staff appointments to Calvin College:

1. De Jong, Jeanette (Mrs.), B.A. (M.A., 1973), Dean of Women for two years.

2. Dykema, Eugene, M.B.A., Assistant Professor of Economics for two years.

3. Hageman, Dolores (Mrs.), B.A., Assistant in Physical Education for two years.

4. Kuipers, Kenneth, M.B.A. (Ph.D. in 1973-74), Assistant Professor of Economics for two years. —*Adopted*

## II. REAPPOINTMENTS TO COLLEGE FACULTY

A. *Materials:*

1. Report 2.
2. Report 2-A.

B. *Recommendation:*

That synod approve the following reappointments to Calvin College (*italics indicate change in rank*):

1. Baldwin, Claude-Marie (Mrs.), B.A., Visiting Assistant in Romance Languages (French) for one year.
2. Beebe, John D., Ph.D., *Associate Professor* of Biology for two years.
3. Besselsen, Gilbert, Ph.D., *Professor* of Education for two years.
4. Borger, Ellen, M.A., Instructor in Romance Languages (French) for two years.
5. De Borst, James, Ph.D., *Professor* of Political Science for two years.
6. Greydanus, Samuel, M.A., Assistant Professor of History for two years.
- \*7. Hegewald, Cornelius P., M.A., D.A.G., *Associate Professor* of Germanic Languages for two years.
8. Huisman, Carl J., M.F.A., *Assistant Professor* of Art for two years.
- \*9. Huisman, Gertrude A., M.A., M. Mus., Assistant Professor of Music for two years.
- \*10. Klooster, Beverly, Ph.D., *Associate Professor* of Biology for two years.
11. Konyndyk, Kenneth, Ph.D., *Associate Professor* of Philosophy for two years.
- \*12. Kuipers, Jack, M.S.E. and Info. & Cont. E., Associate Professor of Mathematics for two years.
13. Lamse, James L., M.A., *Associate Professor* of Germanic Languages for two years.
14. Lucasse, Philip R., Ph.D., Associate Professor of Education for two years.
- \*15. Marsden, George M., Ph.D., *Professor* of History for two years.
16. Menninga, Clarence, Ph.D., *Professor* of Physics for two years.
- \*17. Monsma, Stephen V., Ph.D., *Professor* of Political Science for two years.
- \*18. Nyhoff, Larry R., Ph.D., *Professor* of Mathematics for two years.
- \*19. Ozinga, Thomas J., Ph.D., *Professor* of Speech for two years.
20. Pekelder, Bernard, Th.B., M.A., Vice President for Student Affairs for four years.
- \*21. Reynolds, Alfred J., Ph.D., *Professor* of Psychology for two years.
22. Roberts, Frank C., Ph.D., *Associate Professor* of History for two years.
23. Siebring, Barton G., M.A., Assistant Professor of Romance Languages (Spanish) for two years.
24. Stapert, Calvin R., Ph.D., *Assistant Professor* of Music for two years.
25. Vande Guchte, Peter, M.B.A. (Ph.D. in 1973-74), Vice President for Student Personnel Services for four years.
26. Van Kley, Dale, Ph.D., *Associate Professor* of History for two years.
27. Vila, David, B.D., M.A., Associate Professor of Romance Languages (Spanish) for two years.
28. Vos, Clarence, Th.D., *Professor* of Religion and Theology for two years.
- \*29. Vos, Louis, Th.D., *Professor* of Religion and Theology for two years.
- \*30. Walkout, Clarence P., Ph.D., *Professor* of English for two years.
31. Wells, Ronald A., Ph.D., Associate Professor of History for two years.
32. Westra, Dorothy, M.A., Assistant Professor of Education for two years.
33. Westra, Johan, Ph.D., *Professor* of Political Science. (He already has permanent tenure.)
- \*34. Zuidema, Doris J., M.A., Assistant Professor of Physical Education for two years.
- \*35. Zylstra, Mildred (Mrs.), M.A.L.S., Assistant Professor of English for two years.

—Adopted

\*Persons whose names are marked with an asterisk were interviewed by the Board of Trustees in February, 1973, with a view toward consideration for permanent

tenure. Granting tenure was delayed, however, pending acceptance of a new statement on tenure policy, which to date has not yet been approved. All such persons are approved at least for a two-year appointment, with the understanding that their tenure will be considered on the basis of the new rules for tenure as soon as these are adopted by the Board of Trustees, hopefully in February, 1974.

(The report of Advisory Committee 6 is continued in Article 48.)

#### ARTICLE 31

Advisory Committee 9, *Inter-Church*, the Rev. R. Peterson reporting, presents the following: (The report of Advisory Committee 9 is continued from Article 18.)

##### I. WORLD HOME BIBLE LEAGUE

A. *Material*: Report 32.

B. *Recommendation*: That synod commend the work of the World Home Bible League, recognize this organization as worthy of our prayers and continuing interest, and thank our synodical representative for his report. —*Adopted*

##### II. DELEGATES TO THE REFORMED ECUMENICAL SYNOD

A. *Material*: Report 33.

B. *Recommendation*: That synod encourage the Inter-Church Relations Committee to continue its consultations regarding the role and participation of the CRC in the RES. —*Adopted*

##### III. LORD'S DAY ALLIANCE OF CANADA

A. *Material*: Report 27

B. *Recommendation*: That synod recognize that this organization is deserving of our continued cooperation, and thank the synodical representative for his report. —*Adopted*

(The report of Advisory Committee 9 is continued in Article 45.)

#### ARTICLE 32

Advisory Committee 1, *Appeals*, the Rev. N. Punt reporting, presents the following:

##### I. REVISION OF STATEMENT ON BIBLICAL AUTHORITY (Report 44, Acts of Synod, 1972)

A. *Material*: Overture 1.

B. *Recommendation*: That synod not accede to the overture of Classis Pacific Northwest to either eliminate or provide a substitution for the phrase "the saving revelation of God in Jesus Christ."

*Grounds*:

1. Materially the phrase "the saving revelation of God in Jesus Christ" is found in our creeds in Article 3 of the Belgic Confession in these words, ". . . God, from a special care which he has for us and our salvation, commanded his servants, the prophets and the apostles, to commit his revealed word to writing . . ."

2. The phrase in its context is essential to the unmistakable intent of the entire report. —*Adopted*

## II. RESCIND DECISION ON BIBLICAL AUTHORITY (Report 44, Acts of Synod, 1972)

### A. *Materials:*

1. Overture 19, and Appendices
2. Communication 15 from the Phoenix Christian Reformed Church which expresses substantial agreement with Overture 19 and adds certain other considerations.

### B. *Recommendations:*

1. That synod not accede to the request of the consistory of the Second Christian Reformed Church of Toronto to rescind the decision of Synod 1972.

#### *Grounds:*

a. The overture has failed to prove that either Report 44 (Acts of Synod, 1972) or the seven points of pastoral advice contradict either the Scriptures or the creeds.

b. The overture does not present any new insights which would compel synod to reconsider the decision of 1972 concerning the Nature and Extent of Biblical Authority. —*Adopted*

2. That synod urge the Second Toronto Consistory to continue its study of the Report on Biblical Authority and related guidelines and to reconsider its decision that it cannot accept the guidelines and pastoral advice adopted by Synod of 1972.

#### *Ground:*

The arguments and conclusions of the overture clearly demonstrate that they have not understood the basic thrust and intent of the report and guidelines. This lack of understanding is exemplified when it is said:

“We no longer have an authoritative Bible.”

“The Bible is said to be authoritative only when it speaks of saving revelation in Jesus Christ.”

“By means of such erroneous exegesis synod presents the Scripture as man-focused rather than God-focused.”

“Synod demonstrates unresolved confusion of the distinction between authority and interpretation.”

“The guidelines deprive the believer of his right and privilege to apply the authoritative Word of God to the situations of life, or in any way to follow up the biblical mandate to discover the wolves among the sheep-fold. They create the necessity of an oracle (a scientist or scholar) to interpret either general or special revelation.”

“It makes general revelation superior, giving it priority above the Bible.”

When it is implied that either the report or the guidelines raises doubts that “*All* that the Scripture says is to be believed because the author says so.” —*Adopted*

3. That synod emphasize that 1972 Report 44 contains guidelines for a better understanding of the authority of Scripture, and should not be interpreted as a binding creedal statement. —*Adopted*

4. That synod declare that this also constitutes its answer to the communication of the Phoenix Christian Reformed Church. —*Adopted*

## III. REPLACE ARTICLE 41 OF THE CHURCH ORDER

A. *Material*: Overture 8.

B. *Recommendation*: That synod not accede to the overture of Classis Alberta South to replace Article 41 of the Church Order.

*Grounds*:

1. Article 41 in its present form allows for the procedure and mutual supervision desired by Classis Alberta South.

2. Mutual supervision of the churches is further provided for in Article 42 of the Church Order which speaks of the task of church visitors.

3. The proposed change does not guarantee that this mutual supervision will be conducted in a more meaningful way. —*Adopted*

## IV. AUGMENT CHURCH ORDER, ARTICLE 17

A. *Material*: Overture 13.

B. *Recommendations*:

1. That synod declare that, a minister who has been released from active ministerial service in his congregation according to Article 17 of the Church Order, and who has transferred his membership to another congregation, may, with the approval of classis and after a time agreed upon by classis, have his official connection transferred to the consistory of the congregation of which he is a member.

*Grounds*:

a. The "intolerable situation" which first precipitated the release of a minister from his consistory is likely to influence adversely their continuing relationship.

b. A neutral consistory may be in a better position to deal fairly and objectively with a released minister and to receive that minister's cooperation than would be the consistory from which the minister is estranged.

c. The consistory of the congregation of which he is a member is in a better position to exercise the appropriate supervision of the brother's doctrine and life.

d. This is in accord with the provision made for emeriti ministers by the Synod of 1968 (Art. 96) relative to Article 18 of the Church Order.

—*Adopted*

2. That synod declare this to be its answer to Overture 13.

—*Adopted*

(The report of Advisory Committee 1 is continued in Article 46.)

## ARTICLE 33

Committee 10, *Publication Matters*, the Rev. L. Tamminga reporting, presents the following: (The report of Advisory Committee 10 is continued from Article 27.)

## I. CHRISTIAN REFORMED BOARD OF PUBLICATIONS

A. *Material*: Report 5.

B. *Recommendations*:

1. That synod permit the following to represent the Board of Publications at the sessions of synod in all matters pertaining to the board when

these are being considered: The president of the board: the Rev. C. Boomsma; the secretary of the board: the Rev. John A. Mulder; the acting director of Education (in all matters pertaining to the Education Department): the Rev. A. Kuyvenhoven; the business manager (in matters pertaining to business aspects of the board's operation): Mr. Peter Meeuwssen; the chairman of the denominational building addition committee: Mr. J. Daverman; the Editors: Dr. L. DeKoster and the Rev. W. Haverkamp (in matters pertaining to their periodicals).

—*Adopted*

2. The synod approve the use of the Great Commission Publications on the Junior and Senior High Level for 1974 (Report 5, IV, B).

*Grounds:*

a. The development of new curriculum materials has not yet reached the point of producing our own sources for Junior and Senior High level.

b. This is an extension of the trial periods approved by the synods of 1971 and 1972.

—*Adopted*

3. That synod release the Education Committee from the mandate of publishing Vacation Bible School materials (Report 5, IV, C).

*Grounds:*

a. The responses of the churches to an extensive questionnaire indicated that marketing potential does not warrant further publication.

b. The courses as presently constituted need extensive revision for which time and personnel are not available.

c. In view of declining sales good stewardship forbids further investment in the present materials.

—*Adopted*

4. That synod agree that the Spanish Literature Committee be reorganized along the following lines:

a. That it be placed under the administrative jurisdiction of the Board of Foreign Missions.

b. That the committee personnel be composed of a knowledgeable representative of the Board of Foreign Missions, the Board of Home Missions, the Back to God Hour Committee, and the Board of Publications, and that additional committee personnel be appointed under jurisdiction of the Board of Foreign Missions.

c. That the committee commence its work as soon as possible, but that the Board of Foreign Missions provide a description of the mandate and organizational structure and a definition of the lines of responsibility for approval by the Synod of 1974.

d. That synod rule that the quota previously granted to the Spanish Literature Committee under the Board of Publications now be transferred to the Spanish Literature Committee under the Board of Foreign Missions.

*Grounds:*

1. The urgent need for Spanish materials demands a more effective coordination in production.

2. Denominational agencies involved in working with Spanish speaking people (Board of Foreign Missions, Board of Home Missions, Back

to God Hour, and Board of Publications) have indicated their endorsement of such a committee. —*Adopted*

5. That synod approve the plans of the Long Range Planning Committee for a Denominational Building Addition (cf. Report 5, V).

*Grounds:*

a. Synod of 1972 authorized the expansion of the Denominational Building and instructed the Board of Publications to implement this decision as titleholders in behalf of our denominational agencies.

b. The Board of Publications approved the proposed plans as meeting projected needs at a cost not far out of line with figures quoted to the 1972 Synod. —*Adopted*

6. That synod again encourage the churches to consider adopting the Every Family Plan subscription to THE BANNER on the same grounds as adduced by the Synod of 1972 (Acts 1972, p. 35, II, 3). —*Adopted*

7. That synod gratefully acknowledge the awards won by THE BANNER in the *Periodical of the Year Contest* sponsored by the Evangelical Press Association. THE BANNER placed first in 1971 and 1972 and second in 1973, with additional high honors in the categories of Original Art, Critical Review, and News Story. —*Adopted*

## II. CHRISTIAN REFORMED BOARD OF PUBLICATIONS

### A. *Material*: Report 5-A

B. *Recommendation*: That synod approve the inclusion of all the new approved and provisionally approved liturgical forms, the Liturgical Committee's report as it appears in the Acts of Synod, 1968, and the new provisional translation of the Heidelberg Catechism in the "Supplement to the Psalter Hymnal of the Christian Reformed Church."

*Ground:*

This will enable all the churches to use the new approved forms and will also help the churches to evaluate the provisionally approved forms and the new translation of the Heidelberg Catechism. —*Adopted*

(The report of Advisory Committee 10 is continued in Article 35.)

The afternoon session is closed with devotions.

## THURSDAY EVENING, JUNE 14, 1973

### Sixth Session

#### ARTICLE 34

After the session is opened with devotions, the chairman, Dr. L. Greenway, presents a letter addressed to synod by the Association of Christian Reformed Laymen under the signature of Mr. Nick Bierema. The Association asked for the privilege of taping the sessions of synod which are public meetings. Synod decides to grant the privilege.

#### ARTICLE 35

Advisory Committee 10, *Publication Matters*, the Rev. L. Tamminga reporting, presents: (The report of Advisory Committee 10 is continued from Article 33.)

## CHANGE CHURCH SCHOOL DECISION

A. *Material*: Overture 2B. *Recommendations*:

1. That synod declare that the adoption of the Unified Church School Curriculum in 1970 did not imply that we no longer "recognize the catechism class as we have known it in the Reformed heritage."

*Grounds*:

a. This is agreeable to the Department of Education, for they say in their report to synod, "However no congregation is forced to a one track system. A congregation may choose to use as many tracks as it desires, and all catechism books produced by the Education Committee in the past remain on the market . . ." (Report 5).

b. Article 64 of the Church Order stipulates that there shall be catechetical instruction. —*Adopted*

2. That synod declare this to be the answer to Overture 2. —*Adopted* (The report of Advisory Committee 10 is continued in Article 63.)

Synod recesses for the evening, the delegates going into committee sessions.

## FRIDAY MORNING, JUNE 15, 1973

## Seventh Session

## ARTICLE 36

The session is opened with devotions. The roll is called. All delegates are present. The minutes of Thursday's sessions are read and approved.

## ARTICLE 37

Advisory Committee 8, *Home Missions*, the Rev. E. Knott reporting, presents the following: (The report of Advisory Committee 8 is continued from Article 29.)

## I. FUND FOR NEEDY CHURCHES

A. *Materials*:

1. Report 12
2. Report 18, Section VIII
3. Report 4-A
4. Overtures 3, 15, 27, 28
5. Communication 18

B. *Recommendations*:

1. That the secretary and the treasurer of the Fund for Needy Churches be given the privilege of the floor when matters pertaining to FNC are considered, or that the privilege be given to other members of the committee if the above named are not present. —*Adopted*

2. That the minimum salary for ministers serving churches which receive assistance from FNC be set at \$8,000.00 for 1974. —*Adopted*

3. That the per family contribution toward the minister's salary in congregations receiving aid from the FNC in 1974 be not less (and if possible more) than \$124.00 in the United States and in Canada.

—*Adopted*

4. That a child allowance of \$250.00 be granted for every child up to twenty-two (22) years of age, excluding those who have reached the age of nineteen (19) years of age and who are no longer enrolled in an educational institution. —*Adopted*

5. That a \$350.00 car allowance be given to each minister serving a church which receives assistance from the FNC. Each church is required to pay a minimum of \$500.00 mileage to the minister over and above the salary paid. —*Adopted*

6. That:

a. Synod mandate the Finance Committee of the Synodical Interim Committee to conduct a comprehensive salary study with respect to ordained men. This is prompted by the continuing salary inequities among our ministers. This study should be analogous to the National Union of Christian Schools Salary Studies and possess the machinery to deal with the problem on a continuing (i.e., year to year) basis. —*Adopted*

b. Synod mandate this same committee to consider the special financial problems of churches unable to pay the minimum amount as required under existing rules of the Fund for Needy Churches. This study to be in consultation with FNC, SCORR, CRWRC, BHM, and a representative from the minority membership of the denomination.

*Grounds:*

1. Overtures 3 and 15 deal with the inequities between BHM and FNC, especially in regard to emerging churches.

2. Report 18 of the Synodical Committee on Race Relations (Sec. VIII) points to a problem in churches unable to pay the minimum amount required under the existing rules of FNC.

3. The FNC Committee itself (Communication 18) suggests such a study committee be appointed. —*Adopted*

c. Synod declare this is its answer to Overtures 3 and 15. —*Adopted*

7. a. That synod instruct the Fund for Needy Churches to provide assistance of \$8,000.00 for salary subsidy beginning January 1, 1974, to the Garfield Christian Reformed Church, by way of exception to the present rules for one more year.

*Grounds:*

1. This request is endorsed by Classis Chicago North, May 16, 1973.

2. A reasonable case is presented by the Garfield Church. —*Adopted*

b. Synod declare this is its answer to Overtures 27 and 28. —*Adopted*

## II. APPEAL OF CLASSIS TORONTO

A. *Materials:*

1. Printed Appeal 1

2. Report 4-A, E

B. *Recommendation:* That synod not accede to the appeal of Classis Toronto to continue the Cochrane field under the Board of Home Missions.

*Grounds:*

1. The field has failed to mature in the past 15-20 years.
2. On the basis of available data, there appears to be low mission potential on the Cochrane field.
3. The most responsible stewardship of Home Missions funds would appear to require termination of the field as a denominational home missions field.
4. Classis Toronto itself can assist the Cochrane congregation by classical supply. —*Defeated*

It is moved to accede to the appeal of Classis Toronto to continue the Cochrane field for two years. —*Adopted*

## III. CHURCH HELP FUND

A. *Materials:*

1. Report 10
2. Overture 12

B. *Recommendations:*

1. That the Rev. E. Blankespoor, a member of the Church Help Fund Committee and a delegate to synod, be given the privilege of the floor on matters pertaining to the Church Help Fund. —*Adopted*

2. That synod:

a. Urge the churches that have experienced substantial growth to make more rapid repayment of their loans, if at all possible, to enable the fund to meet the commitments they have already made, and to make additional loans.

b. Note, with regret, that some churches failed to meet their obligations in full since this jeopardizes the revolving nature of the Church Help Fund.

c. Request that classes give careful review to all applications they endorse. According to the committee it is painfully obvious at times that classes are not always diligent in this respect and too readily endorse applications from churches that are not weak and needy. —*Adopted*

3. That synod not accede to the appeal of Classis Alberta North re Trinity, Edmonton.

*Grounds:*

a. Classis itself said that the congregation was of average and above average income.

b. The land on which Trinity Church was built, with an approximate value of \$14,000.00, was donated to the congregation.

c. The congregation is experiencing a good growth, now numbering 118 families.

d. The local church budget is modest (the 1973 budget requires a \$458.33 per family contribution).

e. The Church Help Fund has insufficient funds.

—*Adopted*

(The report of Advisory Committee 8 is continued in Article 80.)

## ARTICLE 38

Motion made to adjourn on Saturday morning at 11:15.  
The morning session is concluded with devotions.

## FRIDAY AFTERNOON, JUNE 15, 1973

## Eighth Session

## ARTICLE 39

After opening devotions, the chairman recognizes the Rev. J. Steigenga, who replaces the Rev. R. Peterson as delegate from Classis Lake Erie. The Rev. Steigenga arises to indicate his agreement with the forms of unity.

## ARTICLE 40

The chairman recognizes the Rev. L. Bazuin of the *Reception Committee*, who in turn presents the Rev. H. Evenhouse, executive secretary of foreign missions. The Rev. Mr. Evenhouse presents to synod the following missionaries who are present: Mr. John Gberkon, Mr. and Mrs. Fred Feikema, Mr. Cornelius Korhorn, Dr. Harry R. Boer, Miss Gertrude Van Haitsma, Mr. Donald Bremer, Rev. and Mrs. Bernard Dokter, Rev. and Mrs. Jerry Pott, Dr. W. Luz, and Rev. Harry Vanderaa.

Mr. J. Gberkon, Rev. B. Dokter, Dr. W. Luz, and Rev. Edward Van Baak address synod in behalf of the foreign missionaries. The Rev. Richard Venema responds in behalf of synod.

The Rev. L. Bazuin presents Mr. G. Borst of the Board of Home Missions, who in turn presents the following home missionaries to synod: The Revs. F. Walhof, G. Negen, M. Nieboer, P. Hogeterp, Dr. R. Kooistra, H. Spaan, H. Bouma, J. Natelborg, R. Tjapkes, C. VanderMeyden, F. Bultman, P. Lagerwey, B. Huizenga, A. E. Mulder, P. Yang, J. Vigh, J. Rozeboom, G. Boerfyn, and Elder E. Berkompas. The Rev. A. E. Mulder addresses synod in behalf of the home missionaries. The Rev. L. Bossenbroek responds in behalf of synod.

## ARTICLE 41

The Rev. L. Bazuin presents to synod Dr. J. Miles, president of the Grand Rapids School of the Bible and Music, the school which purchased the Franklin Street Calvin Campus. Dr. Miles expresses appreciation to the denomination for the sale of the Calvin property and for the personal contacts with Calvin personnel. Dr. James Bosscher responds for synod.

## ARTICLE 42

Advisory Committee 11, *Varia*, the Rev. I. Apol reporting, presents the following: (The report of Advisory Committee 11 is continued from Article 24.)

## I. MINISTERS' PENSION FUND—RETIREMENT BENEFITS

A. *Materials*:

1. Report 16.
2. Report 16-A, III.

**B. Background:** In 1969 synod instructed "the Ministers' Pension Committee to review annually the adequacy of the pension benefits in relation to the cost of living during the ten-year transition period and at intervals of not less than three years thereafter" (Acts of Synod 1969, Art. 71, V-C-2a, p. 47).

The Pension Committee reviewed this matter on May 11, 1973 but did not submit a report indicating the present status of those receiving pension benefit payments.

**C. Recommendations:**

1. That Mr. J. F. Mellema (committee chairman) and Mr. A. Walters (committee treasurer) be accorded the privilege of the floor, with Mr. Jack Stoepker (committee administrator) as alternate for either on matters pertaining to the Ministers' Pension Fund. —*Adopted*

2. That synod request the Ministers' Pension Committee to submit a written report, based on a survey of both national and geographic differences, indicating the adequacy or inadequacy of pension benefit payments. —*Adopted*

## II. MINISTERS' PENSION FUND RULES

**A. Material:** Overture 20.

**B. Analysis:** Classis Minnesota North overtures synod to instruct the Ministers' Pension Committee to change its ruling which states that only one minister from each church comes under the quota payment to read ". . . that all Christian Reformed ministers who are serving individual congregations as assistant pastors, or are working in the congregation, or are employed as a 'team ministry' by the congregation become eligible for benefits under the Pension Plan by means of quota payments."

**C. Recommendations:**

1. That synod reject the overture from Classis Minnesota North.

**Grounds:**

a. Synod 1972 approved the Administrative Policy of the Ministers' Pension Fund. "Each organized church will get credit for one minister. If a church has more than one minister, it is obligated to pay for each additional minister the annual participant payment" (Acts of Synod 1972, Art. 43, I-C-2, p. 52).

b. The concept "team ministry" lacks clarity. —*Adopted*

2. That synod declare this to be its answer to Overture 20. —*Adopted*  
(The report of Advisory Committee 11 is continued in Article 52.)

## ARTICLE 43

Advisory Committee 4, *Church Order III*, the Rev. H. Vanden Einde reporting, presents the following: (The report of Advisory Committee 4 is continued from Article 17.)

### LITURGICAL COMMITTEE

**A. Material:** Report 38.

**B. Recommendations:**

1. That synod grant the privilege of the floor to Dr. Carl Kromminga

and the Rev. John Schuurmann when the report of the Liturgical Committee is being considered. —*Adopted*

2. That synod recommend the updated Form for Baptism to the churches for provisional use for a period of three years, with a view to eventual adoption by synod, and request that reactions to the form be presented to the Liturgical Committee. —*Adopted*

(The report of Advisory Committee 4 is continued in Article 58.)

The session is closed with devotions.

## SATURDAY MORNING, JUNE 16, 1973

### Ninth Session

#### ARTICLE 44

After opening devotions, the roll is called. All delegates are present. The Friday minutes are read and approved.

#### ARTICLE 45

Advisory Committee 9, *Inter-Church*, the Rev. L. Bazuin, reporting in the absence of the Rev. R. Peterson, presents the following: (The report of Advisory Committee 9 is continued from Article 31.)

#### INTER-CHURCH RELATIONS COMMITTEE

##### A. *Materials:*

1. Report 14.

2. Communication 5 (from Inter-Church Relations Committee)

B. *Recommendation:* That synod grant the privilege of the floor to the president and the secretary of the committee when matters pertaining to this committee are considered. —*Adopted*

##### C. *Gereformeerde Kerken and the Problem of Sister Church Relationship*

##### 1. Background

The Synod of 1970 mandated the Inter-Church Relations Committee to advise synod whether our sister church relationship with the Gereformeerde Kerken should be altered because of recent trends in that church. In considering this question over the past three years, the committee faced the more fundamental question of the definition of a sister church relationship in general, and whether that relationship as defined by the Synod of 1944 can be applied to any church with which we are in correspondence. That relationship was defined as a unity which, if it were not for the barriers of geography or language, would result in union. The implications of this relationship have not been fully accepted by the Christian Reformed Church in the years since the adoption of this definition, as is apparent by our requiring a colloquium doctum for ministers coming from the Gereformeerde Kerken. For many years, therefore, we have had an official position which we were not ready to apply fully or to reject.

The Inter-Church Relations Committee recognizes that, given our present definition, it is likely that the demands of integrity will compel

us to discontinue our sister church relationship with the Gereformeerde Kerken. Your advisory committee concurs in this. At the same time, however, we believe it is both important and necessary to maintain fruitful contact and correspondence with the Gereformeerde Kerken.

2. We, therefore, recommend

a. That synod mandate the Inter-Church Relations Committee to study Articles 8 and 59 of the Church Order to determine the validity of the reference to "sister churches" and "other denominations with which the Christian Reformed Church maintains full ecclesiastical fellowship." —*Adopted*

b. That synod mandate the Inter-Church Relations Committee to study our system of correspondence with other churches (cf. Church Order Art. 49) with a view to such redefinition of the process of correspondence as will promote most fully the fellowship of the true church of Jesus Christ and will work most effectively to maintain and to restore the true unity of the churches. —*Adopted*

c. That the results of these studies be reported to synod in a definite report no later than 1975. —*Adopted*

d. That, until these studies are completed, we continue to exercise our sister church relationship with the Gereformeerde Kerken by means of appropriate admonitions and other representations, including a reference to the above studies and the reasons for undertaking them. —*Adopted*

#### D. *Committee Membership*

##### 1. *Recommendations:*

a. That the work of the Rev. Arnold Brink be acknowledged with appreciation and thanks. —*Adopted*

b. That the membership of the committee be expanded to seven regular members, with the Stated Clerk serving ex-officio. —*Adopted*

#### E. *The National Presbyterian and Reformed Fellowship*

##### 1. *Background*

The Christian Reformed Church, through its Inter-Church Relations Committee, was invited by this Fellowship to the NPRF meeting to be held in September 1973 and also to the Advisory Convention of the Continuing Presbyterian Church (gathered from out of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.).

##### 2. *Recommendations:*

a. That synod approve the action of the Inter-Church Relations Committee in declining to participate in these meetings. —*Adopted*

b. That synod endorse the policy of the Inter-Church Relations Committee limiting its representation to established churches and associations of established churches. —*Adopted*

#### F. *The Orthodox Presbyterian Church*

1. *Material:* Communication 20 (letter from the Orthodox Presbyterian Church)

2. *Recommendations:*

a. That synod take note of the letter received from the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, dated June 3, 1973, informing us of their 40th General Assembly held May 14-19, 1973. —*Adopted*

b. That the letter be referred to the Inter-Church Relations Committee for implementation. —*Adopted*

G. *The Reformed Churches of Australia*

1. *Material:* Communication 21 (letter from the Stated Clerk of the Reformed Churches of Australia)

2. *Recommendations:*

a. That synod take note that the Christian Reformed Church was represented at the synod of the Reformed Churches of Australia by Dr. S. Woudstra. —*Adopted*

b. That synod instruct the Stated Clerk to reply to this letter. —*Adopted*

H. *Relations with the Reformed Church in America*

1. *Materials:*

a. Overtures 5, 16, 21.

b. Communications 1, 3

1) Consistory of Calvin, Rock Valley, Iowa

3) Consistory of Prospect Park, Holland, Michigan

2. *Analysis:* Overture 5 urges the discussion of certain differences, some of them specified, in all the recommended efforts toward unity and cooperation. Overture 16 addresses itself more specifically to the Inter-Church Relations Committee and adds a point of difference not specified in Overture 5, but otherwise is substantially identical. Overture 21 asks the Inter-Church Relations Committee to determine whether there are any areas of disagreement in the interpretation and application of Scripture before the various joint ventures being recommended are approved.

Communication 1 indicates that Classis Sioux Center will not engage in any joint ventures until synod has resolved specified basic differences. Communication 3 takes issue with Overture 21 on the grounds that what is being proposed is not a merger but lesser cooperation.

3. *Recommendations:*

a. In response to the issues read, synod declares:

1) That a distinction must be maintained between organic union and cooperation. —*Adopted*

2) That neither the Christian Reformed Church nor its Inter-Church Relations Committee has embarked on a course leading directly toward organic union; but rather both have taken the approach of "encouraging closer fellowship between the CRC and the Reformed Church in America" (Acts of Synod, 1966, p. 59). —*Adopted*

3) That discussion of basic issues and differences, which the Inter-Church Relations Committee has not ignored and intends to pursue further, is enhanced by certain forms of cooperation, and is very difficult without them. —*Adopted*

4) That the recommendations of the Inter-Church Relations Committee are to be regarded as advisory in character, and therefore, should be implemented by consistories and classes only where such implementation contributes to the welfare of the church. —*Adopted*

5) That members and organizations of the Christian Reformed Church, including the Inter-Church Relations Committee, when engaging in joint activities with groups in the Reformed Church in America, be encouraged to discuss, whenever appropriate, the differences which separate the two denominations. —*Adopted*

b. That synod declare the above to be its answer to Overtures 5, 16, and 21 and communications 1 and 3, and the informative communication. —*Adopted*

### I. *Council of the Christian Reformed Churches of Canada*

#### A. *Materials:*

1. Acts of Council - 1972.
2. Communication 2.

B. *Recommendation:* That synod take note that the Council has sent a report of its 1972 meeting, with a cover letter indicating that Article 28 of the Acts of Council has been called to the attention of the Inter-Church Relations Committee. —*Adopted*

(The report of Advisory Committee 9 is continued in Article 67.)

### ARTICLE 46

Advisory Committee 1, *Appeals*, the Rev. N. Punt reporting, presents the following: (The report of Advisory Committee 1 is continued from Article 32.)

#### I. APPEAL OF 1972 DECISION ON BIBLICAL AUTHORITY

A. *Material:* Unprinted Appeal 2 from Mr. John K. Slager.

B. *Information:* This is a protest against the expressions found in Report 44 stating that all Scripture is redemptive in character.

#### C. *Recommendations:*

1. That synod not sustain the appeal of Mr. John K. Slager.

*Ground:* The appeal fails to demonstrate that Report 44 errs in saying, "Scripture is a redemptive, saving revelation of God in Jesus Christ." —*Adopted*

2. That synod refer Mr. Slager to the first point of pastoral advice adopted by Synod 1972 (Acts of Synod, 1972, p. 537). —*Adopted*

#### II. APPEAL OF FIRST BELLFLOWER AGAINST DECISION OF CALIFORNIA SOUTH

##### A. *Materials:*

1. Printed Appeal 2.
2. Addenda to Printed Appeal 2 (Supplementary)

B. *Analysis:* At the meeting of Classis California South held January 17, 1973 the church visitors reported that the Anaheim Christian Reformed Church occasionally had services in which only lay members

gave brief sermonettes, even though the service was led by the pastor. This was done notably on the "special days."

The visitors discussed with the consistory the question of whether or not this was in violation of Article 54 of the Church Order. The visitors made the observation to the consistory that "we presently have a synodical study committee working on the whole question of the meaning of Ecclesiastical Office and Ordination. Perhaps they will eventually give us further light on the whole question. But for the present we judged that the Anaheim practice is in harmony with Articles 53 and 54 of the Church Order." (Quotation taken from Church Visitor Report to Classis.) They went on to say that they judged this not only an allowable practice but one which other churches might very well follow.

Classis received the report for information.

First Bellflower submitted the following overture to California South Classis meeting May 16, 1973:

"The Council of the First Christian Reformed Church of Bellflower overtures Classis California South to declare that lay exhortation as noted by church visitors to Anaheim Christian Reformed Church at January 17, 1973 report, is not in agreement with the directives of the Church Order and should not be endorsed as an example for other churches."

Classis did not adopt this overture, and the delegates of First Bellflower informed classis that they reserved the right to appeal.

*C. Recommendation:* That synod declare that lay exhortation in place of the official administration of the Word, as noted in the Anaheim Church visitor's report is not in agreement with the directives of the Church Order.

*Ground:* The Church Order clearly states in Art. 54 a "In the worship services the minister of the Word shall officially explain and apply Holy Scripture."

It is moved to withhold action on the recommendation and refer the appeal back to Classis California South. —*Adopted*

(The report of Advisory Committee 1 is continued in Article 50.)

The session is closed with devotions.

## MONDAY MORNING, JUNE 18, 1973

### Tenth Session

#### ARTICLE 47

The session begins with opening devotions. The roll is called. Elder M. Van Elderen replaces Dr. J. Bosscher of Classis Grand Rapids East. He rises to indicate his agreement with the forms of unity. The Rev. R. Peterson replaces his alternate the Rev. J. Steigenga for Classis Lake Erie.

The following were noted as absent with notification: The Rev. G. Pols of Classis British Columbia and the Rev. L. Bazuin of Classis Illiana.

The Saturday minutes are read and approved.

## ARTICLE 48

Advisory Committee 6, *Educational Matters*, the Rev. H. G. Arnold reporting, presents the following: (The report of Advisory Committee 6 is continued from Article 30.)

## EXAMINATION OF CANDIDATES AND ADMISSION TO THE MINISTRY

A. *Materials*:

1. Overture 4.
2. Overture 9.
3. Overture 17.
4. Overture 26.

B. *Observations*:

Overtures 4, 19, 17, and 26 all relate to various aspects of the examinations for candidacy and ordination. Overtures 4 and 26 make requests which relate to evaluating a candidate and admitting him to the ministry. Overtures 9 and 17 make requests which relate to the examinations of the candidates and declaration of candidacy to the churches.

With respect to Overtures 9 and 17 the advisory committee observes the following: (1) that they are mutually incompatible, (2) that each has some points in its favor, and (3) that some related problems are not touched upon. Under the pressure of the limited time available during synod's sessions, it is hard to choose between these two approaches or to harmonize them with any assurance that the real problems in this area of concern have been met. Moreover, it would be unwise for synod to adopt any drastic changes in procedure before the entire matter has been before the churches for their reaction.

Your committee further observes that the submission of four independent overtures in the same general area of concern is an indication of a substantial degree of dissatisfaction regarding the procedures by which men proceed from student status to that of ordained ministers.

C. *Recommendation*: That synod appoint a study committee to study Overtures 4, 9, 17, and 26, together with such related problems as the relation between examinations for candidacy and for ordination, and the question of declaring candidacy at various times during the year, and to recommend to synod a comprehensive plan for examinations leading to admission to the ministry.

*Grounds*:

1. The number of overtures concerning this subject indicates a considerable concern among the churches.

2. The procedure for classical examinations was revised only a year ago and should be further tested in practice before changes are made in it.

3. The decision of Synod of 1961 to refer interviews for candidacy to the Board of Trustees was carefully considered and should not be reversed without good reason (Cf. Acts of Synod 1961, pp. 54-56).

4. Each of the overtures picks up the problem at a different point. None provides a comprehensive solution, nor can one be formulated without introducing new material which has not been before synod.

5. In recent years men have become ready for candidacy at various times during the year and this trend will increase since the adoption of the M.Div. program at Calvin Seminary. —*Adopted*

(The report of Advisory Committee 6 is continued in Article 79.)

#### ARTICLE 49

The chairman, Dr. L. Greenway, announces the appointment of the Rev. E. Los as a member of the *Reception Committee* in the place of Dr. J. Bosscher who is absent.

#### ARTICLE 50

Advisory Committee 1, *Appeals*, the Rev. N. Punt reporting, presents the following: (The report of Advisory Committee 1 is continued from Article 46.)

#### APPEALS OF DECISION OF CLASSIS GRAND RAPIDS EAST

##### A. *Materials*:

1. Printed Appeal 3 from Oakdale Park Consistory.
2. Printed Appeal 4 from Faith Consistory.
3. Communication 24 from Grand Rapids East Classical Committee.

B. *Recommendation*: That synod not sustain the appeals of the Faith and Oakdale Park Christian Reformed Church Consistories.

##### *Grounds*:

a. It is within the jurisdiction of Classis Grand Rapids East to judge of the matters involved.

b. The appeals do not offer evidence that Classis Grand Rapids East acted in conflict with the Church Order or synodical regulations.

—*Adopted*

(The report of Advisory Committee 1 is continued in Article 86.)

#### ARTICLE 51

The Rev. E. Los, in behalf of the *Reception Committee*, presents the Rev. James Lont. The Rev. Mr. Lont speaks for United Calvinist Youth. He states that the basic purpose of the United Calvinist Youth movement is to motivate the youth of the church to have Christ as King and to serve him always and everywhere.

The Rev. I. Apol responds in behalf of synod.

#### ARTICLE 52

Advisory Committee 11, *Varia*, the Rev. I. Apol reporting, presents the following: (The report of Advisory Committee 11 is continued from Article 42.)

#### I. HISTORICAL COMMITTEE

A. *Material*: Report 13.

B. *Information*: The Historical Committee continues to microfilm the minutes of consistories and classes for permanent preservation. To date 80 percent of the churches have responded favorably to the committee's request.

C. *Recommendations:*

1. That synod express appreciation for the work of the committee.

—*Adopted*

2. That synod request the Historical Committee to submit its financial report for inclusion in the Agenda.

*Ground:* An annual budget of \$10,000 ought to be reviewed occasionally.

—*Adopted*

II. SYNODICAL COMMITTEE ON RACE RELATIONS (SCORR)

A. *Material:* Report 18.

B. *Recommendation:* That synod thank the committee and its executive secretary, Mr. Karl J. Westerhof, for the important work they are doing in carrying out their mandate.

—*Adopted*

III. CHRISTIAN LAYMEN'S LEAGUE

A. *Material:* Report 23.

B. *Information:* The Christian Laymen's League currently uses two primary means to accomplish its purpose. BLAST OFF is a Christian television program for children. Several hundred ORBITOR BIBLE CLUBS for children were conducted during 1972 throughout the United States and Canada.

C. *Recommendations:*

1. That synod express appreciation for the work of the League.

—*Adopted*

2. That synod continue to name a representative to the Christian Laymen's League.

—*Adopted*

(The report of Advisory Committee 11 is continued in Article 60.)

The session is closed with devotions.

MONDAY AFTERNOON, JUNE 18, 1973

Eleventh Session

ARTICLE 53

The session is opened with devotions.

Advisory Committee 7, *Foreign Missions*, the Rev. B. Huizenga reporting, presents the following: (The report of Advisory Committee 7 is continued from Article 26.)

COMMITTEE TO STUDY HOMOSEXUALITY

A. *Materials:*

Report 42

Communication 17

B. *Observations:*

The mandate of the committee as given by the Synod of 1970 was "to study the problem of homosexuality and to delineate the church's position on this matter" (Acts, 1970, p. 121). In the "grounds" supplied for the mandate, synod declared that homosexuality "is a growing problem in

today's society" and it therefore deemed it advisable to appoint a study committee to advise synod what the church's position ought to be.

For a proper reading and understanding of the report it is imperative to observe the careful definitions of and distinctions made in relation to the terms "homosexual," "homosexuality" and "homosexualism":

A "homosexual" is a person who has erotic attractions for members of the same sex. Such a person may or may not actually engage in homosexuality. "It must be pointed out that there are people who have strong erotic attractions for members of the same sex who nevertheless never engage in homosexual acts for various reasons, such as, for example, their religious convictions. They are homosexuals, that is, they are constitutionally (by either biological or psychological conditions or both) predisposed to homosexuality, but do not engage in homosexuality."

"Homosexuality" is a condition of personal identity in which the person is sexually oriented toward persons of the same sex.

"Homosexualism" is explicit (overt) homosexual practice.

### C. Recommendations:

1. That the Rev. Clarence Boomsma, secretary of the Committee to Study Homosexuality be given the privilege of the floor when matters pertaining to this committee are considered. —*Adopted*

2. That synod submit the "Study Report Re Homosexuality" (Part 1) to our churches as providing a background study for our understanding of the problem of homosexuality and the formulation of a Christian position. —*Adopted*

### 3. Introductory Note:

For a proper reading and understanding of the pastoral advice it is imperative to observe the following definitions:

"A homosexual" is a person who has erotic attractions for members of the same sex. Such a person may or may not actually engage in homosexuality. "It must be pointed out that there are people who have strong erotic attractions for members of the same sex who nevertheless never engage in homosexual acts for various reasons, such as, for example, their religious convictions. They are homosexuals, that is, they are constitutionally (by either biological or psychological conditions or both) predisposed to homosexuality, but do not engage in homosexuality."

"Homosexuality" is a condition of personal identity in which the person is sexually oriented toward persons of the same sex.

"Homosexualism" is explicit (overt) homosexual practice.

That synod serve the churches with the following statements of pastoral advice:

a. Homosexuality (male and female) is a condition of disordered sexuality which reflects the brokenness of our sinful world and for which the homosexual may himself bear only a minimal responsibility. —*Adopted*

b. The homosexual may not, on the sole ground of his sexual disorder be denied community acceptance, and if he is a Christian he is to be wholeheartedly received by the church as a person for whom Christ died. —*Adopted*

c. Homosexuality—as explicit homosexual practice—must be condemned as incompatible with obedience to the will of God as revealed in Holy Scripture. —*Adopted*

d. The church must exercise the same patient understanding of and compassion for the homosexual in his sins as for all other sinners. The gospel of God's grace in Christ is to be proclaimed to him as the basis of his forgiveness, the power of his renewal, and the source of his strength to lead a sanctified life. As all Christians in their weaknesses, the homosexual must be admonished and encouraged not to allow himself to be defeated by lapses in chastity, but rather, to repent and thereafter to depend in fervent prayer upon the means of grace for power to withstand temptation. —*Adopted*

e. In order to live a life of chastity in obedience to God's will the homosexual needs the loving support and encouragement of the church. The church should therefore so include him in its fellowship that he is not tempted by rejection and loneliness to seek companionship in a "gay world" whose godless lifestyle is alien to a Christian. —*Adopted*

f. Homosexuals, especially in their earlier years, should be encouraged to seek such help as may effect their sexual reorientation and the church should do everything in its power to help the homosexual overcome his disorder. Members of the churches should understand that many homosexuals, who might otherwise seek therapeutic aid, are deterred from doing so by the fear of detection and consequent ostracism. Christian acceptance and support can in all such cases be a means toward healing and wholeness. On the other hand, to those who are not healed and who must accept the limitations of their homosexuality, the church must minister in the same spirit as when it ministers to all who are not married. —*Adopted*

g. Christians who are homosexual in their orientation are like all Christians called to discipleship and to the employment of their gifts in the cause of the kingdom. They should recognize that their sexuality is subordinate to their obligation to live in wholehearted surrender to Christ.

By the same token, churches should recognize that their homosexual members are fellow-servants of Christ who are to be given opportunity to render within the offices and structures of the congregation the same service that is expected from heterosexuals. The homosexual member must not be supposed to have less the gift of self-control in the face of sexual temptation than does the heterosexual. The relationship of love and trust within the congregation should be such that in instances where a member's sexual propensity does create a problem, the problem can be dealt with in the same way as are problems caused by the limitations and disorders of any other member. —*Adopted*

h. It is the duty of pastors to be informed about the condition of homosexuality and the particular problems of the homosexual in order that the pastor may minister to his need and to the need of others, such as parents, who may be intimately involved in the problems of homosexuality. The pastor is also in a position to instruct his congregation in

appropriate ways about homosexuality and to alert members and office holders to the responsibility they bear toward homosexuals in the fellowship. He can encourage an understanding of and compassion for persons who live with this sexual disorder, and dispel the prejudices under which they suffer. —Adopted

i. The church should promote good marriages, and healthy family life in which the relations between husband and wife and between parents and children are such that the psychological causes that may contribute to sexual inversion are reduced to a minimum. Parents should be encouraged to seek Christian counsel and help when they see signs of disordered sexual maturation in their children. —Adopted

j. Institutions and agencies associated with the church that are in a position to contribute to the alleviation of the problem of homosexuality are encouraged to do so by assisting ministers to become better informed, by offering counseling services to the homosexual and his family, and by generally creating a Christian attitude in the churches as well as in society as a whole. —Adopted

k. The church should speak the Word of God prophetically to a society and culture which glorifies sexuality and sexual gratification. It should foster a wholesome appreciation of sex and expose and condemn the idolatrous sexualism and the current celebration of homosexuality promoted in literature, the theater, films, television, advertisements and the like. —Adopted

4. That synod thank the study committee for its work. —Adopted

5. That synod consider this to be its answer to that part of Communion 17 dealing with this matter. —Adopted

#### ARTICLE 54

The session is closed with prayer and on Monday evening synod honors its special guests at a testimonial dinner.

### TUESDAY MORNING, JUNE 19, 1973

#### Twelfth Session

#### ARTICLE 55

The morning session is opened with devotions. The roll is called. All delegates are present. The Monday minutes are read and approved.

#### ARTICLE 56

1. The Rev. L. Bazuin, speaking for the *Reception Committee*, introduces Dr. Herman Ridder, former President of Western and New Brunswick Seminaries and present pastor of the Central Reformed Church of Grand Rapids, Michigan, as the fraternal delegate from the Reformed Church in America. Dr. Ridder addresses synod and in the course of his address presents in behalf of the RCA Synod of 1973 two invitations to synod: a. To join a study committee composed of five representatives of each denomination whose mandate will be to study the theology of evangelism. b. To join in pilot projects in various shared ministries, such as: church planning, youth work, overseas ministries.

The Rev. W. Buursma responds.

2. The Rev. E. Los, in behalf of the *Reception Committee*, presents Chaplain L. Kok to synod. Chaplain Kok briefly addresses synod.

The Rev. W. Heynen responds.

3. The Rev. E. Los also requests synod to recognize Chaplain Henry Guikema, who is present at this time.

#### ARTICLE 57

The vice-president of synod presents the following:

1. That synod refer the proposals of the Reformed Synod, given in the person of Dr. Ridder, to Advisory Committee 9 for recommendation.

—*Adopted*

2. A letter from the Rev. R. Recker is read, thanking synod for its appointment and expressing his acceptance.

#### ARTICLE 58

Advisory Committee 4, *Church Order III*, the Rev. H. Vanden Einde reporting, presents the following: (The report of Advisory Committee 4 is continued from Article 43.)

#### LITURGICAL COMMITTEE

A. *Material*: Report 38.

B. *History*: Though synod gave no specific mandate to the Liturgical Committee with respect to the second worship service, the committee states: "For some years your committee on liturgy has been under pressure to submit a study on the second Sunday service." They have undertaken this study under the broad mandate given in 1964 "to study liturgical usages and practices in our churches in the light of Reformed liturgical principles and past synodical decisions . . ." They have now presented a "Report on the Second Sunday Service."

C. *Observation*: We recognize the fact that the second Sunday service need not be a simple duplication of the morning worship. We believe that the Church Order does not exclude variation in the second service under the supervision of the consistory. Yet we believe there are parts of this report that allow for types of services which may be in violation of the Church Order. In this light we make the following recommendations.

D. *Recommendations*:

1. That synod refer this report to the churches for their consideration and reflection.

*Grounds*:

a. The first section of the report is of an informative and illustrative nature, and calls for further reflection.

b. The second section contains suggestions for certain types of services which synod ought not to adopt with an official endorsement, since in this way the possibility may be opened for types of services which would be in violation of the Church Order (e.g. the ecumenical service), or the intent of one of the questions asked at church visiting:

"When guest ministers or unordained men are invited to preach, does the consistory employ only persons who are of Reformed persuasion and who are properly licensed?" —*Adopted*

2. That synod remind the churches that whatever practices are followed with respect to the second service, the consistories exercise care to observe Articles 51-55 of the Church Order, particularly Article 54a which states: "In the worship services the minister of the Word shall officially explain and apply Holy Scripture." —*Adopted*

(The report of Advisory Committee 4 is continued in Article 62.)

The session is closed with devotions.

## TUESDAY AFTERNOON, JUNE 19, 1973

### Thirteenth Session

#### ARTICLE 59

During synod's devotionals, the Rev. J. Lont presents Mr. Jim Bolden, vocalist, who thrills synod with his music.

#### ARTICLE 60

Advisory Committee 11, *Varia*, the Rev. I. Apol reporting, presents the following: (The report of Advisory Committee 11 is continued from Article 52.)

#### I. CHAPLAIN COMMITTEE MATTERS

##### A. *Materials:*

1. Report 9.
2. Report 4-A, B

##### B. *Full-time Executive Secretary*

1. Background: Past synodical decisions indicate an ever-increasing challenge confronted and met by the Chaplain Committee. In 1970, synod gave authorization for a part-time secretary (Acts of Synod 1970, Art. 40, p. 18). Since 1970 the challenge of the institutional chaplaincy continues to grow. The need for this ministry continues to grow in hospitals, in prisons, in community health centers, and in industry. The Chaplain Committee now requests "that synod appoint a full-time qualified ordained man to serve as Executive Secretary."

##### 2. *Recommendations:*

a. That synod grant the permission of the floor to the chairman of the committee, the Rev. T. Versepunt, on matters pertaining to the Chaplain Committee. —*Adopted*

b. That synod appoint a study committee for one year whose mandate shall be:

1) to determine the appropriate agency of jurisdiction for these ministries (Seamen's Ministry, Prison Ministry, Servicemen's Ministry, etc.).

2) to determine the need for an executive secretary to coordinate and administer the work of all chaplains.

3) to prepare a job description for the executive secretary, if such need is established.

*Grounds:*

(1) The obvious overlap in ministries warrants further investigation (for example, the prison ministry).

(2) Such a study should normally precede any projected expansion and hiring of staff to avoid any duplication of work, and of church relations. —*Adopted*

c. That synod delay the request for projected expansion of their ministries in the amount of \$20,000 until the year's study is completed.

*Ground:* In view of the study committee's report, the granting of this request is premature. —*Adopted*

*C. Administrative Matters:*

*Recommendation:* That synod strongly urge that classis require that any ordained person working full-time in pastoral care or counseling, not serving a local church or a denominational agency, be endorsed by the Chaplain Committee in order to receive approval by his classis for work in a special ministry. Endorsement shall consist of the following:

1. The approval of the man as a qualified candidate in terms of ministerial skills and training for his specialized position. Such qualifications are to be judged on the basis of personal interviews, recommendations, and other standards of the Chaplain Committee. (Classis shall retain the task of judging the spiritual nature of the position and granting permission for a man to be called to that position.)

2. The approval of the field as a "worthy field" with a potential great enough to justify the full-time employment of an ordained minister.

*Grounds:*

a. Article 95 of the Church Order stipulates the proper equality among churches and office bearers.

b. This arrangement is consistent with the general policy adopted by synod in 1961, "that a Christian Reformed minister entering the institutional chaplaincy, in addition to consistorial and classical endorsement, be urged to secure ecclesiastical endorsement from the Synodical Chaplain Committee" (Acts of Synod 1961, Art. 44, p. 13). —*Adopted*

**II. UNORDAINED EMPLOYEES' PENSION FUND***A. Material:* Report 20.

*B. Background:* In 1967 the Unordained Pension Plan was replaced by the present Unordained Employees' Pension Fund. The fixed benefit provided under the old plan was \$114.19 per month for married employees, and \$70.80 for single employees. When employees retired it was necessary to provide additional funds from the Supplemental Fund. The committee now proposes a change to provide the benefits to which they are entitled.

*C. Recommendations:*

1. That synod approve a minimum pension benefit for all employees who were participants under the former plans equal to five percent per year from January 1, 1967, to date of retirement over the benefits provided by the former plans, but not to exceed \$150.00 per month, effective as of January 1, 1973. —*Adopted*

2. That synod refer the matter of adequate pension for unordained employees to the Synodical Interim Committee for study. —*Adopted*
3. That synod approve the hiring of a part-time administrator by the committee. —*Adopted*

### III. SYNODICAL DEPUTIES' REPORTS

#### A. Rev. Gerald J. Postma

The synodical deputies P. Sluys (Chatham), H. Vander Ark (G.R. East), and H. De Wolf (Grandville) concurred in Classis Lake Erie's decision to grant the request of the Olentangy Christian Reformed Church to call the Rev. G. J. Postma as Associate Pastor to be loaned to the Whetstone Convalescent Center of Columbus, Ohio.

*Recommendation:* That synod approve the work of the synodical deputies. —*Adopted*

#### B. Rev. Kenneth Wezeman

The synodical deputies G. J. Rozenboom (G.R. North), L. A. Bazuin (Illiana), and J. T. Malestein (Lake Erie) concurred in the decision of Classis Grand Rapids East that the Rev. K. Wezeman be called as chaplain in the Appalachian Regional Hospital.

*Recommendation:* That synod approve the work of the synodical deputies. —*Adopted*

#### C. Rev. A. Dirk Evans

The synodical deputies H. De Wolf (Grandville), M. R. Doornbos (G.R. North), and H. Vander Ark (G.R. East) concurred in Classis Lake Erie's decision to grant the request of Cherry Hill Christian Reformed Church to call the Rev. A. Evans to serve as hospital chaplain at the Outer Drive Hospital of Lincoln Park, Michigan.

*Recommendation:* That synod approve the work of the synodical deputies. —*Adopted*

#### D. Rev. Duane Visser

The synodical deputies M. R. Doornbos (G.R. North), J. Blankespoor (Zeeland), and J. A. Mulder (Kalamazoo) concurred in the decision of Classis Grand Rapids South to grant the request of the Cutlerville Hills Christian Reformed Church to extend a call to the Rev. D. Visser to serve as chaplain at Pine Rest Hospital.

*Recommendation:* That synod approve the work of the synodical deputies. —*Adopted*

#### E. Rev. Herman Teitsma

The synodical deputies J. Blankespoor (Zeeland), M. R. Doornbos (G.R. North), and J. A. Mulder (Kalamazoo) concurred in Classis Grand Rapids South's decision to grant the request of the La Grave Avenue Christian Reformed Church to call the Rev. H. Teitsma to become executive director and chaplain of the Jellema House.

*Recommendation:* That synod approve the work of the synodical deputies. —*Adopted*

#### F. Rev. Chester Schemper

The synodical deputies W. R. Witte (Chicago North), J. Bylsma (Chicago South), and J. A. Mulder (Kalamazoo) concurred in Classis Illiana's decision to grant the request of the First South Holland Christian Reformed Church to call the Rev. C. Schemper in order to loan him to the World Home Bible League to supervise Latin American Bible translations and Bible Study programs.

*Recommendation:* That synod approve the work of the synodical deputies. —*Adopted*

#### G. Honorable Release for Rev. Wayne De Young

The synodical deputies G. Stob (Hudson), L. A. Bazuin (Illiana), and J. Malestein (Lake Erie) concurred in the decision of Classis Florida to grant release from the office of the ministry to the Rev. W. De Young, pursuant to Article 14 of the Church Order.

*Recommendation:* That synod approve the work of the synodical deputies. —*Adopted*

#### H. Deposition of Rev. Henry Visscher

The synodical deputies G. D. Pars (Pacific Northwest), K. Slager (Columbia), and A. De Jager (California South) concurred in the decision of Classis Central California to depose the Rev. H. Visscher from the ministry.

*Recommendation:* That synod approve the work of the synodical deputies. —*Adopted*

(The report of Advisory Committee 11 is continued in Article 72.)

### ARTICLE 61

The Rev. E. Los presents the fraternal delegate of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, the Rev. Lawrence Eyres, in behalf of synod's *Reception Committee*. The Rev. Mr. Eyres is the pastor of the Redeemer Orthodox Presbyterian Church of Dayton, Ohio. He speaks of three traps which haunt the path of churches today.

The Rev. H. Spaan responds in behalf of synod.

### ARTICLE 62

Advisory Committee 4, *Church Order III*, the Rev. H. Vanden Einde reporting, presents the following: (The report of Advisory Committee 4 is continued from Article 58.)

#### MARRIAGE GUIDELINES

##### A. *Materials:*

1. Report 40.
2. Overture 29 - Second Christian Reformed Church, Wellsburg, Iowa.
3. Communication 17, part "b".

##### B. *Observations:*

The Synod of 1971 appointed a committee on Marriage Guidelines with the following mandate: "to evaluate the material of Classis Toronto and to compare it with the 1956 decisions of synod on divorce and re-

marriage with a view towards establishing guidelines for pastors and consistories in their care of (a) couples contemplating marriage, (b) couples involved in marital difficulties, (c) divorced persons, and (d) those who have been divorced and contemplate remarriage; and to report their findings with recommendations to synod."

The study committee has finished its work and has given its final report to this synod along with several recommendations. Much of what has been written is valuable advice and should prove helpful to pastors and consistories in dealing with problems relating to marriage and divorce. But there are some aspects of the report which cause questions and difficulties. We present to synod the results of our deliberations with respect to Report 40.

*C. Recommendations:*

1. That synod grant the privilege of the floor to two representatives of the study committee when this report is considered. —*Adopted*
2. That synod do not adopt the committee's recommendation "that synod accept Part II as in accord with biblical teaching on marriage and offer it to the churches as a guideline in their pastoral task" (recommendation 1, p. 472).

*Grounds:*

a. Synod is not convinced that Part II is in its entirety in accord with the biblical teaching on marriage.

For example:

1) Whereas the study committee maintains that the Greek word *porneia* as used in Matthew 5:32 and 19:9 has a broader meaning than illegitimate sexual intercourse we question whether that interpretation can be substantiated from Scripture.

2) The contractual, covenantal nature of marriage is minimized in favor of a "relationship of fidelity," thus opening the possibility for thinking that a marriage's real beginning and ending depends on some undefined personal commitment to each other by the parties involved.

b. A number of statements are made and a number of expressions are used that are ambiguous and capable of various interpretations: for example, the phrase "dead marriage," the words "fidelity" and "infidelity," and the definition of adultery. —*Adopted*

D. Synod recesses. After recess the officers of synod present the following advice:

1. To instruct the Appointments Committee to appoint a new study committee whose mandate shall be to provide Marriage Guidelines in the light of:

- a. previous synodical decisions;
- b. the Study Committee Report (1973);
- c. the reactions of the Synodical Advisory Committee (Advisory Committee 4, Report -B);
- d. the original overture (Overture 18, 1971). —*Adopted*

2. To instruct the new study committee to report to the Synod of 1974, if at all possible. —*Adopted*

The session is closed with prayer.

## TUESDAY EVENING, JUNE 19, 1973

## Fourteenth Session

## ARTICLE 63

After the session is opened with devotions, Advisory Committee 10, *Publication Matters*, the Rev. L. Tamminga reporting, presents the following: (The report of Advisory Committee 10 is continued from Article 34.)

## BOARD OF PUBLICATIONS:

A. *Material*: Report 5 (Item 8)

B. *Observations*:

1. The Board of Publications requests synod to approve the sale of the Revised Standard Version, as a service to our membership. The same request was made to the Synod of 1970, and the request was denied on the grounds that this Bible version is easily available, and, also, that our Publishing House should not enter into competition with private firms (Acts 1970, page 66).

2. The Board of Publications will study the entire matter of retail selling with a view to formulating guidelines which will govern the retail operation of our Publishing House. These guidelines are to appear in the Agenda of the Synod of 1974. In anticipation of these guidelines the following recommendation should not be interpreted as a precedent for broader retail selling by our Publishing House.

C. *Recommendation*: That synod grant the request of the Board of Publications to the effect that the Publishing House be permitted to sell the Revised Standard Version.

*Grounds*:

1. It is in keeping with the Articles of Incorporation of the Education Committee of the Christian Reformed Church (filed February 3, 1964, Article II): "The purposes for which the corporation is formed are as follows . . . B, to provide educational materials of all kinds including, but not limited to, books, booklets, workbooks, filmstrips, and handicraft materials."

2. Since synod's approval of the R.S.V., it has become virtually the only version quoted in Christian Reformed educational materials, and hence the demand for this version has grown significantly since 1970; many inquiries are being received for this Bible version by the Publishing House.

3. The Publishing House is able to supply this version to our constituency at significant savings. The Publishing House is in a position to stipulate quality of binding and paper, and the format might match the Psalter Hymnal somewhat.

4. The Publishing House has sold the American Standard Version for many years.

—*Adopted*

## ARTICLE 64

Advisory Committee 2, *Church Order I*, the Rev. A. E. Mulder reporting, presents the following: (The report of Advisory Committee 2 is continued from Article 22.)

## ECCLESIASTICAL OFFICE AND ORDINATION

A. *Material*: Report 44.B. *History and Observations*:

The question as to the precise status of the "layworker in evangelism" and the broader subject of ecclesiastical office and ordination have been before synod at regular intervals during the past ten years, with study reports having been submitted in 1965, 1967, 1969, 1972, and now in 1973.

The present study committee was appointed by the Synod of 1969 and was given the mandate "to study the nature of ecclesiastical office and the meaning of ordination as taught in the Scriptures and exhibited in the history of the church of Christ" (Acts of Synod 1969, page 85, Article 121, C).

In 1971 synod also assigned to this committee the study of an overture from Classis Alberta South, dealing with the question of the status of ministers engaged in extraordinary types of service, such as administration or teaching Bible in a high school (Acts of Synod 1971, pages 55, 643).

The study committee submitted a report to the synod in 1972, in response to which synod referred the report back to the study committee with the request:

"a. to address itself to such (inter-related) questions as these:

1) To whom does the exalted Christ delegate his authority (Matthew 28:19f.), to the church as a whole, to special offices within the church, or to both?

2) What is the nature of the authority involved in the special office in its relation to what is known as 'the office of all believers'?

3) What is the relationship between the task and authority of the apostles and that of other offices (ministries) in the church?

"b. to delineate the comparison between its conclusions and Articles 30, 31 of the Belgic Confession as well as the form for installation/ordination of office-bearers presently used in the Christian Reformed Church, and

"c. to report to the Synod of 1973" (Acts 1972, p. 95).

Report 44 represents the study committee's ambitious efforts to fulfill this large mandate.

While your advisory committee is in general agreement with Report 44, it feels that the study committee has not presented a full and integrated statement on ecclesiastical office and ordination. This must be explained in part by the fact that the report was developed in two separate stages. The first part of the report consists of the 1972 report on "office" as ministry or DIAKONIA. The second section, which was written some time later, develops the idea of authority. Consequently, we believe, the study committee has failed to adequately and consistently integrate the earlier and later sections of their study report. Specifically, the recommendations of the study committee do not reflect the fruit of its study of authority.

Your advisory committee, in consultation with the study committee, has struggled at length to incorporate some of the further insights regarding authority into the recommendations as presented below. How-

ever, even as these recommendations or "guidelines" for the church appear in their revised form, we believe that both the study report and the proposed recommendations will be better understood in the light of the observations that follow.

C. *Recommendation*: That synod adopt the following observations as the framework within which the "guidelines for understanding the nature of ecclesiastical office and ordination" are to be understood:

1. Although in the New Testament the organization of the church is not as clear as has sometimes been assumed, nevertheless there is insistence that the church shall have organizational structure, and that this organizational structure shall include designated leaders to whom respect and submission is due.

2. Nowhere in the New Testament is there a conflict between authority and service, or between ruling and love. Christian authority involves service in the name of the authoritative Christ, and Christian service involves authority in the name of the serving Christ. Both before and after his ascension as our victorious Lord, Jesus is the authoritative Son of God who serves the Father and those whom the Father has given him.

3. Christ only is Lord of the church, and no one may presume to rule in his place. Service and authority exercised in the church are in his Name and according to his Word.

4. Because God is a God of order, and because the people of God are subject to many weaknesses and errors and in need of spiritual leadership in the face of a hostile world, Christ grants, by his Holy Spirit, gifts of ruling service and serving authority (service and authority) to particular people whom the church must recognize, in order that their gifts may be officially exercised for the benefit of all.

5. The office bearers, i.e., certain people appointed to particular tasks, are not appointed without the call and approbation of the church. When so appointed, however, they are recognized by the church to be representatives of Christ in the special functions for which they have been appointed. As such they serve both Christ and the church, and are worthy of honor, especially if they serve and rule well.

6. These guidelines are intended to offer helpful direction to the churches as they continue to seek practical solutions to the questions pertaining to the status and functions of "layworkers in evangelism" and related questions. These guidelines do not re-define the basic types of service currently assigned to deacons, elders and ministers; nor do the guidelines now authorize anyone other than ministers to administer the sacraments along with the preaching of the Word. *In keeping with our church polity, such changes may be introduced only by way of revision of the Church Order as decided by synod.* —*Adopted*

D. *Recommendation*: That synod give the privilege of the floor to the following representatives of the study committee when the report is discussed: Dr. Willis De Boer, Dr. Clarence Vos, and Dr. Louis Vos.

—*Adopted*

E. *Recommendation*: That synod adopt the following statements as **GUIDELINES FOR UNDERSTANDING THE NATURE OF ECCLESIASTICAL OFFICE AND ORDINATION**:

## (Comprehensive Ministry: "Office of all believers")

1. The general term for "office" in the Greek New Testament is *DIAKONIA*, meaning "service" or "ministry." In this basic sense ecclesiastical office is one and indivisible, for it embraces the total ministry of the church, a ministry that is rooted in Christ. —*Adopted*

2. This comprehensive ministry (office) is universal, committed to all members of the church, and the task of ministry is shared by all. The ministry of the church is Christ's ministry, and as Christ's ministry it functions with the power and authority of Christ the Lord. This ministry of the church is shared by all who are in Christ. —*Adopted*

## (Particular Ministries)

3. It is not inconsistent with this universal office-sharing and is in keeping with apostolic practice that some individuals, in whom the church has discerned the required gifts, be appointed to special tasks. The Scriptures report a setting apart to particular ministries or services. Both in the Old and New Testaments God calls certain people for particular tasks. —*Adopted*

4. From the beginning these particular ministries were functional in character, arising under the guidance of the Spirit in the interests of good order and efficiency in the church, to enable the church to carry out Christ's work in the world most effectively. —*Adopted*

5. The particular ministries are characterized by service, rather than by status, dominance or privilege. These ministries function with Christ's power and authority, a power and authority rooted in obedience to his Word and expressed in loving service. In turn, those who are served are to be respond with obedience and respect. —*Adopted*

6. The particular ministries are to be distinguished in function, not in essence, from the comprehensive ministry shared by all believers, and distinctions among the particular ministries themselves also are functional. Since all members are commissioned to serve, there is only a difference in the kinds of service of deacons, elders, ministers, and all other members. —*Adopted*

## (The Word and The Sacraments)

7. The tasks of the preaching of the Word and of the administration of the sacraments have been given by Christ to the church. Although in the Scriptures these tasks are not explicitly limited to special office-holders, historically they have been assigned to and carried out by those whom the church has appointed on Christ's authority. —*Adopted*

8. There is no valid biblical or doctrinal reason why a person whom the church has appointed to bring the Word may not also be appointed to administer the sacraments. —*Adopted*

## (Appointment to Particular Ministries)

9. "Ordination" should be understood as the appointment or setting apart of certain members of the church for particular ministries that are strategic for the accomplishment of the church's total ministry. In this

sense of appointment or setting apart, ordination has biblical precedent, and is valuable for the good order and well-being of the church.

—*Adopted*

10. The ceremony of the laying on of hands is not a sacrament but a symbolic act by which the church may publicly confirm its call and appointment to particular ministries. As such it is useful but not essential.

—*Adopted*

11. To invite only ministers, and not elders also, to participate in the laying on of hands is a departure from biblical example. Furthermore, there is no biblical warrant for limiting the laying on of hands to the occasion of setting apart for the particular ministry of the Word and the sacraments.

—*Adopted*

12. Because the Scriptures do not present a definitive, exhaustive description of the particular ministries of the church, and because these particular ministries as described in Scripture are functional in character, the Bible leaves room for the church to adapt or modify its particular ministries in order to carry out effectively its service to Christ and for Christ in all circumstances.

—*Adopted*

*F. Concluding Recommendations:*

1. That synod return Overture 25 from the Acts of 1971 (p. 643) to Classis Alberta South, asking that classis reconsider it in the light of the guidelines given above.

—*Adopted*

2. That synod express thanks to the study committee upon completion of this task.

—*Adopted*

3. That synod appoint a new committee to study the implications of the GUIDELINES FOR UNDERSTANDING THE NATURE OF ECCLESIASTICAL OFFICE AND ORDINATION, especially as they relate to "layworkers in evangelism," and to report to the Synod of 1974.

*Grounds:*

a. The study report and guidelines raise questions which require further study by synod.

b. This study report was initiated specifically with a view to resolving questions relating to "layworkers in evangelism."

—*Adopted*

The session is closed with devotions.

**WEDNESDAY MORNING, JUNE 20, 1973**

**Fifteenth Session**

**ARTICLE 65**

The session is opened with devotions. The roll is called. Elder delegate Mr. F. Ritsema of Classis Grandville is absent with notification. The Tuesday minutes are read and approved.

**ARTICLE 66**

The Rev. B. Huizenga presents Dr. Roger Greenway who introduces synod to the Faith-Promise missionary support program.

## ARTICLE 67

Advisory Committee 9, *Inter-Church*, the Rev. R. Peterson reporting, presents the following: (The report of Advisory Committee 9 is continued from Article 45.)

## NEW CONFESSION

A. *Materials:*

1. Report 35.
2. Letter from New Confession Committee, dated June 6, 1973.
3. Report 4-A, Section C.

B. *Recommendations:*

1. That synod grant the privilege of the floor to the chairman of the study committee during the discussion of this matter. —*Adopted*
2. That synod again urge our publications, elders' conferences, ministers' institutes, societies, congregations, ministers and professors to study the Scriptures, our confessions, the study reports, and the times in which we live, in order to discover which aspects of our biblical heritage need special emphasis in a confessional statement in our time.

*Ground:* This is an ongoing task which needs continual attention.

—*Adopted*

3. That synod continue the study committee on New Confession to assist the churches in further study of our confessional task and to watch confessional developments that are under way in other churches.

—*Adopted*

4. That synod encourage the use of the Belgic Confession and the Canons of Dort, as well as the Heidelberg Catechism, in preaching.

—*Adopted*

5. That synod encourage the committee to continue its investigation of contemporary ways of confessing the faith, along these lines:

a. evaluating the need for translating the Belgic Confession and the Canons of Dort into contemporary English;

b. consulting with the Psalter Hymnal Supplement Committee to determine the feasibility of versifying and setting to music some portions of the Heidelberg Catechism for use in worship and elsewhere, e.g. Lord's Days 1, 21, 45, etc.

c. considering the feasibility of other contemporary methods of communicating the truths contained in the confessions.

*Grounds:* (For a, b, and c)

1) The committee has sought clarification of the meaning of the reference to "contemporary ways" as included in its mandate from synod.

2) The reactions of the churches to the committee's questionnaire strongly suggest pursuing these lines. —*Adopted*

6. That synod appoint a committee to study the use and function of synodical pronouncements on doctrinal and ethical matters, and their relationship to the confessions.

*Grounds:*

a. From time to time the church does in fact confess the faith by official declarations in interpretation and application of the confessions.

b. There is no clear understanding as to how these fit into our confessional structure.

c. There is need for compiling, publishing, and distributing such declarations in a usable form. —*Adopted*

7. That synod instruct the Board of Home Missions, in consultation with the Board of Publications, to revise and update the booklet *The Christian Reformed Church — What It Teaches* in order to provide new members and inquirers with a helpful introduction to our doctrinal position. —*Adopted*

8. That synod declare 7 above to be its answer to the Board of Home Missions' request that synod indicate the audience for this booklet. —*Adopted*

(The report of Advisory Committee 9 is continued in Article 69.)

The session is closed with prayer.

## WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON, JUNE 20, 1973

### Sixteenth Session

#### ARTICLE 68

The session is opened with devotions.

The Rev. L. Bazuin, speaking for synod's *Reception Committee*, presents Dr. Joel Nederhood. Dr. Nederhood traces the phenomenal growth of the Back to God Hour ministry under the blessing of the Lord. Synod rises to its feet in appreciation for the address of Dr. Nederhood.

#### ARTICLE 69

Advisory Committee 9, *Inter-Church*, the Rev. R. Peterson reporting, presents the following: (The report of Advisory Committee 9 is continued from Article 67.)

INVITATION FROM THE GENERAL SYNOD OF THE REFORMED CHURCH IN AMERICA (via address of fraternal delegate).

#### A. *Material:*

Address to the Synod of 1973 by the fraternal delegate from the Reformed Church in America.

B. *Background:* The address of the fraternal delegate contains several suggestions for joint action between the Christian Reformed Church and the Reformed Church in America. These include a joint study of a theology of evangelism, a cooperative pilot project in church planning, and the exploration of possible cooperation in an overseas mission project and in an area of youth work.

#### C. *Recommendations:*

1. That synod authorize the appointment of a five-member committee to work with a similar committee from the Reformed Church in America in producing a joint study of the theology of evangelism for submission to the respective synods. —*Adopted*

2. That synod instruct the Board of Home Missions to explore the possibility of a cooperative pilot project in church planning and report to the Synod of 1974. —*Adopted*

3. That synod instruct the Board of Foreign Missions to explore the possibility of a cooperative overseas mission project and report to the Synod of 1974. —*Adopted*

4. That synod request the Stated Clerk to refer the suggestion to explore possible areas of cooperation in youth work to the United Calvinist Youth Board. —*Adopted*

#### ARTICLE 70

Synod's vice-president, the Rev. J. Vriend, reads a letter from Dr. M. Hugén. Dr. Hugén expresses his appreciation for synod's reappointment to the chair of Associate Professor of Practical Theology at Calvin Seminary and indicates his acceptance.

#### ARTICLE 71

The *Obituary Committee*, the Rev. John Entingh reporting, presents the following:

The time of synod is a season of constant activity. Pastors and elders are concerned with issues vital to the growth and health of the church and how we can be of service to the church of Jesus Christ. Midst the busyness of a dedicated deliberative body, it behooves us well to pause and remember with gratitude to our God the contributions of those whom God has been pleased to use in the past to make the church what it is today and in whose footsteps we seek to walk with fidelity. Since the Synod of 1972, our Lord has been pleased to remove from service in the church militant to a new kind of service in the heavenlies the following brethren:

1. *Rev. François Guillaume* (1905-1972)

François Guillaume was born in Amsterdam, the Netherlands, on July 26, 1905. He studied for the ministry at the Free University of Amsterdam. His call to the ministry, according to his own testimony, came at an early age: "From my fifth year I knew that I had to become a minister." He graduated from the Free University in 1928 with an honorary cum laude degree. He served successively the churches of Oosterend, Klundert, Sneek (Friesland), and Amsterdam-West. During World War II, along with several of his colleagues, he was interned at the Dachau Prison Camp. Eight years after his liberation, he followed the great Dutch immigration to Canada where he pastored the Rehoboth Church in Toronto. He was a man of vision and many labors, working diligently for Christian education in Canada, a co-founder of the Association for the Advancement of Christian Studies, and writing for the *Calvinist Contact*, *Church and Nation*, and *De Wachter*. In 1965 he became pastor of the Third Christian Reformed Church in Edmonton, Alberta. He was granted honorable emeritation because of ill health in 1969. He was taken from the earth suddenly on October 17, 1972. Of the twenty-four ministers who came to Canada to serve the post-war immigrants to Canada, brother Guillaume was the first to be called home. He left a goodly legacy in his many printed articles and sermons and in the many lives which he was instrumental in leading to the Savior.

2. *Rev. Samuel Fopma* (1887-1972)

Samuel Fopma was born in Spannum, Friesland, in the Netherlands on January 5, 1887. He came to the United States with his parents at the age of five years. After his schooling in Cincinnati, Ohio, he prepared for the ministry at Calvin College and Seminary which was followed by one year of post-graduate work at Princeton Seminary in New Jersey. He began his ministry at Arlene, Michigan in 1918. He also served the churches at Lamont and Noordeloos in Michigan, and finally the church at Rock Rapids, Iowa, from which he retired in 1951. Following a stroke, he was called to the heavenly home on November 18, 1972, at the age of 85 years.

3. *Dr. Carlos Cortina* (1927-1973)

From the background of recent history, Carlos Cortina's life and career had more of the dramatic than that of most of our ministers. He was born in Calnaguey, Cuba, on April 16, 1927. While studying at the University of Havana for a law career, he and his wife, Elsa, came to know Fidel Castro personally, even to the point of "double-dating" at times. It was an association which proved to be a bane and a blessing. Upon his rise to power, Castro took over the private school operated by Carlos and Elsa. When his life was threatened, Carlos tried to flee to Venezuela, only to find that door shut. For some unknown reason, he was given a special dispensation by Cuban authorities and on surrender of their property and possessions, their departure from Cuba was arranged with dispatch.

Carlos, with his wife and daughter, arrived in Miami on November 3, 1961. It was the illness of their daughter which brought them to the Good Samaritan Center and in contact with not only Rev. Clarence Nyenhuis but especially Jesus Christ. Carlos made profession of faith in 1962. Life changed for Carlos and he became superintendent of the summer Bible school. The call to the ministry was laid on him. That entailed a difficult year at Calvin College (because of the language problem) and three years at Calvin Seminary. It was a crowning day when Carlos was ordained as the pastor of the Spanish Christian Reformed Church of Grand Rapids, Michigan, to which he gave his love and unstinted efforts.

But our best-laid plans and cherished hopes are changed at times by God's higher purposes which to us, for the present, are often inscrutable. In 1970 a malignancy was discovered which led later to radical surgery. But the disease was not stayed. Carlos fell asleep in Jesus on April 10, 1973. We can only say:

God moves in a mysterious way, His wonders to perform;  
He plants His footsteps in the sea and rides upon the storm.

His purposes will ripen fast, unfolding every hour;  
The bud may have a bitter taste, but sweet will be the flower.

4. *Dr. Ralph Bronkema* (1893-1973)

Ralph Bronkema was born of Holland immigrants at Grand Rapids, Michigan on June 10, 1893. He was introduced to work at an early age due to an incapacitated father. His concern in preparing for the ministry led him into a broad spectrum of activity. While attending school, he was a reporter for *The Grand Rapids Press*, taught catechism in the Broadway Ave. Church, served as janitor in a post office and assisted Prof. A. Rooks in teaching beginner's Latin. During summer vacations he canvassed Western Michigan communities on motorcycle selling subscriptions to *The Grand Rapids Press*. He also gave private elocution lessons. Practical training included teaching at the Alpine Ave. Church's Bartlett Street Mission.

In 1920, having completed two year's work at Calvin Seminary, he became a teacher of Bible at the newly organized Grand Rapids Christian High School. Five years later, with a desire for more theological education, Ralph studied at the Free University of Amsterdam for four years, during which time he did much preaching and made many friends. There he received his Th.D, having submitted his dissertation, *Puritanism in America*. After World War II, the brother organized a relief project in Iowa, which gathered tons of food, clothing, and medicine for people in The Netherlands. For this Dr. Bronkema was knighted by the Dutch Government.

His ministry in the United States began with his ordination in the First Christian Reformed Church of Orange City, Iowa, on September 29, 1929. Orange City was his only charge, from which he was emeritated in 1952 because of ill health. He was able to assist vacant churches and home mission stations from time to time. In the words of a close relative, "he was a servant with many gifts and human failings. His chief delight was to proclaim the Gospel of the grace of God." He was called to the eternal home on May 4, 1973.

5. *Rev. Wiebe Van Dyk (1909-1973)*

While synod was in session, the news came that another minister had been transferred from service on this earth to the eternal rest. Wiebe Van Dyk was born February 28, 1909 in the Province of Friesland, the Netherlands. Upon his ordination in 1936, he served the churches of Zevenhoven-Noorden, Oudewater, Nijmegen, and Gouda in the Netherlands.

In 1953 he felt called to follow the wave of post-war immigrants by accepting the call to the church of St. Catharines. He also served the churches at Hamilton, Acton, and Orillia, which was his last charge. From 1959-1964 he served as Principal and as Instructor of Bible at the Hamilton District Christian High School where he left a good influence on the lives of the young people who came under his instruction.

He was called home abruptly on June 15, 1973. It is a rich tribute to his life that, in the words of one of his colleagues, "Wiebe Van Dyk proclaimed God's truth with great zeal and enthusiasm."

Your committee also recommends that synod, acknowledging that the presence of the minister's wife in the manse is a considerable asset to the work of the pastor and help to the congregation, take cognizance of the departure of the following helpmates of ministers and thank God for their often unacknowledged labors:

Mrs. Herman Bel	May 6, 1972
Mrs. Jacob Hoogstra	June 1, 1972
Mrs. Herman Goodyke	June 30, 1972
Mrs. Albert Bratt	August 10, 1972
Mrs. John Pikaart	September 12, 1972
Mrs. Morris Faber	September 15, 1972
Mrs. Lee Huizenga	September 25, 1972
Mrs. Fred Bakker	April 30, 1973
Mrs. Emo Van Halsema	June 20, 1973

Your *Obituary Committee* recommends that synod adopt the following resolutions:

1. Synod expresses its humble thanks to God for the service rendered by the aforementioned servants and thanks the Lord that we may believe that their death was gain.

2. Synod expresses its sympathy to all the bereaved and commends them to the mercy of our covenant God who is the God of grace and comfort.

3. Synod decides to send a copy of these resolutions to the bereaved families, and to make the resolutions a part of the synodical record.

—*Adopted*

Acknowledging the present joy of God's departed servants and the ground for their joy, the delegates sing Psalter Hymnal No. 469, stanzas 1 and 3.

#### ARTICLE 72

Advisory Committee 11, *Varia*, the Rev. I. Apol reporting, presents the following: (The report of Advisory Committee 11 is continued from Article 60.)

#### REQUEST FOR DECLARATION ON WAR

A. *Material*: Overture 11.

B. *Analysis*: Classis Lake Erie requests synod to provide a Declaration on War which takes account of synodical decisions and discussions in 1939, 1964, 1969, and 1972. They specifically request that synod develop "(a) extensive and incisive criteria for a just war, especially in the light of the Second Indochina War and potential wars of 'national liberation,' (b) guidelines for those who are conscientiously opposed to all war, and (c) a statement defining the church's institutional responsibilities, i.e., whether church members should act *only* as individuals or whether church members should *also* act corporately as the body of Christ."

C. *Recommendation*: That synod appoint a study committee whose mandate shall be to provide the church's membership with guidelines for making ethical decisions about war. The committee shall, *inter alia*, (a) take account of previous synodical decisions, especially The Report on the Problem of War, (Acts of Synod 1964, pp. 312-316) and the actions of other denominations of Reformed persuasion, (b) provide pastoral counsel for those who are conscientiously opposed to all war, (c) study the responsibilities of the councils, classes, and synod of the church in helping its members to determine whether a specific war is just or unjust.

#### *Grounds*:

1. Synodical actions of 1939, 1969, and 1972, relating to war, do not provide guidelines for making ethical decisions about war for those individuals who must make decisions about whether and how they should participate in a particular war; for those whose duty it is to instruct, advise, and counsel such individuals; nor for those individual church members who, as members of an informed national citizenry, must evaluate and act upon national policies pertaining to war and peace. The report, presented to the Synod of 1964 does have valuable statements regarding war, but it has never been adopted by synod.

2. There are some in our fellowship who are conscientiously opposed to all war and look to the church for further guidance.

—*Adopted*

(The report of Advisory Committee 11 is continued in Article 78.)  
 The session is closed with devotions.

### WEDNESDAY EVENING, JUNE 20, 1973 Seventeenth Session

#### ARTICLE 73

The evening session is opened with devotions. The Rev. J. Vriend is chairman of the evening session in the absence of Dr. L. Greenway. The alternate delegates of Classes Grand Rapids South and Holland, the Rev. A. Brink and Elder J. Bultman respectively, indicate their agreement with the forms of unity and are seated.

#### ARTICLE 74

Advisory Committee 5, *Doctrinal Matters*, the Rev. J. B. Vos reporting, presents the report on Neo-Pentecostalism. Seven recommendations of the committee are adopted.

(In the interest of clarity, the materials and decisions above are incorporated in the minutes of Thursday, June 21, 1973, Article 76. Wm. P. Brink, Stated Clerk).

The session is closed with prayer.

### THURSDAY MORNING, JUNE 21, 1973 Eighteenth Session

#### ARTICLE 75

Dr. L. Greenway resumes the chair.

The morning session is opened with devotions. The roll is called. All delegates are present. Elder G. De Vries is again present for Classis Holland. The Wednesday minutes are read and approved after a slight correction.

#### ARTICLE 76

Advisory Committee 5, *Doctrinal Matters*, the Rev. J. B. Vos reporting, continues its report on Neo-Pentecostalism:

(In the interest of clarity the complete report of Advisory Committee 5 and the decisions of synod on neo-Pentecostalism are included at this point in the minutes of the eighteenth session. It should be noted that this matter was dealt with in three sessions of synod: the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth. Wm. P. Brink, Stated Clerk).

#### I. NEO-PENTECOSTALISM: MATERIALS, BACKGROUND, AND ANALYSIS

##### A. *Materials*:

1. Report 34.
2. Overture 30 from the Western Springs CRC.
3. Communication 13 from the Clinton CRC.
4. Report 4-A, section G.

B. *Background*: The Synod of 1971 appointed a committee to "study, in the light of the biblical teaching on the Holy Spirit, the teachings and

practices associated with what is popularly called 'Neo-Pentecostalism,' and explore reasons for its growing appeal in the Christian Reformed Church" (Acts, 1971, Art. 116, p. 97f). This mandate was broadened by the Synod of 1972 to include the formulating of practical advice to churches which faced membership difficulties as a result of re-baptisms (Acts, 1972, Art. 73, II, C. 3, p. 102). In response to this assignment the committee has placed before synod the 95-page result of its study, Report 34.

*C. Analysis:* The study committee has sensitively examined neo-Pentecostalism. It engaged in extensive exegetical studies, read widely on the subject, and conducted quite a number of interviews. The report breathes a spirit of love and compassion while indicating at the same time a rather clear divergence between basic tenets of neo-Pentecostalism and the Reformed position. It offers a brief historical study to identify neo-Pentecostalism and addresses itself to the question why the charismatic movement seems to have widespread appeal to members of the CRC.

The report contains a fine study of the teaching on the Holy Spirit in Scripture and in the Reformed creeds. The neo-Pentecostal view of baptism with the Holy Spirit is examined in the light of Scripture and a few perspectives are given that are important for a Reformed understanding of baptism. This is followed by a substantial study on the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Three additional elements are picked up in the section called "Neo-Pentecostal Hermeneutic, Individualism and Extra-Ecclesial Koinonia." This section contains a helpful summary on a neo-Pentecostal understanding of the Bible, and pastoral advice on how to deal with extra-ecclesial groups of a neo-Pentecostal orientation.

The members of the study committee were able to reach a consensus on many matters. They were unable, however, to resolve their differences about one issue that converges on the question whether the more "spectacular" gifts of the Spirit mentioned in the New Testament are still present in the church of Christ today. The majority answered this question with a qualified affirmative, while the chairman of the study committee dissented from the conclusions of the majority. The majority submits for synod's approval extensive counsels; the dissenting advice is brief. The report concludes with a discussion of re-baptism and church membership.

The dissent from the conclusions of the majority is not formally called a minority report. However, inasmuch as the chairman of the study committee submits separate recommendations and requests permission to defend them, the advisory committee suggests that procedurally the dissent be treated as a minority report.

The overture of Western Springs in effect asks synod to reject the counsels of the majority report. The consistory of Clinton responds to each of the eight recommendations concerning the membership in our churches of re-baptized persons. A communication from Classis Holland informs synod that it favors the dissent from the majority. And the Board of Home Missions urges synod to come to a definite decision and to provide clear and definite guidelines.

The advisory committee is impressed by this study of neo-Pentecostalism. It does not feel free, however, to take over without qualification all the recommendations of either the majority or the dissent. The recommendations it makes are based on the entire study.

## II. RECOMMENDATIONS:

A. That synod give the privilege of the floor to Prof. J. Stek and the Rev. D. Hart as spokesmen for the majority, and to the Rev. B. Madany for the minority. —*Adopted*

B. *Recommendations concerning the issue of neo-Pentecostalism:*

1. That synod address the following to the churches as a preamble to the counsels to the churches:

In the face of the phenomenon known variously as the charismatic or neo-Pentecostal movement, synod declines to assume a detached and non-committal attitude. The Christian Reformed Church cannot ignore the challenge that has come to her from those who identify themselves with this movement. For these persons commonly lay at her doorstep the charge that the church as they know it has failed them. They generally accuse that church of having neglected to preach to them and transmit to them the "baptism with the Holy Spirit"—the overpowering experience of the presence of God as a blessing distinct from and in addition to the experience of conversion. They now tend to look not to the church and its corporate life but to a neo-Pentecostal fellowship for the vitality, the assurance, and the experience they crave. And in their desire to revitalize the church to which they belong, they now devote themselves to the spread of this movement's "superior spirituality." Neo-Pentecostalism confronts the church, therefore, with a fundamental challenge.

It is synod's conviction, on the one hand, that the church must examine herself. She must do so particularly with regard to the painful lack of religious assurance exhibited by many of her members, the limited display of joy and power in the service of Jesus Christ, and the widespread lack of appreciation for a full-fledged covenantal life in Christ as the Bible speaks of it. She must re-emphasize, in terms of today's needs, that the Gospel with its wealth of teaching is intended to produce a salvation that is *experienced*. For that she will need to accent clearly that in both the proclamation and the reception of salvation the work of the Holy Spirit is indispensable.

Synod is convinced on the other hand that the church must firmly reject such attitudes, practices and teachings of neo-Pentecostalism as the following:

a. the teaching that baptism with the Holy Spirit is a second blessing distinct from and usually received after conversion;

b. a yearning for and seeking after the extraordinary, spectacular gifts of the Spirit, viewing these as primary evidence of Spirit-baptism;

c. a low regard for the church for not possessing those gifts which the neo-Pentecostals especially treasure;

d. an atomistic and private way of interpreting Scripture that ignores the literary, historical nature of the Bible as well as its redemption-history focus;

e. a practical separation of the work of the Holy Spirit in the lives of individuals from the saving work of Christ in the world;

f. a reduction of the scope of the Gospel to the salvation and empowerment of the individual, and the neglect of the outward-looking kingdom perspective.

Insofar as the neo-Pentecostal movement displays these attitudes, practices, and beliefs—and they are shown in varying degrees by most of its adherents—it reveals itself as a movement which runs counter to the Scripture and the Reformed faith.

In view of this two-fold challenge with which neo-Pentecostalism confronts the church, and in view of the questions to which the charismatic movement has given rise in the churches, synod makes the following declarations as counsel to the churches. —*Adopted*

2. That synod address the following counsel to the churches:

a. Synod urges all the churches to search the Scriptures so as to bring the faith and life of the church into full accord with the biblical teaching about the work of the Holy Spirit and our salvation. —*Adopted*

b. Synod affirms and testifies that according to the Scriptures a believer receives the baptism in or with the Holy Spirit at the time of his regeneration-conversion, as the apostle Paul declares: “For in one Spirit were we all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit” (I Cor. 12:13, ASV), so that in Christ we all “have access in one Spirit to the Father” (Eph. 2:18) and “are builded together for a habitation of God in the Spirit” (Eph. 2:22, ASV). Compare John 3:5f; Acts 2:39; Romans 8:1-17; 15:13; I Corinthians 3:16f.; 12:3; II Corinthians 1:21ff.; Galatians 3:2; 5:16-26; I John 2:20, 27; and see also *Heidelberg Catechism* Questions 49, 51, 53, 55. Synod rejects, therefore, the teaching that the baptism with the Holy Spirit is a second blessing distinct from and usually received after conversion, and declares that this doctrine is not to be taught or propagated in the Christian Reformed Church. —*Adopted*

c. Synod urges the whole church and every member to live in close fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ so that the believers’ lives, individually and communally, may always show the fruit of the Holy Spirit. —*Adopted*

d. Synod calls the churches to recognize that Christ through his Spirit sovereignly distributes his gifts to the body of believers when and where he wills, and that he empowers the members of the church in every age with whatever gifts he judges necessary for the building up of his body. —*Adopted*

e. Synod urges the churches to provide within their communal fellowship for the free exercise of all genuine gifts of the Spirit, so long as all things are done “unto edifying” and in “good order.” “God is not a God of confusion but of peace” (I Cor. 14:33). The churches

should also provide full opportunity for kingdom service in ministries appropriate to the gifts received by the members of the congregations.

—*Adopted*

f. Synod warns the churches to be alert to the many errors and excesses involved in much of today's exercise of claimed "charismatic" gifts such as tongue speaking, faith healing, and exorcism. —*Adopted*

g. Synod urges the churches to accept in love and patience those members who claim to have been baptized with the Holy Spirit as a "second blessing" distinct from and received after conversion, and to deal firmly with them in a pastoral way so that they will be corrected in their belief, and helped to show the fruit of the Spirit, and so that the peace and unity of the church be maintained. —*Adopted*

3. That synod urge the churches to address the following counsels to the neo-Pentecostals among us:

a. Remember that all your Christian brothers and sisters have received the Holy Spirit as well as you: "For in one Spirit were we all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, bond or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit" (I Cor. 12:13); "Any one who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him" (Rom. 8:9b).

—*Adopted*

b. Remember that all religious experience is to be judged by God's written Word. —*Adopted*

c. Remember that the Spirit of God is sovereignly free to work as he will, and there is diversity in his working. Do not presume, therefore, to know the manner of the Spirit's working the grace of God in the hearts of your Christian brothers and sisters. Do not suppose that the Spirit's way with one believer constitutes a pattern that he follows in everyone, as Paul says, "All these are inspired by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills" (I Cor. 12:11).

—*Adopted*

d. Be discerning about the gifts of the Spirit and be sure that the claims of such gifts are confirmed by the presence of fruit of the Spirit.

—*Adopted*

e. Remember that Christians are not to glory in their gifts, or in those who are gifted, but only in Jesus Christ and in the salvation they have in him. "Let him who boasts, boast of the Lord" (I Cor. 1:31; Gal. 6:14; II Cor. 10:17; cf. Jer. 9:23-24). "For who sees anything different in you? What have you that you did not receive? If then you received it, why do you boast as if it were not a gift?" (I Cor. 4:7). "Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you; but rejoice that your names are written in heaven" (Luke 10:20).

—*Adopted*

f. Remember that the gifts of the Spirit are for the good of the whole body of Christ. Where the gifts of the Spirit are not used out of love for the Christian brotherhood, and in the wisdom of the Spirit, they come to nothing (I Cor. 13).

—*Adopted*

g. Remember that the gifts of the Spirit are not achievements or rewards or endorsements; they are verily *gifts*—not for honor but for service. —*Adopted*

h. Do not let your seeking the gifts of the Spirit be governed by the spectacular character of some of the gifts but by their usefulness for the upbuilding of the church in faith, hope and love. "Since you are eager for manifestations of the Spirit, strive to excel in building up the church" (I Cor. 14:12). —*Adopted*

i. Do not single out any one of the gifts of the Spirit, be it speaking in tongues or any other, as the touchstone for being filled with the Spirit. —*Adopted*

j. Remember that those who claim to have been given the more "spectacular" gifts are not necessarily gifted in the interpretation of Scripture or in understanding "what the will of the Lord is." Study the Scriptures within the company of the whole Spirit-gifted church and discern the will of the Lord within the fellowship of the whole brotherhood. —*Adopted*

k. In your use of Scripture remember that what the Spirit has to say to the church and to the individual members of the church is only to be learned by way of a disciplined listening to the Scriptures within the fellowship of the whole church and in a manner which acknowledges the grammatical, historical and literary character of the Scriptures. Only in this way is the Bible truly honored as the written Word of God. —*Adopted*

l. In all things seek the leading of the Holy Spirit, but remember that the Spirit leads through the teaching of Scripture. Although the Spirit may indeed guide us at times in strange and wonderful ways, to seek "special guidance" by signs or portents or revelations is to distrust the Spirit's normal workings, to render yourself a victim to subjective whims, self-deception and arbitrary directives, and to seek escape from your own responsibility before God for decision-making in accord with the will of God—a responsibility which by no means can be escaped. Do not confuse sudden insights with "special revelations," but receive such insights gratefully and examine them carefully in the light of Scripture and the accumulated wisdom of the church. —*Adopted*

m. Be on your guard against those who claim to be agents of the Spirit in the "last days" and who seek to confirm their claims by "signs and wonders" but do not speak out of "one mind" with the church, or even exalt themselves over against the church. From the early years of the church there have been those who are "false apostles, deceitful workmen, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. So it is not strange if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness. Their end will correspond to their deeds" (II Cor. 11:13-15). Be warned that their activities are "with all power and with pretended signs and wonders" (II Thess. 2:9). —*Adopted*

n. Remember the reality of the kingdom of darkness and be aware of the dangers facing those who give in to this kingdom or who become involved in occult practices. —*Adopted*

o. If you feel the desire or need to participate in extra-ecclesial fellowship, be sure to exercise all due restraint in those meetings so that gatherings of believers designed to promote the welfare of the Christian community may not actually erode the unity of the church. We urge you, therefore, to remember Paul's words to the church: "You (plural) know, do you (plural) not, that you (plural) are the temple (singular) of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells in you (plural)? If anyone (singular) destroys the temple of God, him (singular) will God destroy. For the temple of God is holy, and you (plural) are that temple" (I Cor. 3:16, 17). —*Adopted*

p. Recognize and accept the comprehensive range of the gifts of the Spirit to which Scripture refers. What many regard as only superficial activities and routine administrative and teaching rules in the established church are, according to the Bible, gifts of the Spirit: e.g., service, teaching, exhorting, contributing, ruling, doing acts of mercy (Rom. 12:6-8); teachers, helpers, administrators (I Cor. 12:28); pastors and teachers (Eph. 4:11). We urge you to remember the thrust of Second and Third John: unless order, structure and the apostolic teaching are maintained, the church will die. —*Adopted*

q. Finally, we urge you in the words of the Apostle Paul: "Be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. Do nothing from selfishness or conceit, but in humility count others better than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others" (Phil. 2:2-4). —*Adopted*

4. That concerning neo-Pentecostalism and office bearers synod:

a. declare that any office bearer who holds the teaching that baptism in or with the Holy Spirit is a "second blessing" distinct from and usually received after conversion, should be dealt with according to the stipulations of Art. 88 ff. of the Church Order.

*Ground:* This doctrine is contrary to the Scriptures and the Reformed Confessions. —*Adopted*

b. urgently request office bearers who, though disavowing the neo-Pentecostal view of Spirit-baptism, tend to other features of neo-Pentecostalism, to review their attitudes, practices, and beliefs in order to bring them into harmony with synod's decisions and counsels on neo-Pentecostalism; and instruct the churches to uphold the biblical qualifications for office as well as the stipulations of the Form of Subscription. —*Adopted*

c. appoint a committee to examine further the practical implications of synod's decisions on neo-Pentecostalism for office bearers who claim certain "charismatic" experiences, especially ministers, taking due account of the welfare of the congregations, the office bearers and the denomination at large, and to serve the Synod of 1974 with specific advice.

*Grounds:*

1. There are office bearers in the Christian Reformed Church who claim certain extraordinary experiences while disavowing the error of neo-Pentecostalism.

2. While the measure of involvement in neo-Pentecostalism among some office bearers varies, synod's decisions call for a consistent application in the denomination. —*Adopted*

C. That concerning the problem of church membership and re-baptism synod adopt the following:

1. The churches are urged to preach and to teach faithfully and explicitly the biblical doctrine of infant baptism as this is rooted in the covenant and the unity of the Testaments, and thus to avoid and correct tendencies toward an individualistic understanding of the workings of God's grace.

Parents must be urged to live up to the vows made at the time of the baptism of their children, specifically to instruct their children with respect to the meaning and implications of infant baptism. —*Adopted*

2. Members who are attracted to the view of "believers' baptism" should be urged to seek the counsel of the office bearers of the church concerning the biblical teaching on infant baptism. —*Adopted*

3. Whenever a consistory is reliably informed that a member has been re-baptized, the consistory shall officially ask such a member whether he still considers himself a member of the Christian Reformed Church and is willing to submit to the teaching and discipline of the Christian Reformed Church.

a. If the reply is in the affirmative, the consistory must faithfully and persistently admonish such an erring member.

b. The consistory should bar such a member from the Lord's table only if it is necessary for the unity and well-being of the congregation.

c. If such a member actively disturbs the unity and peace of the congregation, the regular steps of discipline should be followed. —*Adopted*

4. Since neither the Bible nor the Confessions nor the Church Order allow consistories simply to terminate membership in the church when such action is not requested by the member, such a member as mentioned above can be excluded from the church only if he is worthy of excommunication, which is the act of public declaration by the church that such a person has no part in Christ or in his church. —*Adopted*

5. Under no circumstances should members erring in this respect be allowed to hold office in the church. —*Adopted*

D. That synod refer the entire study report, without the recommendations, to the churches as a valuable background study of neo-Pentecostalism and as a fruitful basis for further discussion. —*Adopted*

E. That the above decisions be synod's answer to Overture 30, Communication 13, and Report 4-A, section G. —*Adopted*

F. That synod thank the committee for its work and discharge the committee. —*Adopted*

G. That synod instruct the Board of Publications to publish the preamble and the decisions concerning neo-Pentecostalism and re-baptism in a pull-out section in *The Banner*, and that reprints be made available to the churches.

*Ground:* Such a publication will give wide publicity and make readily available these pronouncements of synod. —*Adopted*

H. That synod forward a copy of the study report as well as its own decisions concerning that report to the RES.

*Ground:* The RES has requested all member churches to send their study materials on this subject to its study committee (Acts of the RES, 1972, p. 99, Art. 148). —*Adopted*

I. That synod instruct the Board of Publications to make the study report on neo-Pentecostalism (without the recommendations, and including synod's decisions) available for sale as a separate booklet if sale potential warrants it. —*Adopted*

The morning session is closed with prayer.

## THURSDAY AFTERNOON, JUNE 21, 1973 Nineteenth Session

### ARTICLE 77

After opening devotions, the Rev. E. Los, in behalf of the Reception Committee, presents the Rev. Duane Visser to synod. He speaks in behalf of institutional chaplains.

### ARTICLE 78

Advisory Committee 11, *Varia*, the Rev. I. Apol reporting, presents the following: (The report of Advisory Committee 11 is continued from Article 72.)

#### ON AMNESTY

##### A. *Material:* Overture 24

B. *Background:* Overture 24 was first submitted to Classis Lake Erie on January 12, 1973. Classis Lake Erie did not endorse the overture at that time, but on May 18, 1973 it was endorsed by said classis.

C. *Analysis:* Classis Lake Erie overtures synod to support a national policy of amnesty for those who by reason of conscience cannot participate in the Vietnam Conflict. In 1969 synod approved the principle of selective conscientious objection (Acts of Synod 1969, Art. 135, I-D-2, p. 98). However, this alternative to total conscientious objection (pacifism) is not recognized by the United States government.

D. *Recommendation:* That synod accede to the overture from Classis Lake Erie with the following decisions:

1. To urge pastors, consistories, and its church membership to fulfill their duty to extend Christian love and concern to all who have been directly or indirectly punished for resisting the Vietnam conflict because of conscience which has been informed by Scripture.

2. To send once again our 1939 and 1969 decisions regarding the Christian attitude toward war and peace to the President and each member of Congress with the following statement: In 1969 we sent to you our **TESTIMONY REGARDING THE CHRISTIAN'S ATTITUDE TOWARD WAR AND PEACE**, a document adopted by our denomination in 1939 and reaffirmed in 1969. With that document we also sent to you decisions that were made by our denomination in 1969. Those documents still represent the position of our denomination.

Based on this position and in respect for individual conscience, in the interest of national reconciliation and in the name of Christian love and justice we urge the President of the United States and Congress to grant, at the earliest opportunity, amnesty for those who by reason of their Christian conscientious objection to the Vietnam conflict are in exile, at large, incarcerated, or deprived of the full rights of citizenship. The request for amnesty for such men does not make a judgment on the justness or unjustness of the war; it does support the man who in good conscience could not bear arms in the Vietnam conflict. This request does not dishonor, but respects the consciences of those who fought and died.

*Grounds:*

a. Although synod has never declared a specific war to be just or unjust, it has consistently supported the man who could not in good conscience before God bear arms in a given war. "Both Scripture and our Confession place a restriction upon our duty to obey the government. Peter at one time refused to obey the civil authorities and appealed to a higher loyalty to God in doing so. And our Creed restricts the duty of the citizen to the State to 'all things which are not repugnant to the Word of God.' From this it is clear that the church must not only recognize the right of Christians but even their duty under certain definite circumstances to refuse obedience to the civil magistrate" (Acts of Synod 1939, p. 246).

"The only conscientious objector to military service whose claim the church cannot repudiate is he who, recognizing his duty to obey his government and to defend his country in response to its call to arms, has intelligent and adequate grounds to be convinced that the given war to which he is summoned is an unjust war. When he is absolutely certain in the light of the principles of the Word of God that his country is fighting for a wrong cause, he cannot morally justify his participation in the given war. War is killing people and for anyone to engage in such killing of fellowmen when he is convinced in his heart that the cause for which he is fighting is an unjust one cannot be justified before the tribunal of God and his Word. The only course open to such a person is to resort to passive resistance and to refuse to bear arms in that given war.

"In closing, synod would urge upon all to pray for righteousness and peace in national and international affairs; to study the revealed Word for an understanding of the will of God for the guidance of the life of citizens and their government; to obey all lawfully constituted authori-

ties for God's sake; and, if a serious conflict of duty should occur, to obey God rather than man" (Acts of Synod 1939, p. 249).

b. A request to declare amnesty for conscientious objectors to the Vietnam conflict is a concrete action which implements the words of synodical decisions especially the 1969 decision urging us to ". . . extend Christian love and concern to all the draft eligible including those who struggle with the decision regarding selective conscientious objection and its consequences" (Acts of Synod 1969, p. 99).

c. Such a statement also implements our responsibility as a denomination to speak the Word of God as we perceive it to those in authority over us, a responsibility clearly recognized by the 1969 Synod which sent our decisions to Washington. —*Adopted*

#### ARTICLE 79

Advisory Committee 6, *Educational Matters*, the Rev. H. G. Arnold reporting, presents the following: (The report of Advisory Committee 6 is continued from Article 48.)

#### CANDIDACY OF ROBERT R. BROEKEMA

##### A. *Materials:*

1. Unprinted Appeal 5
2. Decision of Synod 1973, Art. 10.

B. *Background:* Mr. Broekema's recommendation for candidacy by the seminary faculty and the Board of Trustees was nullified by his failure to meet the deadline for completion of his academic work. He appealed to synod. Synod decided that his candidacy would be considered only when he had satisfactorily completed the academic requirements. The seminary faculty now states this has been done.

C. *Recommendation:* That synod declare Mr. Robert R. Broekema a candidate for the ministry in the Christian Reformed Church.

##### *Grounds:*

1. Mr. Broekema was endorsed for candidacy by both the seminary faculty and the Board of Trustees contingent upon fulfilling all academic requirements.

2. Mr. Broekema has now completed the academic requirements to the satisfaction of the seminary faculty. —*Adopted*

(The report of Advisory Committee 6 is continued in Article 85.)

The session is closed with devotions.

### THURSDAY EVENING, JUNE 21, 1973

#### Twentieth Session

#### ARTICLE 80

The session is opened with devotions. Dr. James Bosscher of Classis Grand Rapids East resumes his place as elder delegate.

Advisory Committee 8, *Home Missions*, the Rev. E. Knott reporting, presents the following: (The report of Advisory Committee 8 is continued from Article 37.)

## I. MANHATTAN CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH

A. *Material*: Overture 31. The Manhattan Christian Reformed Church requests synod to transfer building title from Board of Home Missions to the local congregation.

B. *Recommendation*: That synod not accede to the overture of the Manhattan Christian Reformed Church.

*Grounds*:

1. The terms for repayment of capital loans to Home Mission churches for erecting or buying church buildings are established by synod (Acts, 1960, Art. 171).

2. The overture does not demonstrate that the current synodical policy is contrary to biblical principles, logic, or the interest of a flexible ministry.

3. The overture does not offer grounds for making an exception to the current policy in the case of the Manhattan Christian Reformed Church.

—*Adopted*

## II. BOARD OF HOME MISSIONS: EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

A. *Material*: Report 4-A

B. *Recommendation*: That synod take note of the content of this report, informing synod that, before an executive secretary of the Board of Home Missions is appointed, and other staff replaced, the board is having a study made by an independent agency of the staff structure, assignments, and needs.

—*Adopted*

## III. AMEND CHURCH ORDER

A. *Material*: Overture 25

B. *Recommendation*: That synod accede to the overture of Classis Eastern Canada to amend Article 36a of the Church Order, changing the words, “. . . The meeting shall be presided over by the minister, . . .” to read: “. . . Ordinarily the meeting shall be presided over by the minister. . . .”

*Grounds*:

1. The offices of minister and elders as rulers are equal.

2. There are experienced elders who are quite capable of chairing meetings of consistory.

3. In crucial times, such as when a congregation is without a pastor, elders preside over the meetings and have proven themselves capable to do so quite adequately.

—*Adopted*

## ARTICLE 81

Advisory Committee 3, *Church Order II*, the Rev. M. De Vries reporting, presents the following: (The report of Advisory Committee 3 is continued from Article 23.)

## WOMEN IN ECCLESIASTICAL OFFICE

A. *Materials*:

1. Report 39

2. Communication 16, 17, 19, 22

*B. Background and Analysis:* The Synod of 1970 appointed a study committee "to examine in the light of Scripture the general Reformed practice of excluding women from the various ordained offices in the church." This study committee now places before synod the results of its study.

Your advisory committee judges that the report submitted by the study committee is in many ways an impressive document and that it reflects the several years of study required for its preparation. The report wrestles in a substantial way with the biblical givens relating to the subject assigned for study. It is based throughout on the assumption that the Word of God is our basic norm and that "neither old established traditions nor new concepts may be our guide." Several relevant passages are exegeted in considerable detail.

The report first focuses on the significance of the Old Testament data for the subject. It emphasizes the fact that both man and woman, by virtue of their creation, are equal before God. Together they bear his image and show forth his glory in the world (cf. Gen. 1:26-28, 2:18-25). While recognizing the diversity between man and woman the report at the same time rightly stresses the complementary correlation between them. The report points out further that though the fall into sin has adversely affected the relationship between man and woman, in Christ this relationship has been restored so that it again is able to express the beautiful harmony between the sexes as created by God.

In Israel, thus the report continues, the woman was subordinated to man (cf. Ex. 22:16; I Sam. 18:17-27). But along with many cases of disparity between man and woman various instances of parity between them are noted. Although admitting that no conclusive argument can be deduced from the Old Testament data, the report nevertheless states that these data "seem to favor the idea that women, too, may serve in the ministry of the special office of the New Testament church."

While taking grateful note of the valuable materials gleaned from the Old Testament, your committee wishes to make the following observations.

The first one concerns the mandate given to the study committee. The mandate "to examine the Reformed practice of excluding women from the various ordained offices in the church" seems to carry with it the hidden assumption that women have been an object of discrimination in the church for as long as this Reformed practice has prevailed. But does not this approach to the problem shift the burden of proof and does it not prematurely place accepted practice under the suspicion of being discriminatory? Should not the study committee have examined its mandate critically? Would it not have been better for the committee to suggest the study of the place and role of women in the Christian church?

As to the copious materials from the Old Testament themselves, the advisory committee feels that some of them require further reflection. Thus it may be noted that at no point in the report is there any mention of the fact that during the Old Testament dispensation the office of elder was held by men only. Other points which need further examination are

the notion of partnership as well as the fact that the report at certain points seems to be inclined to conclude too much too soon. For example, where the report has just begun to deal with the data of Genesis 1 and 2 it states that "one could conclude that the church is shortchanging herself in her exclusion of women from office." Also questionable in the advisory committee's opinion is the heavy emphasis on the basic equality between man and woman before God without a corresponding stress on and examination of the possible distinction of roles between them. Nor does the report adequately demonstrate whether the equality of man and woman in ecclesiastical office will be workable in view of the concept of woman's submissiveness.

In its examination of the pertinent New Testament data the study report again produces much that is of great value and should be closely examined. The report should be commended for seeking to evaluate these data against the background of the social and cultural conditions that existed at that time. Helpful observations are made about the status of women in the Greek and Roman cultures prevalent during New Testament times. To examine the biblical text in the light of its broader context, including the customs and mores of surrounding cultures, must be deemed a proper and wholesome method of biblical interpretation long practiced by Reformed exegetical writers. Without such attention to context one's use of the Bible can easily become erroneous and may tend toward sectarianism or even heresy.

When discussing the New Testament data the report begins to pay greater attention than heretofore to the differences between man and woman, which must be kept in mind along with the basic equality between them as creatures of God. Thus the report states that "woman should remain womanly in her conduct." It also observes that "the creation order as Paul explains it . . . stresses how men and women must behave in accordance with and with respect to their sexual differences, also in public life." And it asserts that "equality does not imply sameness."

In its treatment of some of the crucial passages from Paul's epistles such as I Corinthians 11:2-16; 14:33-36 and I Timothy 2:8-15, the report alerts the reader to the background against which these passages must be understood. At the same time the report correctly stresses the lasting significance which such passages may and do have when properly understood. Speaking about I Corinthians 11:2-16 the report clearly states that vs. 7-10 show "the deep and irreversible relationship between man and woman."

At more than one point the report emphasizes that the apostles, while preaching a gospel that was new and in many ways revolutionary, did not want to upset accepted custom when this was not necessary for the progress of the gospel. This accounts for Paul's appeal to the concept of "nature," a concept which includes "accepted tradition and cultural pattern." The same emphasis can be found in the report's analysis of Peter's insistence that women should be submissive. This call to submissiveness, thus the report, must be viewed within the missionary context of Peter's epistle.

These emphases in the report may form a proper basis for further reflection and should be carefully weighed before a final judgment regarding the report's findings is made.

At the same time the advisory committee is again compelled to raise some critical questions which it believes should be given further attention. Has the report done sufficient justice to Paul's clear cut reference to what "the law says?" (I Cor. 14:33-36). Is this not a reference to an injunction *not* subject to cultural environment, as is also the opinion of Grosheide in commenting on this passage? And when Paul, in I Timothy 2: 12, 13, exhorts women not to teach or to have authority over men, basing his exhortation on the fact that Adam was first created and then Eve, as well as on the fact that in the temptation Adam was not deceived but the woman, is it then legitimate to explain such an appeal to Genesis as an instance of rabbinistic exegesis? Paul received his revelation from Jesus Christ (Gal. 1:11, 12). To what extent does this fact allow or disallow for time-related arguments in the apostle's exhortation at this point? Has the Reformed and biblical view of inspiration been duly observed in the explanation of this passage? In I Corinthians 11:5 Paul allows women to prophesy but in I Corinthians 14:33 he forbids women to speak. Also this apparent contradiction deserves further clarification.

Attention should be called further to the fact that when the New Testament mentions the qualifications for eldership it seems to think of men only, for it specifies that they should be husbands of one wife. Again the question arises whether such injunctions must be merely seen against Paul's Jewish background. But since Paul elsewhere fully recognizes woman's place within the life of the church and of its manifold functions, is it not less than likely that the apostle should be so influenced? Still another problem in the report concerns the explanation of "headship." Does the report do justice to this concept? In marriage, for example, is the democratic model the biblical norm? Does headship exclude any degree of leading or ruling? We wonder whether masculinity and femininity has been adequately explained. Are these not unique qualities? (cf. Gen. 1:27, I Peter 3:1-6).

While the study of the Old and New Testament materials comprises the main part of the report, a very helpful survey of how women's role in the church has been viewed in church history is also presented. In this survey several misconceptions are cleared away and this deserves the church's attention and reflection.

The advisory committee is convinced that before the church can act on the specific recommendations of the report a new study committee should have the opportunity to address itself to a number of specific questions raised in our analysis.

Furthermore, we also feel strongly that the whole church should be involved in studying this matter to allow its reactions to be sent to the study committee for evaluation. The conclusions thus reached can then hopefully function as a solid foundation for the review of the main question whether women should be excluded from the ecclesiastical office and to determine the woman's place and role in the Christian church.

C. *Recommendations:*

1. That synod give the privilege of the floor to the chairman and the reporter of the study committee, Dr. Remkes Kooistra and the Rev. Dirk Habermehl, when the report is discussed by synod. —*Adopted*

2. That synod refer the entire report to the churches for study and reactions.

*Grounds:*

a. The importance of this subject demands that we proceed with care. A long standing policy of the church is substantially affected by this report.

b. All the churches should have an adequate opportunity to react to this report, produced by a study committee over a period of three years.

c. The decision of this synod re the report on "Ecclesiastical Office and Ordination" (Report 44) will have bearing on this subject.

d. There is still ample time to present synodical decisions re this subject to the Reformed Ecumenical Synod of 1976.

e. Several issues need further examination, for example, the method we may use in interpreting the biblical data; the question whether equality also involves similar roles with respect to the ecclesiastical office; the creation order and the appeal that can be made to it; the meaning of headship; the roles and functions of women in the church; the concepts of femininity and masculinity. —*Adopted*

3. That synod appoint a new study committee with the following mandate:

a. To study, evaluate, and report on the study committee and advisory committee reports; communications 16, 17, 19, and 22; and other informative communications. —*Adopted*

b. To receive and evaluate the reactions of the churches and structure the discussion as it deems best, with a view to presenting a report to Synod 1975, if possible. Reactions should be forwarded to this committee no later than July 1974. —*Adopted*

c. To study the place and role of women in the Christian church. —*Adopted*

4. That synod declare this to be its answer to communications 16, 17a, 19, and 22. —*Adopted*

5. That synod thank the study committee for its work. —*Adopted*  
(The report of Advisory Committee 3 is continued in Article 89.)

The session is closed with prayer.

## FRIDAY MORNING, JUNE 22, 1973

### Twenty-first Session

#### ARTICLE 82

After opening devotions, the roll is called. Elder M. Van Elderen is present for Classis Grand Rapids East. The Rev. G. VanderPlaats is absent with notification. His alternate for Classis Pella is not present.

The following are absent without notification: the Rev. C. Vander Meyden, and Elder W. De Haan.

The Thursday minutes are read and approved.

#### ARTICLE 83

Advisory Committee 13, *Budget Matters*, Mr. W. Schipper, Sr. reporting, presents the following:

##### I. A GUIDELINE FOR QUOTA INCREASES

###### A. *Materials:*

1. Overture 22 from First Kalamazoo consistory
2. Report 19-A

###### B. *Observations:*

1. A motion to submit Overture 22 to synod was defeated by Classis Kalamazoo on January 19, 1973. The overture requests that synod consider the relationship of the average increase in quotas (8.4% average for the last six years) with the average increase in family income (1968-71 average 6.5%). Added information developed by the Finance Committee of the Synodical Interim Committee shows that in the period 1969-1973 the average percentage increase requested by agencies to be 10.48%; the recommended increase in quota of the Finance Committee 5.59%; and the actual approved by synod 7.3%. The average annual family income increase for 1972 is reported at 6.8%.

2. The emphasis on "limiting" and "quota" is unfortunate. The emphasis should be on "planned giving" for "planned programs" which are world-wide in scope and well beyond the ability of any single congregation to staff and underwrite. The wholehearted support of denominational programs by every congregation and its consistory should be elicited—not out of obligation, but "for the Lord."

3. That the "ability to pay" and the local needs of the congregation are also factors to be considered in the setting of denominational quotas is hereby acknowledged.

###### C. *Recommendations:*

1. That Mr. Fred Hollebeek and Dr. Marvin De Vries, president and secretary of the Finance Committee, and all other members of the Finance Committee, be granted the privilege of the floor when finance matters are discussed.

—*Adopted*

2. That synod do not adopt a fixed limit on recommended quota increases.

###### *Grounds:*

a. Situations may arise calling for action exceeding a specific maximum percentage guideline based upon any external criterion such as the average increase in annual family income.

b. To limit quota increases to an estimated real income figure (i.e., increase in national family income adjusted by the estimated loss through inflation) would restrict and reduce ongoing programs of various agencies where fixed costs also are affected by the same pressures.

c. In any year, denominational programs may be built up or curtailed according to the judgment of the elected delegates to each synod—the

first consideration must be the opportunities to advance Christ's kingdom. —*Adopted*

3. That synod declare this to be its answer to Overture 22. —*Adopted*

II. QUOTAS AND APPROVED CAUSES

A. *Denominational Quotas*

1. *Materials:*

- a. Report 1—Back to God Hour
- b. Report 2A—Calvin College and Seminary
- c. Report 3—Board of Foreign Missions
- d. Report 4—Board of Home Missions
- e. Report 5—Board of Publications
- f. Report 9—Chaplain Committee
- g. Report 12—Fund for Needy Churches
- h. Report 16—Ministers' Pension Fund
- i. Report 19—Synodical Interim Committee
- j. Report 19A—Synodical Interim Committee
- k. Report 31—United Calvinist Youth

2. *Orientation:* In approaching the task of determining quotas to recommend for synodical action, the Advisory Committee for Budget Matters adopted the following policy:

The financial report of every organization supported by denominational quotas was carefully studied.

Explanation of its rationale for recommended action respecting quotas was obtained from the cognizant members of the Finance Committee, subcommittee of the Synodical Interim Committee.

A knowledgeable member from the board of most of the organizations was interviewed to ascertain as concisely as possible the necessity for every quota increase requested, and particularly what would be jeopardized by budget reductions.

All reasonably available information was gathered and compared before any decisions were taken.

A great deal of careful screening and study had been conducted by the Finance Committee, without whose diligent continual monitoring and meticulous preliminary work the duties of this committee would have been impossible to complete. The Finance Committee in Report 19-A indicate the efforts they made toward economy. Furthermore, every board demonstrated the lengths to which they had gone to achieve the greatest benefit to the Lord's work for the funds entrusted to them.

3. *Recommendations:*

a. That synod consider all denominational quota requests before acting on any one of them. —*Adopted*

b. That synod adopt the following denominational quotas:

	1973	Requested for 1974	Recommended for 1974*	Synodically Amended Budget for 1974
1. Back to God Hour .....	\$ 15.00	\$ 18.50	\$ 16.00	\$ 16.00
2. Board of Publications				
a. Spanish Literature .....	.75	.75	—	.50

b. "De Wachter" .....	.25	.25	—	.25
c. Unified Church-School Curriculum .....	2.00	3.00	2.00	2.00
d. Denominational Building Addition .....	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
3. Calvin College & Seminary**	30.60**	32.10**	32.10**	32.10**
4. Chaplains' Deposit Fund .....	.50	.50	.50	.50
5. Chaplain Committee .....	—	1.00	—	—
6. Foreign Missions .....	28.75	30.00	29.00	29.00
7. Fund for Needy Churches .....	11.25	12.00	12.75	12.75
8. Home Missions .....	41.10	41.10	41.10	41.10
9. Ministers' Pension Fund .....	22.00	23.50	22.75	22.75
10. Synodical Expense Fund .....	2.75	3.25	3.25	3.25
a. SCORR .....	1.40	1.40	1.40	1.40
11. United Calvinist Youth .....	1.00	—	—	—
<b>Total Yearly per Family Quota ..</b>	<b>\$158.35</b>	<b>\$168.35</b>	<b>\$161.85</b>	<b>\$162.60</b>

\*The recommendations are those of the Finance Committee and Advisory Budget Committee.

\*\*Allocated on an area basis as indicated below.

—*Adopted*

c. That in agreement with the decision of the Synod of 1962, synod approve the following regional or area quotas for Calvin College and Seminary:

Area No. 1—comprises Classes Grand Rapids East, Grand Rapids South, Grand Rapids North and Grandville .....	\$44.00
Area No. 2—comprises Classes Cadillac, Holland, Kalamazoo, Lake Erie, Muskegon and Zeeland .....	40.25
Area No. 3—comprises Classes Chicago North, Chicago South, Florida, Illiana, and Wisconsin .....	33.75
Area No. 4—comprises Classes Minnesota North, Minnesota South, Northcentral Iowa, Orange City, Pella, and Sioux Center .....	16.00
Area No. 5—comprises Classes Hackensack and Hudson .....	44.00
Area No. 6—comprises Classes Columbia, Pacific Northwest, California South, Central California and Rocky Mountain .....	29.25
Area No. 7—comprises Classes Alberta North, Alberta South, British Columbia, Chatham, Eastern Canada, Hamilton, Huron, Quinte, and Toronto .....	15.25

Areas which benefit from a quota reduction should employ the monies saved to finance their present area colleges (Acts of Synod, 1962, pages 54, 104, XXV).

—*Adopted*

### III. DENOMINATIONAL CAUSES RECOMMENDED FOR FINANCIAL SUPPORT

#### A. *Denominational Causes for One or More Offerings*

1. Armed Forces Fund of Home Missions Board
2. Back to God Hour for above-quota needs
3. Back to God Tract Committee
4. Board of Foreign Missions for above-quota needs
5. Board of Home Missions for above-quota needs

6. Chaplain Fund
7. Committee for Educational Assistance to Churches Abroad
8. Minority Student Scholarship Fund
9. Supplemental Relief Fund of Ministers' Pension Fund Committee

B. *Denominational Benevolence Cause for One or More Offerings*  
Christian Reformed World Relief Committee

C. *Denominational Related Youth Causes for One or More Offerings*

1. Calvinettes (division of United Calvinist Youth)
2. Calvinist Cadet Corps (division of United Calvinist Youth)
3. Young Calvinist Federation (division of United Calvinist Youth)
4. Young Calvinist Servicemen's Ministry

*Recommendation:* That synod approve the above recommended causes for one or more offerings. —*Adopted*

#### IV. NON-DENOMINATIONAL CAUSES

The following non-denominational causes are recommended for financial support, *but not necessarily for one or more offerings*. The number of offerings, or any amount to be given to these causes, is a matter that *each council should decide*.

##### A. *Benevolent Causes*

1. Bethany Christian Home, Inc.
2. Bethesda Hospital
3. Calvary Rehabilitation Center
4. Christian Sanatorium Association
5. Christian School Employees Relief Fund (only when specifically requested)
6. Eastern Christian Children's Retreat
7. Elim Christian School
8. The Luke Society
9. Pine Rest Christian Hospital Association (includes Children's Retreat and Sheltered Workshop)
10. Roseland Christian School

##### B. *Educational Causes*

1. Association for Advancement of Christian Scholarship
2. Christian Schools Educational Foundation (NUCS)
3. Dordt College, Inc.
4. National Union of Christian Schools (general fund)
5. Reformed Bible College
6. Trinity Christian College
7. Westminster Theological Seminary

##### C. *Miscellaneous Causes*

1. American Bible Society (U.S. Churches only)
2. Canadian Bible Society (Canadian churches only)
3. Christian Labour Association of Canada (Canadian churches only)
4. Christian Laymen's League
5. Faith, Prayer, and Tract League
6. Gideons (for Bible distribution)
7. Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship

8. Lord's Day Alliance of the U.S. (U.S. Churches only)
9. T.E.L.L. (The Evangelical Literature League)
10. World Home Bible League (includes Canadian Home Bible League)

*Recommendation:* That synod approve the recommended non-denominational causes for financial support. —*Adopted*

#### V. REGIONAL CAUSES RECOMMENDED FOR FINANCIAL SUPPORT

The Synod of 1972 adopted the following recommendation (Acts of Synod, 1972, Art. 64, IV.2, p. 84) :

"That a study be made to determine if a number of non-denominational causes recommended for financial support are actually local or regional in character. (Refer to Synodical Interim Committee for action)."

The Synodical Interim Committee referred this matter to its Finance Committee. The Finance Committee requested another year to complete this work.

*Recommendation:* That synod grant a one year extension for the completion of a study of non-denominational regional causes.

#### *Grounds:*

1. The determination of the characteristics of regional causes is a complex problem and requires more time.
2. The new Denominational Financial Coordinator can provide invaluable assistance in the data collection and analysis of this question.

—*Adopted*

#### VI. AMERICAN CALVINIST FELLOWSHIP

A. *Material:* Communication 4, American Calvinist Fellowship request to be placed on list of accredited causes.

B. *Background:* Founded in 1945 as the Calvinistic Action Committee, "to promote God-centered living through faith in Jesus Christ." The organization concentrates on translating and publishing standard Reformed works into the Spanish language such as Warfield's *The Plan of Salvation* and Berkhof's *Systematic Theology*, and was dropped in 1969 at its own request because of declining leadership. Under new leadership, the ACF requests reinstatement for the purpose of translation into the Spanish language and distribution of Christian literature, emphasizing the Reformed world and life view.

#### C. *Recommendations:*

1. That synod not grant the request of the American Calvinist Fellowship.

*Ground:* This is in accord with the action taken by the Synodical Interim Committee on May 24, 1973 not to accede to the request of American Calvinist Fellowship in view of the possible overlapping of effort it would entail. —*Tabled*

2. It is moved to grant the request of the American Calvinist Fellowship. —*Adopted*

3. That the Board of Foreign Missions and the Spanish Literature Committee appointed by the Synod of 1973 study the possible relation-

ship of the American Calvinist Fellowship to the Spanish Literature program of the denomination.

*Ground:* Since synod has seen fit to appoint a Spanish Literature Committee requested by the Board of Publications, it would appear that the work projected by the American Calvinist Fellowship could well be undertaken by this committee. In any case it would be wise to consider at this point if we have a proliferation of agencies supplying literature to the Spanish-speaking people. —*Adopted*

#### VII. RECOMMENDATION

That synod commend the Finance Committee of the Synodical Interim Committee for its diligent service. —*Adopted*

#### ARTICLE 84

The president of synod, Dr. L. Greenway, expresses synod's appreciation to Mr. George Kamp, Mr. Lester Ippel, the office personnel, and the custodians for their excellent work in assisting synod.

The fourth session of synod approved a three-year reappointment of the Rev. W. Haverkamp as Editor of *De Wachter*.

The vice-president, the Rev. J. Vriend, reads a letter from the Rev. W. Haverkamp indicating his acceptance of synod's reappointment.

Synod decides to reconvene at 1:00 p.m.

The morning session is closed with devotions.

### FRIDAY AFTERNOON, JUNE 22, 1973

#### Twenty-second Session

#### ARTICLE 85

The session is opened with devotions.

Advisory Committee 6, *Educational Matters*, the Rev. H. G. Arnold reporting, presents the following: (The report of Advisory Committee 6 is continued from Article 79.)

#### CANDIDACY OF CLAIR VANDER NEUT

##### A. *Materials:*

1. Board of Trustees Minutes, May 21, 1973.
2. Executive Committee Minutes (BOT), June 7, 1973.

*B. Background:* Mr. Vander Neut's recommendation by the seminary faculty to the Board of Trustees was nullified when he failed to meet the established deadline for submission of work required for graduation. The board, in its May meeting, held a satisfactory interview with Mr. Vander Neut. However, because of academic deficiencies, the board instructed the executive committee to make the final recommendation for candidacy. The executive committee, in its June meeting, decided to recommend Mr. Vander Neut for candidacy "contingent upon his satisfactory completion of his academic requirements." His name did not appear in the board's supplementary report to synod. He has now met the graduation requirements and, therefore, the contingency established by the executive committee.

*C. Recommendations:*

1. That synod, by way of exception, declare this matter to be legally before it.

*Ground:* Although the resolution of this problem came too late to be included in the printed report of the board, the minutes clearly indicate that it was to be submitted when the contingency had been met.

—*Adopted*

2. That synod declare Mr. Clair Vander Neut a candidate for the ministry in the Christian Reformed Church.

*Grounds:*

1. Mr. Vander Neut was endorsed for candidacy by both the seminary faculty and the Board of Trustees contingent upon fulfilling all academic requirements.

2. Mr. Vander Neut has now completed the academic requirements to the satisfaction of the seminary faculty.

—*Adopted*

## ARTICLE 86

Advisory Committee 1, *Appeals*, the Rev. N. Punt reporting, presents the following: (The report of Advisory Committee 1 is continued from Article 50.)

## I. APPEAL OF MR. ROY VAN KOOTEN

*A. Materials:*

1. Unprinted Appeal 1, Mr. Van Kooten appeals decision of Calvary Christian Reformed Church, Pella and Classis Pella

2. Communication 8 from Calvary, Pella

3. Communication 9 from First Pella

4. Communication 10 from Classis Pella

5. Communication 11 from the Rev. John Geels

6. Communication 12 from First Oskaloosa

*B. History:* For some time the Calvary Christian Reformed Church has admitted guests to the sacrament of the Lord's Supper by making the following announcement in its church bulletin on Communion Sunday and reading it from the pulpit:

"At worship this morning we will commemorate the suffering and death of our Lord by partaking of the Lord's Supper. To all who believe in Jesus Christ as their only Savior and Lord and who are professing members in good standing of evangelical, orthodox Christian churches; to all who are truly sorry for their sins, who have repented of their wrong doing to Christ, and who earnestly desire to lead a godly life, we extend a sincere invitation to come with gladness to the table of the Lord and to take part in this celebration of the Lord's Supper."

Mr. Van Kooten appealed to the Calvary Christian Reformed Church to change this practice and, when his appeal was denied, he sent his appeal to Classis Pella, in session January 25, 1973.

Classis responded as follows:

"A motion is made and supported that classis answer this appeal by declaring that the practice of the Calvary Christian Reformed Church

in its administration of the Lord's Supper is in accord with the Church Order of the Christian Reformed Church. —Adopted"

At its meeting held May 17, 1973 Classis Pella received protests from First Pella, First Oskaloosa and the Leighton Church and from the Rev. John Geels against the above decision.

Classis responded to these protests by deciding to "postpone action on these protests and overture until synod disposes of the matter."

**C. Recommendations:**

1. That synod sustain the appeal of Mr. Van Kooten.

*Grounds:*

a. The practice employed by the Calvary Church does not adequately implement the concern of Article 59 of the Church Order with regard to supervision of admission to the Lord's Supper.

Although Article 59 of the Church Order does not speak directly about the admission of visitors to the Lord's Supper, it does require of the consistory that it admit to the Lord's Supper only those who are *known* to have professed Christ and who give evidence of true faith and godliness. This is evident from Question 4 of the Guide for Conducting Church Visiting, "Does the consistory properly guard the sanctity of the Lord's table by admitting only those who give evidence of true faith and godliness?"

b. The appeal of the Consistory of Calvary Christian Reformed Church to Article 60 of the Church Order is unwarranted in view of the fact that Article 60 pertains to the *manner* in which the Lord's Supper is *served*, it does not speak to the *matter* of *admission* to the sacrament.

—Adopted

Note 1: The following delegates register their negative vote: H. Bouma, J. Bos, D. Slotemaker, P. Hogeterp, M. Nieboer, B. Huizinga, R. Peterson, C. Keegstra, B. Vander Lee, N. Noordeloos, D. Buteyn, G. Negen, W. Gritter, A. E. Mulder.

Note 2: The undersigned protest the decision sustaining the appeal of Mr. R. Van Kooten. Ground: Synod used as support for its decision, Article 59 of the Church Order. This article is not germane to the subject raised in the appeal. Therefore the synodical decision is based on a false premise.

W. Buursma, C. Salomons, and H. Spaan

2. That synod appoint a committee to study the problems faced by consistories with respect to the supervision of admission of visitors to the Lord's Supper in the light of Scriptures and the Reformed Creeds.

*Grounds:*

- a. The Church Order does not speak directly to this matter.
- b. Increasing mobility within our society, and the greater ease with which Christian believers today visit congregations of another denomination than their own, makes the problem one of growing difficulty and urgency for consistories.

- c. The problem is so widespread in the churches that it warrants the attention of synod.

—Adopted

3. That synod declare that this constitutes its answer to the appeals of the consistories of First Pella and First Oskaloosa churches and of the Rev. John Geels.

—*Adopted*

## II. CHURCH VISITORS APPEAL DECISION OF CLASSIS ROCKY MOUNTAIN

A. *Material*: Unprinted Appeal 3, "Church Visitors appeal decision regarding admission to the Lord's Supper."

B. *History*: The Church Visitors gave the following report to classis in session September 12, 13, 1972, concerning their visit with the Chelwood Church:

"The manner of following our denominational practice of supervised communion is weakly followed and left entirely to the pastor. He speaks of the nature of the supper and warns against improper participation but the elders are not part of guarding the sanctity of the table. The participation of the supper is left entirely to the individual addressed. This violates Articles 59 and 85 of the Church Order."

To this charge the Chelwood consistory gave the following reply:

"The problem our church faces is that 50% to 60% of the people (adults) attending our communion services are not members. We have been attempting to find a way of controlling participation in the sacrament that meets two objectives: protects the sanctity of the table, and makes non-member Christians feel genuinely welcome at the table. This has led to a great deal of struggle on our part. We have used the method of asking prior permission of the council, but found it aggravates and alienates newer and younger Christians. We have used the method of asking non-members to sign their name to a printed statement of faith in the bulletin. We have used the method of making a clearcut warning from the pulpit and then leaving the participation up to the individual. We are still struggling to find the best method of achieving our two objectives in our situation. We have appointed a study committee for this purpose. We are open to suggestions from other ministers and churches in the classis in circumstances like ours. And whatever method we finally come up with, which we can systematically use, we will be happy to share with the full classis at its next meeting."

At its September 1972 session, classis did not approve the work of the Church Visitors relative to reporting lack of elder supervision of the Lord's Table, nor did it disapprove of their work. Classis appointed a committee "to advise classis regarding the impasse between the Chelwood consistory and the Church Visitors."

This committee reported to the February 1973 session of classis and upon its recommendation classis adopted the following statement:

"Classis declares that Articles 59 and 85 of the Church Order do not speak directly to the matter of inviting non-member worshippers to the Lord's Supper."

It is this decision of February 1973 which the Church Visitors are appealing.

C. *Observation*: Synod cannot simply sustain the appeal of the Church Visitors because the statement adopted by Classis Rocky Mountain is formally quite correct, namely - "Articles 59 and 85 of the Church Order

do not speak directly to the matter of inviting non-member worshipers to the Lord's Supper."

D. *Recommendation*: That synod declare that its action relative to the appeal of Mr. Van Kooten against the Calvary Christian Reformed Church of Pella constitutes its answer to this appeal. —*Adopted*

#### ARTICLE 87

The Christian Reformed Board of Foreign Missions recommends the reappointment of Dr. E. Rubingh as Area Secretary for Africa, and the Rev. E. Van Baak as Area Secretary for the Far East. —*Adopted*

#### ARTICLE 88

Mr. Elwood Woods, fraternal delegate from the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America, was unable to attend our synod, but conveys his greetings and a message to synod through the Rev. L. A. Bazuin, representing the *Reception Committee*.

#### ARTICLE 89

Advisory Committee 3, *Church Order II*, the Rev. M. De Vries reporting, presents the following: (The report of Advisory Committee 3 is continued from Article 81.)

#### A NEW FORM OF SUBSCRIPTION

##### A. *Materials*:

1. Overtures 7 and 18.
2. Communication 25: First Denver Christian Reformed Church
3. Communication 6

B. *Background*: The overture by Dr. Harry Boer pleads for a new form of subscription. He argues that we ought to be deeply concerned about maintaining the integrity of our confessions and that our present form interferes with the exercise of this concern. When it comes to the process of creedal revision or gravamen procedures the church does not seem to have a voice in the discussions leading to final official action on proposed amendments of the creeds. This overture is pleading for a specific freedom which is to be exercised in association with the writing of a gravamen. Though it is true that the assemblies of the church must make final decisions concerning any proposed creedal change, the church as a whole should be free to participate in the discussions and reflections which lead to the final decision. Dr. Boer contends that our present Form of Subscription does not give this freedom in the course of the gravamen procedure.

Classis Chicago South in its overture does not share Dr. Boer's opinion that a whole form is needed, but it does recognize a deficiency in the present form. This deficiency is, according to this overture, that the form limits the process of creedal revision exclusively to the ecclesiastical assemblies. Classis Chicago South wishes to correct this limitation by introducing an additional sentence, spelling out the right and responsibility of the whole body of believers to reflect upon proposed changes in our doctrinal standards.

### C. *Introductory Observations:*

Your advisory committee has attempted to evaluate these overtures and it would seem that several different approaches are possible. Four options surfaced and were seriously considered.

First of all, the committee gave consideration to the possibility of recommending to synod not to accede to either overture. This proposal found no support, however, because of certain arguments expressed in both overtures.

Secondly, the committee gave serious thought to the possibility of keeping the Form of Subscription completely intact but to recommend to synod that it make a declaration about the meaning of the word "until" in this form, explaining the precise meaning of the phrase "we will neither publicly or privately propose, teach, or defend the same, either by preaching or writing, *until* we have first revealed such sentiments to the consistory, classis, or synod." Does this mean that an individual upon having filed a gravamen thus obtains the right to publicly discuss and defend his view before the consistory, classis or synod has made a judgment concerning the matter? The common understanding seems to be that even though such sentiments were revealed to a consistory, the individual would not be allowed to publicly discuss them until synod had made its judgment concerning them. Another reading, however, favors that once the consistory has been officially notified by the individual, he does have the right to make known his sentiments in public.

There is merit in keeping the Form of Subscription as it is, and in synod expressing itself about the meaning of "until." The value of this approach, however, would be limited. Would this declaration be remembered? Would such an explanatory note be repeated each time the Form is read? And furthermore, might there not be grave misunderstandings anyway about what precisely is permissible during a gravamen procedure?

Thirdly, the committee considered seriously the proposals of Dr. Boer to undertake the writing of a new form. After much reflection, however, the committee does not feel persuaded to go into this direction either. The committee questions Boer's contention that the Form of Subscription is hierarchical and incongruous with the Reformed conception of the church. He points out some weaknesses in the present form, but does this give adequate ground for the rewriting of the whole form?

The obligations which the church has toward its office-bearers in responding to gravamina should indeed be taken seriously. However, we question whether the Form of Subscription should have to spell out these mutual obligations as this overture suggests. The Church Order as well as the call letter for pastors seem to be adequate in enunciating these obligations.

Dr. Boer takes issue with the present form also because of its "absoluteness in wording and severity of openly threatened sanctions." One can only sign this form, he claims, with "mental reservations." The present form makes an implicit distinction, however, between the Word of God and agreement with the doctrinal standards. The phrase "do fully agree with the Word of God" must be read in the light of Article

VII of the Belgic Confession: "Neither may we consider any writings of men, however holy these men may have been, *of equal value* with these divine Scriptures. . . ." (*italics supplied*). It is precisely for this reason that provision is made in the Form of Subscription for revising the creeds.

We like to underscore Boer's contention that any gravamen should be acted upon with deliberate speed and the assemblies should not avoid their responsibility.

A fourth possibility considered by the committee is recommended by Classis Chicago South, namely, to incorporate a sentence into the Form of Subscription, explaining the validity of recognizing the whole body of believers in a gravamen procedure. Your committee acknowledges that the present form has served us well for many years in preserving the unity and orthodoxy of our denomination and in keeping the office bearers aware of their creedal commitment. Nevertheless, we see merit in the overture of Classis Chicago South and hence we come with a recommendation that is essentially similar to it, although the wording of the amendment has been altered to fit in better with the rest of the form.

*D. Recommendations:*

1. That synod incorporate the following sentence into the Form of Subscription:

After revealing such sentiments to the consistory, classis or synod for examination we shall have the freedom to discuss and defend these sentiments publicly, except in our preaching or official teaching, always with a spirit of meekness and love, and we understand that the church as the body of believers may openly reflect upon them until the matter has been conclusively adjudicated by consistory, classis or synod.

*Grounds:*

a. This addition, in accordance with the biblical and Reformed teaching of the nature of the church, more clearly recognizes the right and responsibility of the whole body of believers, to whom the Holy Spirit is given, to reflect upon and prayerfully seek the will of the Spirit concerning any proposed changes or amendments of our doctrinal standards.

b. This addition does not infringe upon the exclusive right which the assemblies of the church have in adjudicating any proposed creedal change. —*Adopted*

2. That synod incorporate this new sentence in the Form of Subscription after the word "examined" (in the 19th line) and before "being ready."

*Ground:* This position will convey best the intent of the amendment. —*Adopted*

3. That synod change the following words after the newly inserted sentence to read: "And we shall be" before the word "ready," and drop the word "being."

*Ground:* These corrections will aid the grammatical construction. —*Adopted*

4. That synod add the words "official teaching" to the second paragraph.

*Ground:* This addition will add a unifying note to the form and is in harmony with the wording of the amendment. —*Adopted*

5. That synod delay the final ratification of these changes in the Form of Subscription until Synod of 1974.

*Ground:* The crucial role of the Form of Subscription in the life of our churches demands that no changes be made without ample reflection by the whole church. —*Adopted*

6. That synod declare this to be its reply to Overtures 7 and 18 and Communication 25. —*Adopted*

*E. The amendments adopted above are incorporated and italicized in the following form:*

### AMENDED FORM OF SUBSCRIPTION

We, the undersigned, Professors of the Christian Reformed Church, Ministers of the Gospel, Elders and Deacons of the Christian Reformed congregation of \_\_\_\_\_, of the Classis of \_\_\_\_\_ do hereby, sincerely and in good conscience before the Lord, declare by this our subscription that we heartily believe and are persuaded that all the articles and points of doctrine contained in the Confession and Catechism of the Reformed Churches, together with the explanation of some points of the aforesaid doctrine made by the National Synod of Dordrecht, 1618-'19, do fully agree with the Word of God.

We promise therefore diligently to teach and faithfully to defend the aforesaid doctrine, without either directly or indirectly contradicting the same by our public preaching, *official teaching*, or writing.

We declare, moreover, that we not only reject all errors that militate against this doctrine and particularly those which were condemned by the above mentioned synod, but that we are disposed to refute and contradict these and to exert ourselves in keeping the church free from such errors. And if hereafter any difficulties or different sentiments respecting the aforesaid doctrines should arise in our minds, we promise that we will neither publicly nor privately propose, teach, or defend the same, either by preaching or writing until we have first revealed such sentiments to the consistory, classis, or synod, that the same may there be examined. *After revealing such sentiments to the consistory, classis or synod for examination we shall have the freedom to discuss and defend these sentiments publicly, except in our preaching or official teaching, always with a spirit of meekness and love, and we understand that the church as the body of believers may openly reflect upon them until the matter has been conclusively adjudicated by consistory, classis or synod. And we shall be ready always cheerfully to submit to the judgment of the consistory, classis, or synod, under the penalty, in case of refusal, of being by that very fact suspended from our office.*

And further, if at any time the consistory, classis, or synod, upon sufficient grounds of suspicion and to preserve the uniformity and purity of doctrine, may deem it proper to require of us a further explanation of our sentiments respecting any particular article of the Confession of Faith, the Catechism, or the explanation of the National Synod, we do

hereby promise to be always willing and ready to comply with such requisition, under the penalty above mentioned, reserving for ourselves, however, the right of appeal in case we should believe ourselves aggrieved by the sentence of the consistory or the classis; and until a decision is made upon such an appeal, we will acquiesce in the determination and judgment already passed.

#### ARTICLE 90

Advisory Committee 12, *Appointments*, the Rev. A. Bultman reporting, presents the following lists for synodical approval:

#### I. OFFICERS AND APPOINTEES

##### A. Officers

1. Stated Clerk: Rev. Wm. P. Brink (4 year to 1974)
2. Denominational Financial Coordinator, Mr. A. Vroon (3 year to 1976)
3. Synodical Treasurer: Mr. L. Ippel (2 year to 1974)
4. Alternate: Mr. Clarence De Vries (2 year to 1974)

##### B. Appointees

1. Arrangements and Reports for synod: Mr. L. Ippel, Mr. G. Kamp
2. Correspondent to RES Committee on Missions: Rev. H. Evenhouse
3. Archivist: Dr. H. Brinks

C. *Convening Church for 1974 Synod*: Neland Avenue Christian Reformed Church, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

#### II. SYNODICAL DEPUTIES

Classis	Delegate	Alternate
Alberta North.....	Rev. J. D. Pereboom.....	Rev. N. Knoppers
Alberta South.....	Rev. H. De Moor.....	Rev. L. Mulder
British Columbia.....	Rev. D. Pierik.....	
Cadillac.....	Rev. G. Compaan.....	Rev. M. Stegink
California South.....	Rev. H. Sonnema.....	Rev. A. De Jager
Central California.....	Rev. H. Petroelje.....	Rev. R. Buining
Chatham.....	Rev. P. Sluys.....	Rev. J. Vugteveen
Chicago North.....	Rev. C. Van Essen.....	Rev. S. Vander Jagt
Chicago South.....	Rev. J. Bylsma.....	Dr. A. De Jong
Columbia.....	Rev. K. R. Slager.....	Rev. H. Leestma
Eastern Canada.....	Rev. J. H. Binnema.....	Rev. W. S. Gritter
Florida.....	Rev. F. Diemer.....	Rev. A. Cammenga
Grand Rapids East.....	Rev. J. A. De Kruyter.....	Rev. H. G. Vander Ark
Grand Rapids North.....	Rev. M. Doornbos.....	Rev. G. J. Rozenboom
Grand Rapids South.....	Rev. J. D. Eppinga.....	Rev. A. Brink
Grandville.....	Rev. H. De Wolf.....	Rev. L. Bossenbroek
Hackensack.....	Rev. S. Ten Brink.....	Rev. E. Cooke
Hamilton.....	Rev. H. De Bolster.....	Rev. J. Klomps
Holland.....	Rev. W. Vander Haak.....	Rev. B. Den Ouden
Hudson.....	Dr. G. Stob.....	Rev. R. Wildschut
Huron.....	Rev. G. Nonnekes.....	Rev. A. Beukema
Illiana.....	Rev. L. A. Bazuin.....	Rev. H. G. Arnold
Kalamazoo.....	Rev. J. Mulder.....	Rev. H. Vander Kam
Lake Erie.....	Rev. J. Malestein.....	Rev. A. Hoksbergen
Minnesota North.....	Rev. T. Wevers.....	Rev. P. Ouwinga
Minnesota South.....	Rev. T. Heyboer.....	Rev. P. Brouwer
Muskegon.....	Rev. E. Oostendorp.....	Rev. T. Verseput
Northcentral Iowa.....	Rev. H. Hollander.....	Rev. F. Einfeld

Classis	Delegate	Alternate
Orange City.....	Rev. J. H. Rubingh.....	Rev. H. De Groot
Pacific Northwest.....	Rev. D. Tinklenberg.....	Rev. J. Stulp
Pella.....	Rev. P. Bakker.....	Rev. S. Kramer
Quinte.....	Rev. J. Geuzebroek.....	Rev. D. Los
Rocky Mountain.....	Rev. E. Boer.....	Rev. C. O. Buus
Sioux Center.....	Dr. P. Y. De Jong.....	Rev. J. Engbers
Toronto.....	Rev. P. Jonker.....	Dr. R. Kooistra
Wisconsin.....	Rev. J. C. Verbrugge.....	Rev. T. Medema
Zeeland.....	Rev. J. Blankespoor.....	Rev. C. Bolt

III. BOARDS

A. *Back to God Hour*

Member	Term Expires
Rev. D. Negen, President .....	1975
Rev. R. Wildschut, Vice-President .....	1976
Rev. N. Punt, Secretary .....	1976
Dr. A. Diekema, Treasurer .....	1976
Mr. R. J. De Nooyer .....	1976
Dr. S. Greidanus .....	1974
Rev. J. W. Jongsma .....	1975
Rev. Scott Redhouse .....	1975
Rev. R. Slater .....	1975
Mr. R. Triemstra .....	1974
Mr. C. Vander Brug .....	1975
Mr. W. Veldkamp .....	1975
Rev. R. Venema .....	1974
Rev. J. Jongsma .....	(Canada West)
Rev. D. Negen .....	(California)
Rev. R. Slater .....	(Pacific Northwest)
Mr. C. Vander Brug .....	(California)
Mr. W. Veldkamp .....	(Southern Michigan)
Rev. S. Redhouse .....	(Rocky Mountain)

B. *Board of Trustees - Calvin College and Seminary*

Classis	Delegate	Alternate	Term Expires
Alberta North.....	Rev. J. Joosse.....	Rev. J. Vriend .....	1975
Alberta South.....	Rev. M. J. Lise.....	Rev. L. Mulder .....	1975
British Columbia.....	Rev. B. Nederlof.....	Rev. P. Van Egmond .....	1973
Cadillac.....	Rev. R. Wiebenga.....	Rev. M. Stegink .....	1976
California South.....	Rev. D. Oostendorp.....	Rev. C. Vander Plate .....	1974
Central California.....	Rev. D. Vander Wall.....	Rev. R. Kok .....	1975
Chatham.....	Rev. M. Pool.....	Rev. P. Sluys .....	1974
Chicago North.....	Rev. J. Berends.....	Rev. O. Breen .....	1976
Chicago South.....	Rev. H. De Mots.....	Rev. N. Punt .....	1973
Columbia.....	Mr. P. H. Advocaat.....	Rev. H. Leestma .....	1975
Eastern Canada.....	Rev. H. Numan, Jr.....	Rev. J. De Pater	
Florida.....	Rev. E. Heerema.....	Rev. J. Osterhouse	
Grand Rapids East.....	Rev. W. De Jong.....	Rev. J. C. Medendorp .....	1975
Grand Rapids North.....	Rev. G. Rozenboom.....	Mr. R. Hoekstra .....	1975
Grand Rapids South.....	Rev. J. M. Hofman.....	Rev. A. Brink .....	1976
Grandville.....	Rev. L. Hofman.....	Rev. P. VanderWeide .....	1976
Hackensack.....	Rev. R. Walter.....		1976
Hamilton.....	Rev. R. Sikkema.....	Rev. A. Venema .....	1973
Holland.....	Rev. R. Holwerda.....		1976
Hudson.....	Rev. E. Walhout.....	Rev. N. R. Prins .....	1975
Huron.....	Rev. J. Van Stempvoort.....	Rev. A. Beukema .....	1976
Illiana.....	Rev. J. C. Ribbens.....	Dr. E. Roels .....	1975
Kalamazoo.....	Rev. H. Bouma, Jr.....	Rev. F. De Boer .....	1976

Classis	Delegate	Alternate	Term Expires
Lake Erie.....	Rev. R. Van Harn.....	Rev. F. Steen .....	1975
Minnesota North.....	Rev. A. Van Eek.....	.....	1975
Minnesota South.....	Rev. N. Roorda.....	Rev. L. Zoerhof .....	1975
Muskegon.....	Rev. W. Gebben.....	Rev. E. Piersma .....	1975
Northcentral Iowa.....	Rev. H. Baak.....	Rev. J. Entingh .....	1975
Orange City.....	Rev. J. Hellinga.....	Rev. H. Hiemstra .....	1974
Pacific Northwest.....	Rev. J. Wesseling.....	Rev. A. Leegwater .....	1974
Pella.....	Rev. H. Petersen.....	Rev. S. Kramer .....	1976
Quinte.....	Rev. G. Corvers.....	Rev. D. Los .....	1976
Rocky Mountain.....	Rev. J. Boonstra.....	Rev. R. Veenstra .....	1975
Sioux Center.....	Rev. J. Engbers.....	Rev. H. VandenHeuvel .....	1975
Toronto.....	Rev. A. Dreise.....	Rev. L. Tamminga .....	1975
Wisconsin.....	Rev. H. Exoo.....	Rev. L. Baker .....	1974
Zeeland.....	Rev. W. Van Rees.....	Rev. T. Brouwer .....	1975
Eastern District.....	J. Last.....	A. Snope .....	1975
Central District.....	B. Sevensma.....	Dr. T. VandenBerg .....	1975
	W. Post.....	J. Van Houten .....	1976
	J. Feikens.....	Dr. G. Van Noord .....	1974
	S. Geelhood.....	W. De Young .....	1976
	J. Strikwerda.....	A. Bultman .....	
	N. De Graaf.....	M. De Boer .....	1976
Midwest.....	A. Geurkink.....	C. De Bruyn .....	1974
Far West.....	M. Hekman.....	H. Te Velde .....	1975

### C. Board of Foreign Missions

Classis	Delegate	Alternate	Term Expires
Alberta North.....	Rev. C. Vriend.....	Rev. E. O. Holkeboer .....	1973
Alberta South.....	Rev. H. De Moor.....	Rev. C. H. Salomons .....	1976
British Columbia.....	Rev. P. Dekker.....	Rev. G. Hogeterp .....	1974
Cadillac.....	Rev. S. Bultman.....	.....	1974
California South.....	Rev. A. P. Veenstra.....	Rev. J. Howerzyl .....	1974
Central California.....	Rev. C. W. Flietstra.....	Rev. G. Ebbers .....	1975
Chatham.....	Rev. R. Koops.....	Mr. J. Vander Heide .....	1975
Chicago North.....	Rev. G. Vanderhill.....	Rev. A. Walma .....	1976
Chicago South.....	Rev. A. MacLeod.....	.....	1975
Columbia.....	Rev. R. Posthuma.....	Rev. E. Meyer .....	1974
Eastern Canada.....	Rev. J. Veenstra.....	Rev. H. Uittenbosch .....	1975
Florida.....	Rev. F. Diemer.....	Rev. R. Tjapkes .....	1976
Grand Rapids East.....	Rev. W. Timmer.....	Rev. D. M. Stravers .....	1975
Grand Rapids North.....	Dr. R. O. De Groot.....	Rev. O. Duistermars .....	1973
Grand Rapids South.....	Mr. A. Verduin.....	Mr. H. Scholten .....	1975
Grandville.....	Rev. H. Erfmeyer.....	Rev. S. Cammenga .....	1976
Hackensack.....	Rev. E. G. Cooke, Jr.....	Rev. S. Cooper .....	1975
Hamilton.....	Rev. G. Polman.....	Rev. W. Renkema .....	1975
Holland.....	Rev. J. Gunnink.....	Rev. F. Van Houten .....	1974
Hudson.....	Dr. R. De Ridder.....	Rev. I. Apol .....	1975
Huron.....	Rev. J. Kerssies.....	Rev. J. Roeda .....	1976
Illiana.....	Rev. A. J. VanderGriend.....	Rev. J. De Vries .....	1974
Kalamazoo.....	Rev. H. Brink.....	Rev. R. Vande Kieft .....	1975
Lake Erie.....	Rev. J. Steigenga.....	Rev. A. Hoogewind .....	1975
Minnesota North.....	Rev. G. VandeRiet.....	Rev. P. Ouwinga .....	1975
Minnesota South.....	Rev. W. Dubois.....	Rev. H. Vanderaa .....	1974
Muskegon.....	Rev. N. Meyer.....	Rev. J. Morren .....	1974
Northcentral Iowa.....	Rev. J. Elenbaas.....	Rev. J. Entingh .....	1974
Orange City.....	Mr. F. Vogel.....	Rev. F. Handlogten .....	1975
Pacific Northwest.....	Rev. A. Leegwater.....	Rev. J. Gray .....	1976
Pella.....	Rev. G. Stuit.....	Rev. S. Kramer .....	1976

Classis	Delegate	Alternate	Term Expires
Quinte.....	Rev. R. Popma.....		1976
Rocky Mountain.....	Rev. S. Redhouse.....	Rev. B. Byrna .....	1973
Sioux Center.....	Rev. J. Kroon.....	Rev. G. Essenburg .....	1976
Toronto.....	Rev. C. Fennema.....	Rev. L. Van Dellen .....	1976
Wisconsin.....	Rev. J. Hoeksema.....	Rev. P. Vis .....	1976
Zeeland.....	Rev. O. De Groot.....	Rev. B. VanAntwerpen .....	1974
Members-at-large.....	Mr. J. Wiggers.....		
	Mr. S. De Young.....		
	Mr. D. Bratt.....		
	Mr. J. Wielsma.....	Mr. E. Dykstra .....	1976
	Mr. A. Huibregtse.....	Dr. M. Sharda .....	1976

*D. Board of Home Missions*

Classis	Delegate	Alternate	Term Expires
Alberta North.....	Rev. C. Bishop.....	Rev. A. Miedema .....	1976
Alberta South.....	Rev. H. Wildeboer.....	Mr. J. Havinga .....	1975
British Columbia.....	Rev. J. Zantingh.....	Rev. P. Kranenburg .....	1973
Cadillac.....	Rev. P. Hogeterp.....	Mr. G. Koster .....	1975
California South.....	Rev. H. Roelofs.....	Rev. L. J. Dykstra .....	1974
Central California.....	Rev. E. Marlink.....	Dr. R. Gritter .....	1973
Chatham.....	Rev. S. Vander Meer.....	Rev. H. Lunshof .....	1976
Chicago North.....	Rev. J. T. Ebberts.....	Rev. A. Mulder .....	1976
Chicago South.....	Rev. R. Hartwell.....	Rev. J. Vander Lugt .....	1975
Columbia.....	Mr. J. Omta.....	Rev. J. Jeffers .....	1976
Eastern Canada.....	Rev. A. Velthoen.....	Rev. J. A. Quartel .....	1976
Florida.....	Rev. E. Tamminga.....	Mr. J. Hofman .....	1976
Grand Rapids East.....	Rev. M. Doornbos.....	Rev. P. W. Brink .....	1975
Grand Rapids North.....	Rev. P. Vermaire.....	Rev. M. Toonstra, Jr. ....	1975
Grand Rapids South.....	Rev. G. Holwerda.....	Rev. J. M. Hofman .....	1976
Grandville.....	Rev. H. Hoekstra.....	Rev. A. Jongsma .....	1974
Hackensack.....	Rev. A. Van Zanten.....	Rev. S. Ten Brink .....	1975
Hamilton.....	Rev. J. Tangelder.....	Rev. G. Ringnalda .....	1974
Holland.....	Rev. C. Steenstra.....	Rev. T. Vanden Heuvel .....	1976
Hudson.....	Rev. B. Van Someren.....	Rev. A. Arkema .....	1976
Huron.....	Rev. J. Koole.....	Rev. P. J. Boodt .....	1975
Illiana.....	Rev. J. Van Ryn.....	Rev. R. Vander Ley .....	1973
Kalamazoo.....	Rev. S. Workman.....	Rev. J. Witvliet .....	1976
Lake Erie.....	Rev. R. Peterson.....	Rev. W. Dykstra .....	1976
Minnesota North.....	Rev. G. Kramer.....	Rev. M. Reitsma .....	1974
Minnesota South.....	Rev. W. Green, Jr.....	Rev. T. Heyboer .....	1976
Muskegon.....	Rev. T. Verseput.....	Mr. H. Poel .....	1974
Northcentral Iowa.....	Rev. F. Einfeld.....	Rev. F. Walhof .....	1974
Orange City.....	Rev. H. De Groot.....	Mr. C. Runia .....	1975
Pacific Northwest.....	Rev. P. Ouwinga.....	Rev. M. Flikkema .....	1976
Pella.....	Rev. R. Venema.....	Rev. L. Vander Zee .....	1974
Quinte.....	Rev. C. D. Tuyl.....	Rev. D. Habermehl .....	1976
Rocky Mountain.....	Rev. J. Vander Laan.....	Dr. J. Kamps .....	1974
Sioux Center.....	Rev. J. Botting.....		1975
Toronto.....	Rev. H. Eshuis.....		1975
Wisconsin.....	Rev. J. Olthoff.....	Rev. R. Uken .....	1975
Zeeland.....	Rev. E. Los.....	Rev. B. Mulder .....	1976
Members-at-large:			
Central Dist. (U.S.).....	Dr. F. Westendorp.....	Mr. J. Fles .....	1976
	Mr. R. De Boer.....	Mr. M. Van Dellen .....	1975
	Mr. J. Van Eerden.....	Mr. H. Soper .....	1974
	Mr. E. Berends.....	Mr. W. Peterson .....	1976
	Mr. R. De Vos.....	Mr. J. Volkers .....	1975

Classis	Delegate	Alternate	Term Expires
East. U.S.A.	Mr. C. Johnson	Mr. W. Hommes	1975
West. U.S.A.	Dr. J. Vander Beek	Mr. M. Tanis	1975
Rocky Mountain	Mr. E. Begay	Mr. E. Benally	1974
S.W. Ontario	Mr. B. Hoogendam	Mr. D. Velthuizen	1976
East. Canada	Dr. D. H. Poel	Dr. B. Kieseckamp	1975
West. Canada	Mr. B. Bolt	Mr. G. Monsma	1975

### E. Board of Publications

Classis	Delegate	Alternate	Term Expires
Alberta North	Rev. J. Westerhof	Rev. J. Vriend	
Alberta South	Rev. P. Van Tuinen	Mr. D. Bouwsema	1976
British Columbia	Mr. S. Wolters	Mr. G. Ensing	1974
Cadillac	Rev. F. J. Van Dyk	Rev. C. Vander Plate	1976
California South	Rev. C. Nyenhuis	Rev. R. Evenhuis	1976
Central California	Rev. J. Versluys	Mr. K. Maliepaard	
Chatham	Rev. L. T. Schalkwyk	Rev. J. Nutma	
Chicago North	Mrs. E. Van Reken	Mr. K. Zylstra	1974
Chicago South	Dr. A. C. De Jong	Rev. N. Punt	
Columbia	Rev. F. Breisch		1974
Eastern Canada	Rev. D. J. Hart	Mr. R. J. Klein	
Florida	Mr. K. Tanis	Mr. R. Sikkenga	
Grand Rapids East	Rev. C. Boomsma	Rev. C. Terpstra	
Grand Rapids North	Mr. J. Brondsema	Mr. R. Hoekstra	
Grand Rapids South	Rev. W. D. Buursma	Rev. W. H. De Vries	1975
Grandville	Rev. W. Van Antwerpen	Rev. L. Bossenbroek	1975
Hackensack	Miss D. Kelder	Miss W. Knoll	
Hamilton	Rev. W. Vander Beek	Rev. J. Kuntz	
Holland	Mr. R. Holwerda	Mr. D. Zwier	
Hudson	Dr. R. Van Heyningen	Mr. A. Frieling	
Huron	Rev. G. Nonnekes	Dr. H. Feenstra	1974
Illiana	Rev. J. Piersma	Rev. D. Bos	
Kalamazoo	Rev. J. Mulder	Dr. S. Dykstra	1975
Lake Erie	Rev. D. Postema	Mrs. L. Faram	
Minnesota North	Mr. H. Pluimer	Rev. T. Wevers	
Minnesota South	Rev. P. Brouwer	Rev. W. P. Green, Jr.	
Muskegon	Rev. M. Beelen	Mr. D. Schelhaas	
Northcentral Iowa	Mr. A. Cooper	Mr. C. Den Ouden	
Orange City	Mr. G. De Vries, Jr.	Rev. N. Vogelzang	
Pacific Northwest	Rev. B. Huizenga	Rev. J. Stulp	1975
Pella	Rev. G. Vander Plaats	Mr. J. Hall	1974
Quinte	Rev. R. Praamsma	Mr. W. Vos	1975
Rocky Mountain	Dr. R. Post	Rev. G. De Velder	1976
Sioux Center	Dr. J. Veltkamp	Dr. N. De Jong	1974
Toronto	Dr. H. Hart	Rev. L. Tamminga	
Wisconsin	Mr. A. Meeter	Rev. H. Vanden Einde	
Zeeland	Rev. A. Besteman	Rev. E. Haan	

Note: for information:

Board of Publications - Education Committee

Dr. Derke Bergsma

Dr. Sidney Dykstra

Mr. Barry Foster

Mr. Arnold Snoeyink

Board of Publications - Periodical Committee

Mr. Casey Wondergem, Jr.

*F. Christian Reformed World Relief Committee*

Classis	Delegate	Alternate	Term Expires
Alberta North.....	J. Vander Born.....	H. Vriend .....	1974
Alberta South.....	D. Vander Wekken.....	J. Vander Dool .....	1976
British Columbia.....	M. Blok.....	A. Breedveld .....	1974
Cadillac.....	P. Schierbeek.....	J. Gernaat .....	1976
California South.....	C. De Kruyf.....	B. De Young .....	1974
Central California.....	H. Veneman.....	L. Fondse .....	1975
Chatham.....	P. Berghuis.....	A. Bisschop, Jr. ....	1974
Chicago North.....	C. Taylor.....	H. Buurma .....	1974
Chicago South.....	F. Iwema.....	R. Wolterink .....	1975
Columbia.....	H. Buys.....	M. Feddes .....	1976
Eastern Canada.....	C. Hogeveen.....	E. De Kleer .....	1975
Florida.....	D. Bouwer.....	J. Meiste .....	1975
Grand Rapids East.....	P. Brouwers.....	K. H. Terpstra .....	1976
Grand Rapids North.....	R. Meeuwesen.....	D. Molewyk .....	1975
Grand Rapids South.....	Dr. G. Rietberg.....	Dr. H. Kreulen .....	1975
Grandville.....	H. De Jong.....	F. Visser .....	1974
Hackensack.....	R. Van Essendelft.....	A. Statema .....	1974
Hamilton.....	K. Mantel.....	P. De Vries .....	1975
Holland.....	J. Vander Meulen.....	K. Beelen .....	1974
Hudson.....	A. Malefyt.....	C. Hekman .....	1976
Huron.....	H. Exel.....	M. Dykstra .....	1975
Illiana.....	G. Kroll.....	N. Zuidema .....	1975
Kalamazoo.....	A. Woltersom.....	E. Joling .....	1975
Lake Erie.....	C. Vrieland.....	P. Bouman .....	1976
Minnesota North.....	H. Ahrenholz.....	S. Vander Kooi .....	1976
Minnesota South.....	L. Christoffels.....	R. Van Essen .....	1975
Muskegon.....	L. Van Rees.....	C. Van Coevering .....	1974
Northcentral Iowa.....	H. Eiten.....	C. Vander Ploeg .....	1976
Orange City.....	F. Ten Napel.....	C. Postema .....	1975
Pacific Northwest.....	J. Tjoelker.....	J. Van Ry .....	1974
Pella.....	L. Nugteren.....	F. Gritters .....	1976
Quinte.....	P. Feddema.....	W. Piersma .....	1976
Rocky Mountain.....	H. Hubers.....	D. Murry .....	1976
Sioux Center.....	R. De Stigter.....	Dr. W. Alberda .....	1975
Toronto.....	W. Rekker.....	A. Vander Molen .....	1975
Wisconsin.....	W. Navis.....	E. Vander Weele .....	1974
Zeeland.....	O. Aukeman.....	R. Kalmink .....	1975

Members-at-large:

Medical.....	Dr. D. A. De Vries.....	Dr. J. A. Rienstra .....	1975
Businessman.....	T. Prins.....	J. Vander Ploeg .....	1976
Sociologist.....	Dr. D. Hoekstra.....	J. Tuinstra .....	1976
Attorney.....	H. Meyers, Jr.....	D. Vander Ploeg .....	1975
Accountant.....	C. Ackerman.....	D. Pruis .....	1974
Minister.....	Rev. W. Van Dyk.....	Rev. J. Bergsma .....	1974

IV. SYNODICAL INTERIM COMMITTEE

Regular	Alternate	Term Expires
Rev. F. De Jong .....	Rev. W. Ackerman .....	1976
Mr. E. Z. Blankers .....	Mr. J. N. Snapper .....	1975
Dr. P. Y. De Jong .....	Rev. S. Kramer .....	1974
Mr. H. Vermeer .....	Dr. S. Kanis .....	1975
Dr. M. De Vries .....	Mr. J. Jonker .....	1974
Mr. W. Sytsma, Jr. ....	Mr. W. Van Lopik .....	1976
Mr. F. Hollebeck .....	Mr. H. Petersen .....	1975
Mr. B. Sevensma .....	Mr. A. Van Tuinen .....	1974
Rev. O. Breen .....	Rev. J. Verbrugge .....	1974

Regular	Alternate	Term Expires
Rev. A. Hoogstrate .....	Rev. C. Greenfield .....	1976
Dr. G. Stob .....	Dr. R. De Ridder .....	1975
Rev. L. Slofstra .....	Rev. J. Vriend .....	1976
Rev. J. Van Harmelen .....	Rev. L. Tamminga .....	1975
Mr. M. Van Wijk .....	Mr. P. Feddema .....	1974

Stated Clerk, Denominational Financial Coordinator, and Synodical Treasurer, ex officio

#### V. STANDING COMMITTEES:

A. *Back to God Tract Committee*: Rev. E. Los, Rev. W. Masselink, Rev. J. Wieggers, Messrs. P. Brink (76), M. De Boer (76), J. Tibbe (76), W. Timmer, W. Willink, V. De Weerd.

B. *Bible Translation Committee*: Dr. A. Bandstra, Dr. D. Holwerda, Rev. S. Bultman, Dr. M. Woudstra, Dr. D. Engelhard, Dr. L. Vos, Dr. C. Vos.

C. *Chaplain Committee*: Rev. T. Verseput, Rev. C. Schoolland (part-time Exec.-Sec'y) Mr. J. Holwerda, Dr. M. Hugen, Rev. Jim Kok, Rev. G. Meyer (76), Rev. C. Tuyl (76), Mr. N. Van Andel (76), Dr. F. Westendorp.

D. *Church Help Fund Committee*: Rev. J. Rubingh, Rev. J. Engbers (76), Mr. M. Wiersma (76), Rev. E. Blankespoor, Mr. G. Post (75), Mr. T. Van Bruggen (76), Alt.: Rev. D. Houseman (76), Alt.: Mr. H. J. De Groot (76).

E. *Educational Assistance to Churches Abroad Committee*: Dr. E. Rubingh, Rev. R. Recker (76), Mr. P. Vande Guchte, Rev. D. Vanderbrug, Rev. J. Lont, Rev. R. Heynen, Mr. E. VanderWeele (76).

F. *Fund for Needy Churches Committee*: Mr. G. Vande Werken (75), Mr. J. Swierenga (74), Rev. H. De Mots (75), Mr. Henry Wierenga (74), Rev. H. Arnold (74).

G. *Historical Committee*: Dr. L. Oostendorp, Prof. H. Zwaanstra, Prof. H. Ippel, Rev. J. Leugs.

H. *Inter-Church Relations Committee*: Rev. J. Bratt, Rev. J. Eppinga (75), Rev. T. Hofman (75), Dr. J. Kromminga (76), Dr. D. L. Van Halsema (76), Rev. N. Vanderzee (76), Mr. A. Bel (76), Alt.: Rev. J. Morren (76), Stated Clerk (ex officio).

I. *Liturgical Committee*: Dr. C. Kromminga, Dr. C. Seerveld, Rev. J. Vriend, Dr. L. Smedes, Rev. J. F. Schuurmann, Rev. A. Hoksbergen, Dr. N. Wolterstorff, Rev. N. B. Knoppers.

J. *Ministerial Information Service Committee*: Rev. Wm. Van Peursem, Chairman (75), Dr. A. Pauw, Secretary (75), Rev. A. De Jager (75), Rev. L. Dykstra (75), Mr. H. Te Velde (75), Mr. C. Vander Brug (76).

K. *Ministers' Pension Fund Committee*: Mr. J. F. Mellema, Rev. J. Van Harmelen (76), Dr. J. Harkema, Mr. A. Walters, Rev. J. Van Ryn, Mr. P. Brouwer, Mr. D. Oosterhouse, Mr. R. Helder (76).

L. *Sermons for Reading Services Committee*: Rev. C. Fennema, Rev. K. Hart (76), Rev. A. Venema (76), Dr. S. Greidanus; Alt.: Dr. R. Kooistra.

M. *Synodical Committee on Race Relations*:

Member	Alternate
Rev. J. White .....	Mrs. Carol George
Mr. Donald Minor .....	Mr. Luther Ward
Rev. V. Geurkink .....	Rev. A. E. Mulder
Rev. S. Vander Klay .....	Rev. R. Opperwall
Dr. R. Kooistra .....	Rev. J. Vugteveen
Dr. M. Geerdes .....	Mr. D. Holtrop
Mr. W. Bowman .....	Mr. J. De Groot
Mr. S. Jung .....	Mr. A. Cho
Mr. Benito Infante .....	Mr. Jorge Fernandez
Mr. L. Van Rees .....	Mr. H. Meyers
Rev. D. Postema .....	Rev. C. Nyenhuis
Dr. A. Diekema .....	Mr. W. Ipema

Student age young person from minority: Brenda Robinson; alternate: Paul Higa.

N. *Unordained Employees' Pension Fund Committee*: Messrs. A. Bielema, G. Borst, L. Ippel (76), D. Oosterhouse (76), D. Zwier (76).

VI. REPRESENTATIVES

- A. *American Bible Society*: Mr. J. Last; Alt., Mr. A. Petzinger.
- B. *Canadian Bible Society*: Rev. K. Verhulst; Rev. A. Vanden Pol.
- C. *Christian Laymen's League*: Rev. G. Holwerda.
- D. *Dordt College*: Rev. N. Vogelzang.
- E. *Faith, Prayer, and Tract League*: Mr. P. Doot; Alt., Mr. N. Baylor.
- F. *Lord's Day Alliance of Canada*: Rev. G. Nonnekes; Alt., Rev. S. Terpstra.
- G. *Lord's Day Alliance of the United States*: Mr. F. Fisher; Alt., Rev. R. Wezeman.
- H. *Luke Society*: E. Van Reken, M.D., Alt., J. Rienstra, M.D.
- I. *Reformed Bible College*: Rev. H. Vander Ark.
- J. *The Evangelical Literature League*: Mr. D. Bosscher, Alt., Mr. W. Schultze.
- K. *United Calvinist Youth*:
  - 1. Calvinist Cadet Corps: Rev. E. Piersma, Alt., Rev. G. Dahnke
  - 2. Calvinettes: Mrs. Sharon Blohm, Alt., Mrs. Vonnie Reiffer
  - 3. Young Calvinist Federation: Mrs. Marla Koning
- L. *World Home Bible League*: Rev. A. Vander Griend; Alt., Rev. J. Quartel.

VII. STUDY COMMITTEES

*Recommendation*: That synod approve the following committees:

- A. *New Confession*: Dr. L. Oostendorp, Rev. M. N. Greidanus, Dr. J. H. Kromminga, Rev. F. Van Houten, Mr. H. Arens, Mr. S. De Young.

B. *Psalter Hymnal Supplement*: Dr. J. Hamersma, Mr. M. McGervey, Rev. J. Schuurmann, Dr. C. Seerveld, Prof. G. Warmink, Prof. J. Worst, Miss Betty DeVries, Mrs. Marie Post, Miss Nancy Van Halsema.

C. *Proof Texts for the Heidelberg Catechism*: Dr. W. DeBoer, Dr. C. Kromminga, Rev. H. DeWolf, Rev. M. D. Geleynse, Rev. C. Greenfield, Rev. E. Oostendorp, Dr. C. Vos.

D. *Lodge and Church Membership*: Dr. G. Van Groningen, Rev. J. Admiraal, Rev. J. Botting, Rev. J. B. Hulst, Rev. H. Vanden Heuvel, Mr. A. Geurkink, Dr. S. Kanis; (alt., Mr. D. DeJong).

E. *Translation of the Heidelberg Catechism*: Dr. F. Klooster, Prof. R. F. Wevers, Prof. C. Boersma, Dr. E. Masselink, Prof. S. Wiersma.

F. *Calvin Centennial Crusade Executive Committee*: Dr. W. Spoelhof and Dr. J. Kromminga - Honorary Chairmen; Mr. S. Youngsma - Campaign Director; Mr. H. DeWit - Director of Office Procedure; Dr. W. DeYoung; Mr. J. P. Hoekenga - Executive Secretary.

G. *Examination of Candidates and Admission to the Ministry*: Rev. J. VanRyn, Rev. H. Arnold, Rev. H. Dekker, Mr. D. Dykstra, Dr. E. VanderWeele.

H. *Executive Secretary for Chaplain Committee*: Mr. T. Prins, Rev. E. Oostendorp, Mr. W. Worst, Rev. T. Verseput, Dr. F. Westendorp.

I. *Marriage Guidelines*: Mr. C. VanValkenburg, Rev. W. Vander Haak, Dr. A. Bandstra, Dr. D. Bergsma, Rev. M. DeVries, Rev. G. Gritter, Dr. T. Minnema, Rev. A. Persenaire.

J. *Synodical Decisions and the Confessions*: Rev. H. Vander Kam, Rev. J. DeKruyter, Rev. J. T. Holwerda, Dr. F. Klooster, Mr. H. Bratt, Mr. E. R. Post.

K. *Joint Commission CRC/RCA for Study of Theology of Evangelism*: Dr. R. S. Wierenga, Dr. R. DeRidder, Dr. R. Greenway, Rev. W. Heynen, Rev. W. Smedes.

L. *Ethical Decisions on War*: Rev. R. Opperwall, Rev. E. Bradford, Rev. N. Plantinga, Chaplain J. Hoogland, Rev. J. Quartel.

M. *Women in Ecclesiastical Office*: Rev. J. Hellinga, Rev. H. Petersen, Rev. D. Aardsma, Dr. J. Vander Laan, Mrs. M. Alons.

N. *Implications of Guidelines for Office and Ordination and "Layworkers in Evangelism"*: Rev. B. Nederlof, Rev. W. Ackerman, Rev. S. DeVries, Rev. H. Spaan, Rev. J. Stulp, Rev. T. Van Kooten, Rev. J. Zantingh.

O. *Neo-Pentecostalism and Office Bearers*: Rev. B. Madany, Rev. J. Vos, Rev. M. De Vries, Rev. D. Hart, Rev. D. Holwerda, Rev. L. Sweetman, Dr. S. Bergsma.

P. *Supervision re Visitors at the Lord's Supper*: Rev. P. Van Tuinen, Rev. L. Mulder, Rev. J. Pereboom, Rev. J. Vriend, Rev. J. Westerhof, Mr. D. Zeilstra.

*The above recommendations (I to VIII) of the Advisory Committee on Appointments are approved by synod.*

**IX. LITURGICAL COMMITTEE**

*Recommendation:* That synod approve the change of status of this committee from a Study Committee to a Standing Committee.

*Ground:* There is a continuing need for the services of this committee.

*Note:* It is expected that this committee will present nominations to synod next year which will place the committee membership under the normal guidelines governing standing committees. —*Adopted*

**X. THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON APPOINTMENTS** recommends that synod urge all study committees to use language in their reports which can be readily understood by those who are called upon to read them. —*Adopted*

**XI. PUBLICATION COMMITTEE, EDUCATION STAFF**

*Recommendation:* That synod reappoint to the Education staff for terms of two years:

Editor - Theological Type: Rev. Andrew Kuyvenhoven

Editor - Pedagogical Type: Mr. Robert Rozema —*Adopted*

**ARTICLE 91**

The Stated Clerk, the Rev. Wm. P. Brink, addresses the officers of synod with words of appreciation, and presents inscribed gavels to the president and vice-president, and gratuities to the clerks.

The president, Dr. L. Greenway, expresses his gratitude to synod for the fine cooperation given him and the spirit of helpfulness which was manifested so obviously. He calls the church to continued allegiance to God's Word. He bids the delegates to return to their churches confident that the Lord abides with his church.

**ARTICLE 92**

The vice-president, the Rev. John Vriend, expresses the gratitude of synod for the efficient and kindly leadership given by its president, Dr. L. Greenway.

**ARTICLE 93**

The final prayer of thanksgiving is offered by the president, Dr. L. Greenway.

Synod concludes by singing number 426.

**LEONARD GREENWAY, President**  
**JOHN VRIEND, Vice-president**  
**JOHN A. DE KRUYTER, First Clerk**  
**HOWARD SPAAN, Second Clerk**

Attested a true copy:

**WILLIAM P. BRINK, Stated Clerk**  
 2850 Kalamazoo Ave., S.E.  
 Grand Rapids, Michigan 49508

# REPORTS OF BOARDS

## REPORT 1

### THE BACK TO GOD HOUR

(Arts. 26, 83)

DEAR BROTHERS:

Throughout the turbulent months of 1972, one of the more grim years in recent memory, Back to God Hour broadcast ministries continued to surround the world with God's good news. These ministries are primarily preaching ministries. As such they exhibit the beauty that Peter expressed when he wrote: "*All flesh is like grass and all its glory like the flower of the grass. The grass withers, and the flower falls, but the word of the Lord abides for ever. That word is the good news which was preached to you*" (I Peter 1:24, 25). Our denominational broadcast ministry has joined this glorious proclamation with the marvelous technology that can send the message at the speed of light to radio sets that are capable of hearing because of the transistor, itself just 25 years old in 1972.

Because many Back to God Hour programs are released on a public service basis, it is impossible to calculate the full extent of this ministry. But there can be no doubt that there were well over 1000 program releases each week, for more than 250 broadcast hours weekly. Many of the programs, now in Arabic, Spanish, Portuguese, French, and Indonesian besides English, are daily, and they are carefully designed for their target audiences by ministers who are natives of the lands they are reaching. Project Bonaire, a special programming package that is broadcast several times each day from Trans World Radio in Bonaire, the Netherlands Antilles, is an example of The Back to God Hour's intensive overseas penetration as the message is directed into the heart of India in English, and into South America in Spanish and Portuguese.

The Rev. Bassam Madany, since 1958 our church's Arabic language radio pastor, indicated some of the potential for overseas missions by means of radio. After returning from a trip which took him to his homeland, Lebanon, the Rev. Mr. Madany said, "From 1959 to 1970 the Arabic ministry has sowed the seed. Now gradually we are getting more and more contacts in Arab lands and also in Europe, where there are many Arabs working and studying. Some of these people are equipped to help others come to a deeper knowledge of the Scriptures. Through people like these, our dream of the establishment of Christian churches may well become a reality."

The Rev. Juan Boonstra, speaker on the Spanish language programs heard throughout the United States and in South America and in Spain, also reported high interest in the Reformed faith when he returned from a two week series of meetings held in Guatemala City, Guatemala. The meetings, sponsored by radio station TGNA, drew crowds of sometimes upwards of 3000, made up of people who want to learn the fuller dimensions of the gospel as it is understood within our Reformed heritage. Occasions like these underscore the reality of the listening audience that is made up of people who are willing to go out of their way to learn more about the Scriptures. The Spanish language pastor, himself a native of Argentina, was also extremely gratified to have Leonel Gordillo, a Colombian listener who recently completed the course of study at Reformed Bible College, return to his native country to minister to his countrymen.

The Portuguese language ministry which benefits from the wise insights of the Rev. William Muller, a long time veteran Christian Reformed missionary in Brazil, established closer ties with our missionaries in that rapidly developing South American country and also with the Presbyterian Church of Brazil. In addition to the daily penetration of that great land by means of Radio 7315, part of the Bonaire package, plans were made to begin local broadcasts.

The possibility of more local broadcasting in South America both in Spanish and Portuguese requires only the establishment of a system of service and distribution, for often local stations are willing to air the programs simply in exchange for tapes. The Rev. Mr. Boonstra, who has pioneered public service programming for The Back to God Hour, reported that he added 17 new outlets to his already extensive network of stations in Spanish speaking countries, at no cost other than the cost of supplying the tape.

On other fronts, Back to God Hour foreign ministries are developing in Indonesia and in the French language. The Rev. Junus Atmarumeksa reported that the Indonesian Christian Broadcasting Foundation in which he plays a vital role is now producing programs that are being distributed throughout Indonesia, as well as literature which includes a monthly publication similar to the *Family Altar*. French language programming which is released primarily in Quebec and which features the ministry of the Rev. Aaron Kayayan has been strengthened with the addition of an important station. The broadcast is now being serviced by our church in Montreal which receives and answers the mail.

In addition to the many contacts maintained in foreign lands through the ministries just mentioned, the English language foreign broadcasts blanket Europe and each day penetrate India and other parts of Asia. The broadcasts in India have enabled The Back to God Hour to establish contacts with natives who are working hard in reaching their country with the gospel. Mr. Kurien of the All India Prayer Fellowship, who has worked with The Back to God Hour for more than 10 years and has printed the *Family Altar* in several Indian dialects, visited the United States in 1972 and made arrangements for students to come from his land to Reformed Bible College. Two are now studying there. All

this shows how the ministry of radio, and literature, combined with the work of people on the field, creates a far reaching impact.

On the domestic scene, the regular releases of *The Back to God Hour* program continue to be heard among the welter of voices that now call people away from their Creator. Broadcasting in the United States and Canada is somewhat different from overseas work, for here our program is part of a complex mosaic of communications activity. The competition is exceedingly keen, and we are forced continually to take readings on the state of the industry, so that our target audience will indeed be reached and optimum time slots secured.

Back to God Hour ministries consequently attempt to provide the industry with a varied range of program offerings. *INSIGHT* continues to be played on many stations. It is a four and one-half minute broadcast. One-minute spot announcements are also distributed. And 1972 saw the broad distribution of the thirty-second TV spots. The special Christmas edition of *The Back to God Hour* was also ordered by seventy stations.

The regular program was modified somewhat in the direction of a more documentary approach. It became necessary to abandon the straight worship service format because of station requirements. Therefore programs are now produced with different kinds of music, interviews, and the like, all selected to fortify the main message. The message element of the program is, if anything, somewhat longer than before. And the format, originally dictated by industry requirements, has proven to be a highly integrated package which in some respects is superior to the original format.

Dr. Joel Nederhood, the speaker of *The Back to God Hour*, reports that the new format has created higher program acceptability. An example of this is the new interest of the Armed Forces Network. After a tour through the Pacific Command for the United States Army in which Dr. Nederhood conducted retreats for military chaplains, the Defense Department expressed interest in our program. The way has now been opened to further featuring of the broadcast on the Armed Forces Network *Banners of Faith* series.

The general program content of *Back to God Hour* ministries is represented in the material that is covered in the regular English program. There is a recurring presentation of the love of God revealed in the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ and a continual calling of people to repentance and faith. At the same time the programs are produced out of the glad knowledge that Jesus, the Redeemer, is also the Creator, the one who has come to establish the kingdom of heaven, and thus the radio ministers apply the Word of God to many of the contemporary affairs of men. Several radio messages during the election year which called our continent to a recognition of the Lordship of Jesus also in political life, are representative of what is being done in the other languages, too, with necessary adjustments, of course.

The radio ministries of *The Back to God Hour* are supported by a wide range of literature. The number of subscribers to the *Family Altar* continues to grow, with circulation now well over 205,000. A Board of

Authors produces this material. English language messages, singly and in the *Radio Pulpit*, continue to have wide appeal. Often they are reprinted in other publications. During 1972, Mr. Madany supplemented his already varied offerings in the Arabic language with a book that shows the relationship of the Scriptures to contemporary life. Nineteen seventy-two also saw the publication of the first book of Spanish *Family Altar* meditations, covering a whole year. The Back to God Hour also continues to supply its listeners with material in French and Portuguese; and in Indonesia, the Rev. Mr. Atmarumeksa produces and distributes material as well.

For specific description of the broad scope of Back to God Hour ministries, please consult the charts and data that accompany this report. The Christian Reformed Church is to be congratulated in that it has developed an arm that is devoted exclusively to a broadcast ministry in which all the personnel have been given the freedom to devote themselves exclusively to the demands of this calling. Broadcasting missions are exceedingly strenuous and technical, and it is necessary that those involved be allowed to work in this field exclusively. And today we see the years of work beginning to pay rich dividends. More and more programs are being placed. And we know that literally millions are being reached. In addition, we know, too, that the sheep of Jesus are hearing the voice of the Shepherd and are being brought into the kingdom. Among the personnel of The Back to God Hour there is great optimism regarding the power of the gospel in our world.

At the same time it must be said that up to this point our church has not capitalized this venture sufficiently. Broadcast expansion programs approved by synod have generally assumed that The Back to God Hour would raise support funds outside the quota. The result is that the work of The Back to God Hour advances with no opportunity to develop any reserves of any kind, and, consequently, a tremendous strain is put on the staff for fund raising.

This circumstance, along with increasing opportunities today, both in foreign broadcasting and within our country, plus the necessity of producing different kinds of programs, makes it imperative that greater funds be made available for this work. The budget appended to this report reflects these convictions. It must be remembered that radio missions is becoming increasingly important, and we have yet to realize its full potential. This is a time when a greater proportion of denominational monies must be put into this enterprise than ever before.

It should be borne in mind, too, that the investment we make in radio missions pays especially rich dividends. For the essential staff structure and production situation of The Back to God Hour is set and this insures that added investment now means in general a direct addition to broadcast exposure. In addition, monies invested generate valuable radio time for which we need pay nothing. For example, during 1972 more than \$500,000 in free public service time was given The Back to God Hour by the broadcasting industry.

With all of this we solicit the continual prayers of our church, as we continue to advance in this work. The work of our radio ministers en-

tails much travel and we covet the protection of our Lord for them. But as each message is produced, the burning question is, "What does God want said to those who will listen? What does he want said?" His guidance is needed, then, for the preparation of each message. And let us pray together that the rich promises with which he has surrounded the proclamation of the Word will be realized in connection with this world-wide radio outreach.

### MATTERS REQUIRING SYNODICAL ATTENTION

- I. The Radio Committee requests that Dr. J. Nederhood and either the President, the Rev Donald Negen, or the Secretary, the Rev. Neal Punt, be given the privilege of the floor when Back to God Hour matters are discussed.
- II. The Radio Committee requests that Dr. J. Nederhood be given permission to address synod in behalf of the work of The Back to God Hour.
- III. Nominations:
 

Michigan area:	Mr. R. De Nooyer (incumbent) Mr. F. Deppe
Chicago area:	Dr. A. Diekema (incumbent) Mr. P. Eldersveld
Chicago area (minister):	Rev. N. Punt (incumbent) Rev. J. Vander Lugt
Eastern area:	Rev. R. Wildschut (incumbent) Rev. N. Plantinga
- IV. The Radio Committee requests that the proposed budget for 1974 and the quota of \$18.50 be adopted.
- V. The Radio Committee requests that synod recommend The Back to God Hour for one or more offerings for above quota needs.

The Back to God Hour Radio Committee  
Neal Punt, Secretary

TABLE 1 —BACK TO GOD HOUR PROGRAMMING

Program	Language	Length in Min.	Format	Freq'cy	Coverage	Cost Basis	No. of Stations	Total Hrs. Broadcasting
1. The Back to God Hour	E	30	a	Wkly	USA & Canada	Paid	266	133
2. The Back to God Hour (Overseas Release)	E	30	a	Wkly	Overseas	Paid	42	21
3. The Back to God Hour * (Australian Release)	E	30	a	Wkly	Australia	Paid	10	5
4. Radio Today	E	30	b	Daily	India-S.E.Asia	Paid	1	3½
5. Masterplan	E	15	c	Wkly	Middle East	Paid	1	½
6. Insight	E	4.5	c	Daily	USA	Public Ser.	80	30
7. Racom Spots	E	1	d	N.A.	USA & Canada	Public Ser.	N.A.	N.A.
8. Saatu-L-Islah I	A	30	a	Wkly	Europe	Paid		
9. Saatu-L-Islah III	A	15	a	M-F	NO.Africa	Paid	4	7½
10. Saatu-L-Islah IIII	A	15	a	M-F	Middle East	Paid		
11. La Hora de la Reforme	S	15	a	Wkly	Latin America	Paid	34	8½
12. La Antorcha Espiritual	S	15	a	Wkly	Mexico	Paid	34	8½
13. Radio 3-16	S	30	b	Daily	Central & So.Am.	Paid	1	3½
14. Reflexion	S	5	e	Daily	So. America	Paid	2	N.A.
15. Announcements	S	1	d	Daily	Mexico	Paid	N.A.	N.A.
16. Radio 73-15	P	30	b	Daily	Brazil	Paid	1	3½
17. Programme Radiophonique de Englise Chretienne Reformee	F	15	a	Wkly	Quebec & W.Indies	Paid	5	1½
18. Majestic Plans **	I	5 & 15	N.A.	N.A.	Indonesia	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.

## CODE:

E — English  
A — Arabic  
S — Spanish  
P — Portuguese  
F — French  
I — Indonesian

a — Music/Sermon Format  
b — Magazine Format—News—Music—Message  
c — Talk Only  
d — Spot Announcements  
N.A. — Not Applicable

\* Produced and Financed in Cooperation with The Reformed Church in Australia  
\*\* Produced and Financed in cooperation with Geredja Kristen Indonesia and Indonesian Broadcasting Foundation

THE BACK TO GOD HOURFINANCIAL REPORT - JANUARY 1 THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 1972Receipt:

Synodical Quotas	\$727,014.75	
Churches - Special Offerings	97,242.86	
Organizations	10,489.30	
Individual Gifts	325,521.89	
Foreign Designated	271,060.83	
Station Sponsorship	12,988.79	
Legacies	29,134.84	
Other Income	25,334.55	
Total Receipts		\$1,498,787.81

Disbursements:

Broadcasting:		
Domestic	\$563,698.55	
Foreign:		
English	95,792.75	
Arabic	63,831.02	
Spanish	101,037.64	
French	14,237.78	
Indonesian	13,623.02	
Portuguese	73,270.35	
TV	15,342.98	
Recording & Duplicating	27,406.94	
Research & Development	2,962.87	

Administration:

Audit	1,672.00	
Christian Reformed Employees Pension	4,948.36	
Committee Expense	4,242.30	
Data Processing & Payroll Service	2,178.15	
Equipment	1,280.30	
Insurance	7,229.92	
Maintenance & Repairs	5,714.54	
Ministers' Pension Fund	2,850.00	
Salaries	131,855.85	
Social Security Expense	3,897.91	
Supplies	11,288.83	
Travel	5,670.07	
Utilities	8,532.93	
Family Altar	103,958.71	
Capital Improvements	699.00	
Literature	46,367.79	
Ministers' Housing & Allowances	8,543.92	
Music Production	6,378.73	
Other Printing	31,798.58	
Professional Services	12,161.99	
Sermons	40,302.87	
Other Expense	5,933.26	
Total Disbursements		\$1,418,709.91

THE BACK TO GOD HOUR - TENTATIVE BUDGET 1974Receipts:

Synodical Quotas	\$1,000,500.00	
Churches - Special Offerings	118,500.00	
Organizations	12,000.00	
Individual Gifts	370,000.00	
Foreign Designated	310,000.00	
Station Sponsorship	13,000.00	
Legacies	25,000.00	
Other Income	30,000.00	
		\$1,879,000.00
Total Receipts		

Disbursements:

Broadcasting:		
Domestic	\$ 695,000.00	
Foreign:		
English	115,000.00	
Arabic	95,000.00	
Spanish	139,000.00	
French	28,000.00	
Indonesia	12,000.00	
Portuguese	83,000.00	
Project Orient	40,000.00	
TV	15,000.00	
Recording & Duplicating	33,000.00	
Research & Development	10,000.00	

Administration:

Audit	2,000.00	
Christian Reformed Employees Pension	9,000.00	
Committee Expense	6,000.00	
Data Processing & Payroll Service	5,000.00	
Equipment	12,000.00	
Insurance	12,000.00	
Maintenance & Repairs	10,000.00	
Ministers' Pension Plan	4,000.00	
Salaries	160,000.00	
Social Security Expense	7,000.00	
Supplies	19,000.00	
Travel	11,000.00	
Utilities	11,000.00	
Family Altar	120,000.00	
Capital Improvements	4,000.00	
Literature	80,000.00	
Ministers' Housing & Allowances	13,000.00	
Music Production	5,000.00	
Other Printing	40,000.00	
Professional Services	18,000.00	
Sermons	60,000.00	
Other Expense	6,000.00	
		\$1,879,000.00
Total Disbursements		

## REPORT 2

## BOARD OF TRUSTEES - CALVIN COLLEGE AND SEMINARY

(Arts. 25, 30, 41, 83)

## DEAR BROTHERS:

This report covers the actions of the Board of Trustees of Calvin College and Seminary from June, 1972 to February, 1973. A supplementary report will follow after the May, 1973 meeting of the board.

## I. INFORMATION

A. *Board of Trustees*

1. The board, composed of forty-six members, held its winter semi-annual meeting February 5-8, 1973, at the Knollcrest Commons. This year there were thirty-six ministers and one layman representing the classes, and nine lay members representing the following districts: Eastern, one delegate; Central, six delegates; Mid-West, one delegate; and Far-West, one delegate.

2. Officers: At the February board meeting the following officers were elected:

President .....	Rev. Henry Vander Kam
Vice President .....	Mr. John Vander Ark
Second Vice President .....	Rev. George Gritter
Secretary .....	Rev. Leonard Hofman
Treasurer .....	Mr. Stewart Geelhood
Assistant Secretary .....	Mr. Berton Sevensma

3. Genuine concern for Calvin College and Seminary as distinctively Christian institutions was reflected in the discussions at the meeting of the board, as well as in the interviews with professors and members of the staff. The members present were pleased and encouraged by the warm spiritual tone that prevailed, and the dedication to the Reformed faith that was exhibited by both the administration and faculty. While there is cause for gratitude for a measure of tranquility, the campus does not exist in comfortable isolation. To quote the report to the board of the president of the college:

"All of the serious problems which arise in our national life are bound to impinge upon education somehow, and even many seemingly inconsequential events and forces produce shock waves of grave consequence. There have been many changes in modern life which have influenced education, and there have also been changes within education itself which have produced complexities not easy to identify and even less easy to portray as to their implications for the future.

“The rapid changes brought about by economic, social, cultural, and scientific developments affected educational institutions drastically and dramatically. The very character of education promotes changing perspectives and fine analysis; hence, it is not by accident that higher education today stands at the center of the action. It is in times like these, which seem to call for innovation in curriculum and educational practice and new approaches to old problems and novel solutions of new ones, that Christian higher education finds its stability in Christ, through whom ‘all things are become new.’”

4. The Executive Committee. The five lay members and seven ministers of the Executive Committee met on June 8, September 14, October 12, November 9, and December 14, of 1972, and on January 25, 1973, transacting the business of the college and seminary, with the presidents serving as advisors. Currently the members of the Executive Committee are:

Rev. Henry De Mots  
Mr. Harry Elders  
Rev. Wendell Gebben  
Mr. Stewart Geelhood  
Rev. George Gritter  
Rev. Leonard Hofman

Rev. John Scholten  
Mr. Berton Sevensma  
Dr. James Strikwerda  
Mr. John Vander Ark  
Rev. Henry Vander Kam

The Rev. Tenis Van Kooten, a member of the Executive Committee, and the Rev. William Haverkamp announced their retirement from the ministry and therefore their retirement from board membership at the February meeting. We acknowledge with gratitude to God their past years of faithful service to God on behalf of Calvin College and Seminary.

5. Class visits were assigned and carried out in keeping with regular procedure. The reports submitted by board representatives were generally thorough and favorable.

6. The Board of Trustees reserved a portion of Wednesday, February 7, 1973, so that members could attend the Third Annual Faculty-Board Winter Conference. The Conference Committee was composed of members of the faculties and the Rev. William Van Rees representing the board. Dr. Henry Stob, speaking to college and seminary faculties, joined in the seminary auditorium by the members of the board, presented an address entitled, “Christian Ethics and Scientific Control.” Dr. Clarence Menninga and Dr. Theodore Minnema presented papers in response. Following the discussion of the subject the conferees enjoyed dinner together at the Commons and a sight-sound presentation by Dr. James Bosscher entitled, “A Practical Application to Middle School Teaching.” The conference proved to be a valuable and stimulating contact.

7. An anniversary dinner was held in honor of Mr. and Mrs. Sydney Youngsma for the purpose of celebrating his twentieth year on Calvin’s staff as the chief capital-funds raiser. He is presently serving under the title of Assistant to the President for College Relations.

## B. *The Seminary*

### 1. The Faculty

- a. Personnel. Dr. Marten Woudstra, who taught one term in exchange arrangement at the Theological College of Geelong, Aus-

tralia and did some work on *The New International Bible* in Germany, was ill when he returned home. He has recovered and has returned to his teaching duties at the beginning of the second quarter.

Dr. Bastiaan Van Elderen is absent on the first year of his two-year leave for administrative and academic work in Jordan. Dr. David Holwerda has served most effectively as his replacement in the New Testament Department.

Dr. Andrew Bandstra taught during the first quarter, but is on sabbatical leave for the second and third quarters. He will do research at Yale University.

Dr. Henry Stob resumed his regular duties in September after his one-year sabbatical.

Mr. Allen Verhey is serving in a one-year lectureship in ethics. Professor Harold Dekker has been rendering nearly full-time service in the Department of Practical Theology and as Academic Dean.

Dr. Marion Snapper was a full-time lecturer in Church Education during the first quarter.

All other departments are operating at full strength this year.

b. Anticipated leaves and replacements

- 1) Dr. Anthony Hoekema will be on leave of absence during the academic year 1973-74 to pursue research in Cambridge, England. The board approved the request that Dr. Gordon Spykman teach two courses (*The Doctrine of Man* and *The Doctrine of Salvation*) during the academic year 1973-74.
- 2) Prof. John Stek will be away on a sabbatical leave for the academic year 1973-74.
- 3) Prof. Robert Recker was granted a sabbatical leave for the academic year 1973-74 to pursue a degree program at the Free University of Amsterdam. The Board of Trustees has requested Dr. Richard De Ridder to teach in the area of missions as well as assist in divisional responsibilities during the 1973-74 academic year.
- 4) In view of the continued absence of Dr. Van Elderen during the next academic year, the board decided to request Dr. David Holwerda to teach New Testament courses on a full-time basis during the first two quarters of the 1973-74 academic year.

c. Lecturer

It was decided to engage Mr. Allen Verhey as a lecturer in ethics for the academic year 1973-74.

d. Reappointment—(cf. II. Recommendations, for the reappointment of Prof. Robert Recker and Dr. Melvin Hugen.)

e. Appointment in Church Education. The Board of Trustees decided the following:

- 1) Not to proceed with the nomination of a slate of candidates for regular full-time appointment to the Department of Prac-

tical Theology in terms of the existing job description focussed on Church Education.

- 2) To encourage the faculty to draw up a comprehensive and specific proposal for the upgrading of field education, its greater integration with the program of classroom instruction, and its implications for church education, indicating the type of staff necessary for the optimum execution of this program in the light of our limited resources, and making specific recommendations with respect to engagement of the required personnel.
- 3) To engage Dr. Marion Snapper full time for September through January in the academic year 1973-74, to teach the core course and one elective in the area of church education, to conduct a pilot program of supervised catechism teaching, and to continue to advise the appropriate agencies of the faculty on matters of church education and the supervision of field education.

f. The Master of Divinity degree (M.Div.)

The Master of Divinity degree has become the subject of study by the Seminary faculty. This arose not only out of the endorsement given the M.Div. degree by the American Association of Theological Schools, but also out of sensitivity to a growing demand in the Christian Reformed Church for more thorough professional preparation of candidates for the ministry, and for such preparation in terms of various kinds of specialization. This is not to suggest that an abandonment of theological studies is proposed in favor of a professional emphasis. Present core and elective requirements are to continue in force. The core of the change in awarding the new degree will consist of an increase in quantity and improvement in quality of field education. During a transitional period of at least three years the B.D. degree program will be retained along with the M.Div. degree program. The Th.M. degree will be retained as an independent degree.

The Board of Trustees approved the M.Div. (Master of Divinity) degree and authorized its introduction in the academic year 1973-74, contingent upon the submission of acceptable provisions for such degree to the May, 1973 meeting of the board. The understanding behind this approval is that the M.Div. degree will involve the existing B.D. degree curriculum along with an increase in quantity and an improvement in quality of field education, and with continuing insistence on the primacy of thorough theological training in preparation for the ministry.

## 2. Academic Affairs

a. The following elective courses were approved:

- 1) *Promise and Fulfillment* (Dr. D. Holwerda)

An exegetical study of various ways in which the Old Testament is fulfilled in the New Testament. Implications for a biblical hermeneutic will be developed, as well as a perspective on the eschatological role of Israel.

- 2) *The Adolescent and the Church* (Dr. M. Snapper)  
A study of the nature of adolescence and its implications for the educational program of the church.
- 3) *Man, Medicine, and Morals* (Prof. A. Verhey)
- 4) *The Theology of the New Hermeneutics* (Dr. F. Klooster)

b. The following required course was approved:

*Seminar in United States and Canadian Church History* (Prof. H. Zwaanstra)

c. Requests for support of archeological digs.

- 1) The Executive Committee, authorized by the board, approved giving support for an excavation project at Heshbon in the summer of 1973. The amount of support promised was \$3,000 and it was specified that some effort should be made to obtain this amount from foundation sources. It now appears that the entire amount promised will be available from interested parties.
- 2) In response to a request for support of an excavation at Masouh, the board decided to contribute \$3,000 for work on the project in the summer of 1974. It is understood that if the dig is extended beyond one month, the additional expenses incurred are to be met by contributions other than those from the Calvin budget.

### 3. Student Affairs

a. The 1972-73 academic year began with the following student enrollment: Juniors—38; Middlers—32; Seniors—38; graduate students—16 (9 full-time, 7 part-time); unclassified—11; Interns—16; and 3 in special non-degree programs, for a total of 154.

The total equals that of the beginning of the 1971-72 academic year, although the senior class is smaller and the junior class is somewhat larger.

b. Changes of status

The board ratified the action of the Executive Committee in approving a change in status for seven students, and licensure was approved for twelve. An additional student was also admitted to the seminary. A request for an extension of licensure was also granted.

### 4. Personalizing the Presentation of Candidates to Synod

It was decided to send a report, prepared for use by members of the board at the time of interviews, to the synodical delegates. The report will contain the following: (a) a cover statement indicating the contact the board has had with each student applying for candidacy, and (b) a biographical sketch of the prospective candidate.

## C. The College

### 1. The Faculty

a. The teaching staff. There are 164 persons who are on the full-time teaching staff this year. Last year the full-time teaching staff numbered 168 persons. However, this does not mean a reduction in salaried positions. The lower number rather reflects

the shift of some persons to non-teaching positions. Only three persons left the teaching payroll, while four persons were added to the rolls. Several other faculty members returned to the campus from leaves of absence which had been supported by non-college funds. Maintaining a faculty-student ratio which can be afforded financially remains one of the continuing problems, while the decreasing student enrollment trend continues. The problem persists because, even in this fourth year of enrollment decline, there are some departments, long understaffed, to which new appointments must be made. That situation will be faced again in the 1973-74 academic year.

Twenty-seven persons taught on a part-time basis during the first semester, and 21 are teaching on a part-time basis at the beginning of the second semester.

- b. Leaves of absence were approved for eight faculty members. Most of these will be working in areas of research or on degree programs. In the case of three of these approval was given extension of leave of absence.
- c. Leaving the staff. Dr. F. Walker left the staff at the beginning of 1973 to become Headmaster of the Friendship School, on Cape Cod, at East Brewster, Massachusetts, and Mrs. Jenniete Vander Berg will be leaving to accompany her husband who is graduating from the seminary this year.
- d. Professional Activities and Contributions of Calvin College Faculty Members.  
The president presented a list of the professional activities and contributions by members of the faculty to church, Christian education, teachers' associations, etc., in the past year. The board took special note of this information and requested Dr. Spoelhof to convey the congratulations of the board for these achievements.
- e. Illnesses and Bereavements. The Board of Trustees took note of the illnesses of faculty members or members of their families, and instances of recovery, as well as bereavements in faculty families, and expressed itself appropriately, requesting that President Spoelhof convey the assurance of prayer in their behalf to the parties involved.
- f. The board processed thirty-five reappointments and changes in rank. Twelve were interviewed for tenure. Three new appointments were made.
- g. The board ratified the action of the Executive Committee in making two appointments to the faculty for 1972-73 and a leave of absence for one faculty member for the spring semester of 1973.

## 2. Academic Affairs

- a. The introduction of the following new courses was approved:
  - 1) Chemistry 114—Introduction to Organic and Biochemistry
  - 2) Mathematics 107—Computer Programming for Social Sciences

- 3) Mathematics 108—Computer Programming for Natural Sciences
- 4) Philosophy 206—Philosophy of History
- 5) Philosophy 335—Nineteenth Century Philosophy
- 6) Speech 230—Mass Communication. A change in title and expansion of the content of the course was approved.

b. The 1972 Summer Session.

The successful 1972 summer session reported an enrollment of 618 students. The course offerings and workshops were increased and experiments were made with a number of creative courses.

c. Professional Programs at Calvin College

This study, of vital concern to the college, and the focus of intensive discussion both in the faculty and the Board of Trustees, issued in the following decisions:

- 1) The present core, graduation, and degree requirements leading to the B.A. and B.Sc. degrees shall be retained. The difference between the two degrees is only one of option—that is, a candidate may choose a B.Sc. degree if he/she prefers it to the B.A. degree in recognition of his/her heavy concentration in science.
- 2) Calvin College shall introduce a new degree—a baccalaureate—in the field of that professional program which is judged by the faculty as meeting the guidelines given by the Professional Programs Study Committee in description of “The College Related Profession.” (Cf. *Professional Education and the Liberal Arts College*)
- 3) Programs leading to a baccalaureate degree, other than the B.A. or B.Sc. degrees, under one of the combined or intra-institutional professional programs must include at least the graduation requirements listed below:
  - a) The Liberal Arts Core

The core guidelines for professional programs shall be as follows:

- |   |                         |
|---|-------------------------|
| 1. The Contextual Disciplines<br>(History, Philosophy, Religion and Theology) | 4 courses               |
| 2. Natural Sciences<br>(Mathematics, Biology, Chemistry, Physics)             | 2 courses               |
| 3. Social Sciences<br>(Economics, Political Science, Sociology, Psychology)   | 2 courses               |
| 4. Arts and Literature<br>(Art, Music, Speech, Literature, Foreign Culture)   | 3 courses               |
| 5. Competences<br>(Written Rhetoric, Spoken Rhetoric, Physical Education)     | 2 courses               |
|   | <i>Total</i> 13 courses |

- b) Program of Concentration. Every professional program must include an approved departmental or interdepartmental program of concentration.
- 4) The Board of Trustees recommended to the faculty that when specific programs are developed under the guidelines for the new baccalaureate degree, these programs include at least one course in the category of contextual disciplines in the field of religion and theology.

### 3. Student Matters

#### a. Statistical Data

The total enrollment for the school year 1972-73 decreased for the fourth successive year, standing at 3,185 students. This was a decrease of 3.6%, which was close to the average of 3.3% decrease in undergraduate enrollment in Michigan colleges. At Calvin the number of first-time, degree-credit students was down by eight students—from 945 to 937.

While total enrollment decreased, the number of transfer students to Calvin College increased by 10.7% over 1971.

Canadian enrollment increased from 154 to 164 students. This is the first time there has been an upturn in Canadian enrollment since 1966. It is difficult to give any single reason for this favorable trend, but surely the work of the Rev. G. J. Hoytema, of London, Ontario, Calvin's representative in Canada, should receive recognition.

Black student enrollment increased from thirteen to twenty-five last year, and to thirty-six this year.

Despite the increased efforts to recruit evangelical students other than Christian Reformed, the percentage of such students decreased from 9.1% to 7.9%. The percentage of Christian Reformed students increased from 90.9% last year to 92.1% this year.

#### b. Changes in the Student Personnel Division

##### 1) New Personnel

Prof. Ernest Van Vugt, of the Classical Languages Department, consented to take over the work of Registrar, while retaining a one-course teaching assignment. He comes into this position in relief of Vice President Peter Vande Guchte, who is on a reduced-load leave of absence, working on a doctoral degree program.

##### 2) New Procedures

The Student Personnel Division has instituted a number of important improvements in office procedures which have expedited admissions applications and student follow-up work, and is concentrating on the most effective methods of advertising.

##### 3) Student Recruitment

Recruitment efforts are being stepped up. High priority is given to the western Michigan area, but through the visitation by the admissions staff, representation at conventions, etc., efforts are focused on all areas of our denomination. Increased attention has been given to minority-student recruitment this year. Canadian students have organized a Ca-

nadian Student Alliance in order to present their special problems more effectively to the administration and to communicate the programs and opportunities and goals of Calvin College to the Canadian constituency at home. The administration is currently attempting to secure for our Canadian students a liberalization of the work-permit regulations by the Immigration Office. This would increase the number of allowable jobs to include all those which might be available in the agencies of the Christian Reformed Church and institutions largely supported by the Christian Reformed people.

c. Student and Institutional Aid

A detailed report of "Scholarships and Financial Aid Awarded to Students at Calvin College for the 1972-73 Academic Year" shows that the financial aid program is constituted of 3,921 awards in scholarships, grants, loans, or jobs, which have a total value of \$2,096,509.

d. Overcrowding of Dormitories

Although enrollment has decreased and juniors are permitted to live off campus, 360 students are affected by adding one additional person to a suite of rooms. The room rent is reduced for these students, but this has not made up for the discomfort experienced. Overcrowding has generated more student complaint, and especially parent dissatisfaction, than in previous years. Adding the twenty-four rooms to one of the residence halls (cf. Property and Finance) and recovering faculty-used rooms after the CAF Building is completed will greatly help the situation. Adding resident hall space may appear a bit too optimistic. However, the needs have been consistently under-built. Furthermore, the increasing demand for use by local students, the potential use of unfilled rooms for single occupancy at a higher rate, and the demand for rooms by visitors to the campus and by conferees during the academic year make the adding of space realistic and reasonable.

e. Student Religious Activities

Chapel attendance has improved over last year. There have been good crowds consistently during the first semester.

The college "Thrust" program, instituted especially for out-of-town students, received a good response. Four hundred students, divided into sixty small groups, were engaged in the seven-week program of studying *Called to Serve*.

In addition to "Thrust" groups there are fifty-five Bible study and prayer groups meeting every week in the residence halls.

The Student Senate established a standing Religious Coordinating Committee, which will initiate programs not covered by other campus committees and coordinate the work of others.

f. Knollcrest Worship Services

The board approved the appointment of the Calvin, Neland Avenue, Plymouth Heights, and Woodlawn Christian Reformed Church consistories to serve in supervision of the Knollcrest Worship Services.

4. Library Matters

A total of 9,748 new books were catalogued in 1971-72, as compared with 8,310 in 1970-71. The *Library of English Literature, Part I*, con-

sisting of 1,994 items in microform, was also catalogued and made available. In addition, seventy-four microfilm reels of dissertations and monographs were accessioned.

The Library staff instituted an actual count of the shelf list of holdings. It disclosed that we hold 186,534 volumes, 39,697 bound periodicals, 25,039 government documents, 16,668 microform items, a few remaining Dewey Classification books, and some unclassified short items. Microforms are a relatively new type of research material for an undergraduate library, but the records show good usage of these holdings. The staff and assistants are finding that their efforts to build a Colonial Origins and Church Archives Collection are rewarded in its having grown into one of the best among the various ecclesiastical denominations of our country. The Calvin-Calvinism Collection is also increasing in size and quality. Mr. Peter De Klerk, whose duties include the supervision of the Calvin-Calvinism Collection, has uncovered valuable materials and also titles which may eventually be purchased.

#### D. *Property and Finance*

1. At the February board meeting the auditor's report for the fiscal year ended August 31, 1972, was accepted as the official financial report of Calvin College and Seminary for the fiscal year 1971-72, and the revised operating budget for 1972-73, showing projected revenue of \$5,729,000 and projected expenses of \$5,762,400 was approved.

#### 2. Natatorium

The Long Range Planning for the Knollcrest Campus has included the construction of a natatorium from the beginning. Space was provided in the original campus layout, and certain provisions were built into the Physical Education Building. The lockers and equipment room that will serve the pool area were included in the first phase of the Physical Education Building construction in 1965. The matter of construction of a natatorium comes to fruition at this time because special gifts were received in the amount of \$250,000 and \$100,000 has been raised from local sources. Efforts will be put forth toward raising the balance through western Michigan business appeals.

The Board of Trustees authorized the construction of a natatorium at an estimated cost of \$685,000. The board decided to approve the recommendation that the name for the proposed natatorium be designated as "Bergsma Memorial Natatorium."

#### 3. Addition to Residence Hall

The Board of Trustees authorized the construction of a 48-bed addition to Noordewier Hall with a cost budget of \$250,000 (cf. C 3 d).

#### 4. Official Transfer of the Franklin Campus

The Grand Rapids School of the Bible and Music immediately occupied the Franklin Street campus in July and August, engaging in an extensive remodeling program in order to meet the more rigid Fire Marshall requirements. On September 1, 1972, at a public ceremony, which included removing the box containing the historical documents from behind the 1916 cornerstone of the Administration Building, the official transfer was made. This is recorded in the October 27, 1972 issue of the *Banner* and in the September 26, 1972 issue of *De Wachter*. A letter

was received from those parties owning property contiguous to the Franklin Campus, expressing appreciation for the presence of the Grand Rapids School of the Bible and Music on the campus, and the positive effect this is having on the community.

#### 5. Remodeling Projects

Because of a need to accommodate in existing buildings certain departments which had been eliminated from the CAF Building when the plans for that building were reduced a year ago, the following specific solutions were approved by the board:

- a. The English Department will be housed on the second floor, northeast corner of the FAC Building, an area now occupied by the Art Department.
- b. The Department of Religion and Theology will be housed on the first floor, east end of Hiemenga Hall and that area of the Library now occupied by the college president and dean.
- c. All of the language departments will be housed on the second floor of Hiemenga Hall.
- d. The Department of Philosophy will be housed in the Science Building. In each case the plans provide for single-occupancy offices, a departmental room, and a departmental office.

#### 6. Land Matters

A parcel of land of approximately  $8\frac{1}{2}$  acres, south of Burton Street, was sold to the Holland Home for the sum of \$46,750, and a parcel of land of two acres, south of Burton Street, was sold to a group of medical doctors for the construction of a medical center for the sum of \$70,000.

#### 7. Increase of College Tuition Rates for 1973-74

The Board approved an increase in tuition rates for the college in the amount of \$110 per year (\$55 per semester) for all students. It was decided that \$50,000 of the monies received be placed in an assistance fund for students residing outside of Michigan.

## II. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SYNODICAL ACTION

### A. Seminary

1. The Board of Trustees recommends that Prof. Robert Recker be reappointed as Associate Professor of Missions with permanent tenure, with the following grounds:

- a. Although his first three years of teaching were on a half-time basis, his total teaching experience provides an adequate basis for evaluation.
- b. His eighteen years of experience on the mission field provides rich resources for teaching in the area of missions.
- c. Responses to questionnaires are favorable to an exceptionally high degree.
- d. The rules for reappointment allow for the option of recommending permanent tenure at this stage.
- e. The possibility of permanent tenure at this time was contemplated by the Board of Trustees and the Synod of 1971 (cf. Acts of Synod, 1971, Supplement, Report 12, p. 352 II, A, 1).

2. The Board of Trustees recommends that Dr. Melvin Hugen be reappointed as Associate Professor of Practical Theology for a term of two years.

3. The Board of Trustees recommends that a regular appointment to the staff of the Practical Theology Department (Church Education) be postponed until the completion of the preparatory work outlined in Article I, B, 1, e.

#### B. The College

1. The Board of Trustees makes the following recommendations for appointment:

- (1) De Jong, Jeanette (Mrs.), B.A., Dean of Women for two years.
- (2) Dykema, Eugene, M.B.A., Assistant Professor of Economics for two years.
- (3) Kuipers, Kenneth, M.B.A., Instructor (or Assistant Professor) in Economics for two years.

2. The Board of Trustees makes the following recommendations for reappointment (*italics indicate change of rank*):

- (1) Baldwin, Mrs. Claude-Marie, B.A., Visiting Assistant in Romance Languages (French) for one year.
- (2) Beebe, John, Ph.D., *Associate* Professor of Biology for two years.
- (3) Besselsen, Gilbert, Ph.D., *Professor* of Education for two years.
- (4) Borger, Ellen, M.A., Instructor in Romance Languages (French) for two years.
- (5) De Borst, James, Ph.D., *Professor* of Political Science for two years.
- (6) Greydanus, Samuel, M.A., Assistant Professor of History for two years.
- (7) Hegewald, Cornelius, M.A., D.A.G., *Associate* Professor of Germanic Languages.
- (8) Huisman, Carl, M.F.A., *Assistant* Professor of Art for two years.
- (9) Huisman, Gertrude, M.A., Assistant Professor of Music.
- (10) Klooster, Beverly, Ph.D., *Associate* Professor of Biology.
- (11) Konyndyk, Kenneth, Ph.D., *Associate* Professor of Philosophy for two years.
- (12) Kuipers, Jack, M.S.E., Info. and Cont. E., Mathematics Department.
- (13) Lamse, James L., M.A. *Associate* Professor of Germanic Languages for two years.
- (14) Lucasse, Philip, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Education
- (15) Marsden, George, Ph.D., *Professor* of History.
- (16) Menninga, Clarence, Ph.D., *Professor* of Physics for two years.
- (17) Monsma, Stephen V., Ph.D., *Professor* of Political Science.
- (18) Nyhoff, Larry, Ph.D., *Professor* of Mathematics.
- (19) Ozinga, Thomas J., Ph.D., *Professor* of Speech.
- (20) Reynolds, Alfred, Ph.D., *Professor* of Psychology.
- (21) Roberts, Frank, M.A., *Associate* Professor of History for two years.

- (22) Siebring, Barton, M.A., Assistant Professor of Romance Languages (Spanish) for two years.
- (23) Stapert, Calvin, M.A., *Assistant* Professor of Music for two years.
- (24) Vande Guchte, Peter, M.B.A., Vice President for Student Personnel Services for four years. (Administration)
- (25) Van Kley, Dale, Ph.D., *Associate* Professor of History for two years.
- (26) Vila, David, M.A., B.D., Associate Professor of Romance Languages (Spanish) for two years.
- (27) Vos, Clarence, Th.D., *Professor* of Religion and Theology for two years.
- (28) Vos, Louis, Th.D., *Professor* of Religion and Theology.
- (29) Walhout, Clarence, Ph.D., *Professor* of English.
- (30) Wells, Ronald, Ph.D., *Associate* Professor of History for two years.
- (31) Westra, Dorothy, M.A., Assistant Professor of Education for two years.
- (32) Westra, Johan, Ph.D., *Professor* of Political Science.
- (33) Winzenz, David, Ph.D., *Visiting Assistant Professor* of Psychology for two years.
- (34) Zuidema, Doris, M.A., Assistant Professor of Physical Education
- (35) Zylstra, Mildred (Mrs.) M.A.L.S., Assistant Professor of English.

Board of Trustees,

Leonard J. Hofman  
Secretary

REPORT 2-A

BOARD OF TRUSTEES—CALVIN COLLEGE AND SEMINARY

(Arts. 10, 19, 25, 30, 79, 83, 85)

DEAR BROTHERS:

This supplementary report covers the matters acted upon by the executive committee since the February meeting of the board, and the decisions of the May 21-24, 1973 meeting of the Board of Trustees.

I. INFORMATION

A. *Board of Trustees*

1. The Board of Trustees held its spring semi-annual meeting May 21-24, 1973 at the Knollcerst Commons.

2. The executive committee of the board met in regular session on March 8, April 12, and June 7, 1973.

3. Ministerial members of the executive committee elected at the May meeting of the board are (terms to begin in September): the Reverend Messrs. Henry De Mots, Wendell Gebben, John M. Hofman, Leonard J. Hofman, Robert Holwerda, Gysbert Rozenboom, and William Van Rees.

4. Board membership is as follows:

Classis	Delegate	Alternate
Alberta North.....	Rev. J. Joosse.....	Rev. J. Vriend
Alberta South.....	Rev. M. J. Lise.....	Rev. L. Mulder
British Columbia.....	Rev. B. Nederlof.....	Rev. P. Van Egmond
Cadillac.....	Rev. R. Wiebenga.....	Rev. M. Stegink
California South.....	Rev. O. Oostendorp.....	
Central California.....	Rev. D. Vander Wall.....	Rev. R. Kok
Chatham.....	Rev. M. Pool.....	Rev. P. Sluys
Chicago North.....	Rev. J. Ebbers.....	Rev. O. Breen
Chicago South.....	Rev. H. De Mots.....	Rev. N. Punt
Columbia.....	Rev. E. Meyer.....	Rev. H. Leestma
Eastern Canada.....	Rev. H. Numan, Jr.....	Rev. J. DePater
Florida.....	Rev. E. Heerema.....	Rev. J. Osterhouse
Grand Rapids East.....	Rev. W. DeJong.....	Rev. J. Medendorp
Grand Rapids North.....	Rev. G. Rozenboom.....	
Grand Rapids South.....	Rev. J. M. Hofman.....	
Grandville.....	Rev. L. J. Hofman.....	Rev. P. VanderWeide
Hackensack.....	Rev. R. Walters, Jr.....	
Hamilton.....	Rev. R. Sikkema.....	
Holland.....	Rev. R. Holwerda.....	
Hudson.....	Rev. E. Walhout.....	Rev. N. Prins
Huron.....		
Illiana.....	Rev. J. Ribbens.....	
Kalamazoo.....	Rev. H. Bouma.....	Rev. F. De Boer
Lake Erie.....	Rev. R. Van Harn.....	Rev. F. Steen
Minnesota North.....	Rev. A. Van Eek.....	

Classis	Delegate	Alternate
Minnesota South.....	Rev. N. Roorda.....	Rev. L. Zoerhof
Muskegon.....	Rev. W. Gebben.....	Rev. E. Piersma
Northcentral Iowa.....	Rev. H. Baak.....	Rev. J. Entingh
Orange City.....	Rev. J. Hellinga.....	Rev. H. Hiemstra
Pacific Northwest.....	Rev. J. Wesseling.....	Rev. A. Leegwater
Pella.....	Rev. H. Petersen.....	Rev. S. Kramer
Quinte.....	Rev. C. Corvers.....	Rev. D. Los
Rocky Mountain.....	Rev. J. Boonstra.....	Rev. R. Veenstra
Sioux Center.....	Rev. J. Engbers.....	Rev. H. VandenHeuvel
Toronto.....	Rev. A. Dreise.....	Rev. L. Tamminga
Wisconsin.....	Rev. H. Exoo.....	Rev. L. Baker
Zeeland.....	Rev. W. Van Rees.....	Rev. T. Brouwer
Eastern District.....	Mr. J. Last.....	Mr. A. Snope
Central District.....	Mr. B. Sevensma.....	Dr. T. Vanden Berg
		Mr. J. Van Houten
	Hon. J. Feikens.....	Dr. G. Van Noord
	Mr. S. Geelhood.....	Mr. A. Hoving
	Dr. J. Strikwerda.....	Mr. A. Bultman
Midwest.....	Mr. A. Geurkink.....	Mr. C. De Bruyn
Far West.....	Mr. M. Hekman.....	Mr. H. Te Velde

Note: (-) Vacancies. A nomination for lay positions on the board is submitted with this report.

#### *Officers of the Board of Trustees*

President—Rev. Henry Vander Kam\*  
 First Vice President—Mr. John Vander Ark\*  
 Second Vice President  
 Secretary—Rev. Leonard J. Hofman  
 Assistant Secretary—Mr. Berton Sevensma  
 Treasurer—Mr. Stewart Geelhood

#### B. SEMINARY

##### 1. *Students*

a. Licensure was granted to twenty-three students after interview by the board through its executive committee, and licensure for the summer of 1973 only to thirteen, to be reviewed in September.

b. Extension of licensure was approved for nine who will be serving as interns, completing their B.D. programs or in graduate study, and extension of licensure until September, 1973, was approved for one who will be teaching in a Christian school.

c. Reverend Joseph Tong, of the Church of Christ the Lord, of Indonesia, was granted licensure for one year.

d. Upon recommendation of the seminary faculty, twenty-one students were admitted to the seminary. The board took note of the fact that the faculty admitted three as Special Pre-Licentiates, one as Probationary Special Pre-Licentiate, and six as Probationary Pre-Licentiates.

e. Those men interviewed by the board and recommended to synd for candidacy in the Christian Reformed Church are listed under II, Recommendations.

\*Rev Henry Vander Kam and Mr. John Vander Ark will retire from the board on August 31, 1973, having completed two consecutive three-year terms.

f. The Board of Trustees calls the attention of synod to the fact that our mission boards, churches, and other agencies are asking prospective candidates to commit themselves to a promised "call" which will be officially issued after candidacy has been declared by synod. (Acts of Synod, 1970, Art. 21)

g. The commencement of Calvin Theological Seminary was held at 1:30 p.m. on Saturday, May 26, at the Fine Arts Center on the Knollcrest Campus, with the Honorable John Feikens as the commencement speaker.

h. Scholarships

1) The \$500 Board of Trustees Scholarship to Calvin Seminary was awarded to Mr. Lyle Bierma.

2) The board approved the decision that the Diamond Jubilee Scholarship be awarded to the Reverend Mr. Peter Katwijk.

2. *Faculty*

a. The Board of Trustees requested that President Kromminga express its appreciation for the activities of the faculty members on behalf of the church and the broader academic community, together with a word of encouragement in their endeavors for advancing their respective fields of discipline.

b. The board took note of and approved the following changes in nomenclature which will be the official terminology for the departments/divisions in the future:

The Biblical Division

Department of Old Testament Studies

Department of New Testament Studies

The Theological Division

Department of Historical Theology

Department of Systematic Theology

Department of Philosophical and Moral Theology

The Church and Ministry Division

Department of Pastoral Theology

Department of Missiology

3. *Academic Matters*

a. The Master of Divinity (M.Div.) Degree

At its meeting in February, 1973, the Board of Trustees decided to approve the Master of Divinity (M.Div.) degree, and authorize its introduction in the academic year 1973-74, contingent on the submission of acceptable provisions for such degree to the May, 1973 meeting of the board. The understanding behind this decision was that the M.Div. degree would involve the existing B.D. curriculum along with an increase in quantity and an improvement in quality of field education, and with continuing insistence on the primacy of thorough theological training in preparation for the ministry.

The information necessary to ensure the permission to proceed is found in the following basic provisions governing the M.Div. degree.

1) The M.Div degree will involve the existing B.D. curriculum along with an increase in quantity and improvement in quality of field education.

2) 134 quarter-hours of credit will be required, five less than now required for the B.D. The reduction is entirely in practical theology and is fully absorbed into field education.

3) Forty-five units of field education credit will be required, each unit approximately equal in educational weight and student effort to one hour of course credit.

4) Under ideal circumstances the requirements can be met in three years' study, but will usually require between three and four years.

5) Improvement in the quality of field education will be achieved in part through the training of field supervisors and the greater involvement of seminary faculty members in guiding students to theological reflection of their field experience.

6) A full complement of the presently authorized seminary staff will be sufficient to man the program.

7) Additional costs to the seminary are estimated initially at \$3,500 per annum and will be offset by a tuition charge for each unit of field education.

The Board of Trustees declared that the contingency noted in February, 1973 had been met and the faculty was authorized to proceed with the initiation of the M.Div. Program.

b. Appointment in Church Education (cf. *Agenda*, 1973, Report 2, pp. 21, 22)

Reflection and developments since the February meeting of the board have brought about clarification of the need and the course of action to fill that need in Church Education. There is a basic need for a developed theology of Church Education. There is a pressing practical need for a program of supervised church school teaching. The development of the M.Div. Program has underscored the need of seminary leadership in this area. In the light of these considerations, the Board of Trustees took note of the faculty's intention to prepare a nomination for a full-time appointment in Church Education to be presented to the board at its February, 1974 meeting.

c. Field Education (cf. Acts of Synod, 1972, Supplement - Report 2A, p. 146)

The Board of Trustees adopted the recommendation of the faculty to abolish the office of Director of Field Education, to make permanent the position of Coordinator of Field Education, and to authorize the faculty to present proposals concerning the method and term of the Coordinator's appointment.

d. Library

Under the direction of Mr. Peter De Klerk, the Theological Librarian, the library is well run as to its routine functions, and an imaginative approach is shown to new services.

The Board of Trustees approved the reappointment of the Rev. John Schuurmann for one year as Assistant in the Theological Division of the library.

#### 4. Finance

##### a. Tuition rates

The Board of Trustees approved the following Seminary tuition schedule for 1973-74:

- 1) Minimum tuition: \$50.00
- 2) Charge per credit hour: \$12.00
- 3) Tuition for Field Education: \$5.00 per unit  
(45 units required for graduation with M.Div. degree)
- 4) Th.M. tuition: \$20.00 per credit hour  
(36 hours required for graduation)
- 5) Audit: \$7.50 per hour

#### C. COLLEGE MATTERS

##### 1. Faculty

##### a. Appointments and Reappointments

1) The Board of Trustees, at its February session, made two new appointments to the teaching staff, both in Economics: Mr. Eugene Dykema and Mr. Kenneth Kuipers. Both men accepted their appointments. They will greatly strengthen the staff of a department that has been seriously understaffed for several years.

2) Letters of decline were received from Dr. H. Kieft, Mr. David Sullivan, and Dr. David Winzenz.

3) Mrs. Dolores Hageman has consented to serve as Assistant in Physical Education for a two-year term to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of Mrs. Jenniete Vander Berg, whose husband is being recommended as a candidate for the ministry.

4) Following a favorable interview with Mr. Elias Lumpkins by the College Committee of the Board of Trustees, the appointment by the President of Mr. Lumpkins as Director of Upward Bound and Special Projects was approved.

5) Philip Lucasse, Ph.D., was reappointed Associate Professor of Education for two years.

6) The board approved the reappointment of the Rev. Bernard Pekelder as Vice President for Student Affairs for four years.

7) The board was informed of the need for additional staff personnel in the Psychology Department, especially in clinical and social psychology.

##### b. Leave of Absence

A sabbatical leave during the 1973-74 academic year was granted to Dr. John Hamersma.

##### c. Those leaving the staff of Calvin College

The board took note of the excellent services of the following staff members: Miss Janice Baker for one year of service as an Assistant Instructor in Mathematics, Mrs. Jenniete Vander Berg for eight years of service in Physical Education, Dr. Jack Vander Slik who filled a vacancy in the Political Science Department for one year, Mr. Raymond Van Heukelem for one year of service as Assistant in Physical Education, Dr. David Winzenz who served for one year as Guest Lecturer in the De-

partment of Psychology, and Mrs. Gretchen Zuiderveen who served for two years as Dean of Women.

The board also took note of the acceptance by Dr. Dennis Hoekstra of the appointment as President of Trinity Christian College of Palos Heights, Illinois, following eight years of distinguished service rendered to Calvin College as teacher and administrator.

d. Honors and Achievements, Professional Activity and Service to the Church.

The board took note of the honors and activities in connection with which members of the faculty were distinguished and expressed appreciation.

e. Illnesses and bereavements

In response to receiving information about those who experienced illness or bereavement, the board expressed its Christian sympathy by resolutions of sympathy and concern, and assigned members of the Board of Trustees to visit in some instances.

f. Persons retiring from the staff (cf. II Recommendations)

1) Dr. Cornelius Plantinga. The board took note of his twenty-three years of service to Calvin College, and conferred upon him the title of Professor of Psychology, Emeritus.

2) Dr. Tunis Prins. The board took note of his twelve years of service to Calvin College, and conferred upon him the title of Professor of Philosophy, Emeritus.

3) Professor John Tuls. The board noted his twenty-seven years of service to Calvin College, and conferred upon him the title of Associate Professor of Mathematics, Emeritus.

g. Anniversaries

Three members of the faculty, at the end of this year, will have served Calvin College for twenty-five years; Melvin Berghuis, Ph.D., Clarence Boersma, Ph.D., and John L. De Beer, Ed.D. The board noted with gratitude to God their excellent service. (cf. II Recommendations)

2. *Administrative Matters*

a. Since leaves of absence have assumed an important place in faculty development and because they affect the financial resources of the college, and since a leave-of-absence policy had not been defined precisely in a formal statement, a carefully considered document was presented to the board and was approved.

b. The matter of tenure at Calvin College is still under intensive study and a statement of policy will be presented to the board in the near future.

c. Certain refinements in the Retirement-at-Age-65 Policy were approved in order to accommodate circumstances of those who would soon retire.

3. *Curriculum and Programs*

a. The following new course was approved: Chemistry 303, Biochemistry.

b. Professional Programs (Combined-Curriculum Degree Programs) (cf. Report 2, p. 124).

The following programs for Bachelor of Science (B.S.) degrees under combined-curriculum plans were approved:

- 1) The Bachelor of Science in Letters and Medicine, and Bachelor of Science in Letters and Dentistry.
- 2) The Bachelor of Science in Letters and Medical Technology.
- 3) The Bachelor of Science in Special Education.
- 4) The Bachelor of Science in Letters and Forestry.
- 5) The Bachelor of Science in Letters and Engineering.
- 6) The Bachelor of Science in Letters and Natural Resources.

c. The B.S. Degree in Education with Grand Rapids Baptist College.

The board approved the establishment of a combined-curriculum program in teacher education with Grand Rapids Baptist College leading to a Bachelor of Science in Education degree on the combined-curriculum plan. Students completing the requirements for the degree will be granted the degree by Calvin College and be recommended to the State of Michigan Department of Education for teacher certification. The board approved the recommended requirements for both the B.S. in Education Degree on the Combined-Curriculum Plan with Grand Rapids Baptist College, and the requirements for admission of students.

### 3. *Student Matters*

#### a. Enrollment

In February, 1973, the Registrar reported a total enrollment of 2991 students, which is a decrease of 6.9 per cent from the first semester enrollment. The decrease includes those who officially graduated in December and January (seventy-six students), those who had enrolled as part-time students during the first semester (187 students), and those who discontinued sometime during the first semester (eighty-six students).

Despite the decrease, there are two encouraging signs in the registration statistics. The decrease is smaller than the between-semester drop of 1972, when there was a 7.8 per cent decrease; also, there was an increase in the number of transfer students registered in February. There were thirty-eight transfer students in February, 1973 as against twenty-four a year ago.

#### b. Chapel Services

The board endorsed the faculty recommendation that the present chapel arrangements, which involve voluntary, non-monitored attendance, a variety of services held at different places on the campus, and a scheduled half-hour made free in the morning class schedule to permit chapel attendance, be continued indefinitely.

### 4. *Library*

The Librarians have isolated the Calvinism Collection from the total collection of books. The collection, originally begun when Dr. H. Henry Meeter was Professor of Bible at Calvin College, includes works on Calvin and Calvinism purchased over the years from library funds. Later growth of the collection was made possible through grants made to

Calvin College and Seminary for the H. H. Meeter Fund. The collection is now housed in the balcony reading room.

The recent purchase of the rare book, John Calvin, *Commentary on the 'De Clementia' of Seneca*, has focused the attention of scholars on the Calvinism Collection. This book, of which there are only eight extant, and ours the only one in the United States, is a prestigious volume which enhances the value of our whole collection. The book is one of the most remarkable ones in the development of Calvin's intellectual interests and represents the classical influence on John Calvin's thought, which he carried with him into his later Reformation thought and expression.

#### 5. *Meeting with Heads of (Denominational) Agencies*

The following representatives were present at the invitation of the board, and offered their appreciation for Calvin College and Seminary, and their evaluation of and suggestions for its ministry as it relates to each representative's area of interest:

Mr. H. Triezenberg, National Union of Christian Schools

Rev. W. P. Brink, Stated Clerk

Rev. H. Evenhouse, Executive Secretary of the Board of Foreign Missions

Mr. G. Borst, Chairman of the Home Mission Staff

Mr. L. Van Ess, of the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee

Dr. L. De Koster, Editor of *The Banner*

Rev. W. Smedes, of Home Missions, Moderator

There were responses by the presidents of the College and Seminary. It was an hour profitably spent.

#### D. *Property and Finance*

1. For budget and quota recommendations, cf. II Recommendations.

2. The board approved an increase in the base salary of faculty members in the amount of \$300.

3. Certain refinements were approved for the *Age 65 Retirement and Pension Policy*.

4. Construction of a covered walkway. The board authorized the construction of a covered walkway between the Classroom-Administration-Faculty Building, now under construction, and the existing Library-Classroom Building, at a cost not to exceed \$13,500. This will serve as protection against the elements on a walkway where considerable use is anticipated.

5. Contract award for Noordewier addition. The board ratified the action of the Executive Committee in awarding a contract to C. D. Barnes Construction Company for \$204,379. (See Report 2, I, D, 3)

6. The board ratified the action of the Executive Committee approving a \$1,800,000 8% note issue along with a proposed retirement schedule and "sales" method.

#### E. NAME FOR THE CAF BUILDING

The Board of Trustees adopted the following resolution:

Whereas for more than twenty years the President of Calvin College has provided singular and outstanding leadership, and

Whereas this leadership has been reflected in both his careful attention to the growth and development of this institution as a Christian liberal arts college and his capable direction in the transfer of Calvin from the Franklin Street Campus to the beautiful and functional Knollcrest Campus, together with his valuable guidance in the planning of construction projects, bringing into reality the complex of buildings called Calvin College today, and

Whereas in all of this he exhibited the rare quality of self-abnegation, along with a consuming concern for the College community of Christians who administer, teach, study, or function in tasks large or small, a loyalty to the church of which he forms a part, an uncompromising commitment to the historic Christian faith, and a warm-hearted love for the Christ to whom he dedicates his energies, and

Whereas the construction of the Classroom-Administration-Faculty Building marks the completion of the construction of Calvin College at Knollcrest,

Be it resolved that this building be named the William Spoelhof Building, in recognition of the blessings of our Covenant God to a College community through his faithful servant.

Note: The precise name of the building, as to whether it will be called "Building," "Center," etc., will be flexible until final decision is made.

## II. RECOMMENDATIONS

### A. *Seminary*

#### 1. *Candidates*

Upon recommendation of the seminary faculty and after interview by the Board of Trustees, the board recommends that synod declare the following as candidates for the ministry in the Christian Reformed Church:

Henry Admiraal	Aric C. Leder
J. George Aupperlee	L. Bryce Mensink
Donald G. Belanus	Peter Plug
John Bolt	Frank Pott
Dennis J. Boogerd	James Stoel
Carl Bosma	Daniel Tigchelaar
Robert R. Broekema	William Vanden Bos
Ronald Cok	Edward Vander Berg
Calvin Compagner	Thomas Vander Ziel
James Cooper	William Van Hal
Robert De Lange	Siebren Van Houten
William C. De Vries	Duane Van Loo
Gerrit Haagsma	John Van Regenmorter
Adrian Helleman	Thomas Van't Land
Tjepke Hoogsteen	Ronald Van Zomeren
Henry Jonker	Gerrit P. Veenstra, Jr.
Donald Klop	Peter Veltman
Wayne Kobes	William Ver Hoef
Lee Koning	Harold J. Westra
Robert Koornneef	Peter Winkle
Leslie Kuiper	Carl Zylstra
Harry Kuperus	David A. Zylstra

2. The Board of Trustees requests that synod approve the appoint-

ment of Dr. Richard De Ridder to teach in the area of missions, as well as assist in divisional responsibilities during the 1973-74 academic year.

### B. *College*

1. The Board of Trustees requests that synod recognize in an appropriate way the following:

a. Retiring from the Calvin faculty:

Dr. Cornelius Plantinga

Dr. Tunis Prins

Prof. John Tuls

b. Those who have served on the Calvin faculty for twenty-five years:

Dr. Melvin Berghuis

Dr. Clarence Boersma

Dr. John L. De Beer

### C. *Property and Finance*

1. The board recommends the approval of the proposed budget for the fiscal year ending August 31, 1974, with a proposed income of \$6,114,000 and proposed expenses of \$6,135,000, showing a budgeted deficit of \$21,500.

2. The board recommends that synod approve the following area quota scale for 1974:

	1973	1974
Area No. 1	\$41.25	\$44.00
Area No. 2	40.25	40.25
Area No. 3	33.25	33.75
Area No. 4	14.50	16.00
Area No. 5	41.25	44.00
Area No. 6	26.00	29.25
Area No. 7	14.50	15.25

### D. *Nomination for Lay Members of the Board of Trustees*

1. Eastern District

Alternate

\*Andrew Snope—Wyckoff, New Jersey

Robert Walter—Passaic, New Jersey

2. Central District

Regular

Norman De Graaf—Grand Rapids, Mich.

Glenn Niemeyer—Hudsonville, Mich.

Alternate

\*\*Marvin De Boer—Grand Rapids, Mich.

Regular

Anthony Diekema—Wheaton, Illinois

William Post—Elmhurst, Illinois

Alternate

\* \*\*Jay Van Houten—Grand Rapids, Mich.

## Regular

\*Stewart Geelhood—Grand Rapids, Mich.  
Arnold Hoving—Elmhurst, Illinois

## Alternate

Dr. Wesley De Young, Grand Rapids, Mich.

## \*Incumbent

\*\*We request that the nominee not elected as regular delegate be added to the alternate nomination.

*E. Privilege of the floor*

We respectfully request that the Reverend Henry Vander Kam, president of the board, and the Reverend Leonard J. Hofman, secretary of the board, be permitted to represent the board in matters relating to the Report of the Board of Calvin College and Seminary.

Board of Trustees

Leonard J. Hofman, Secretary

**REPORT 3****CHRISTIAN REFORMED BOARD OF FOREIGN MISSIONS**

(Arts. 26, 40, 66, 83, 87)

**DEAR BROTHERS:**

The Mission Order under which the Board of Foreign Missions operates starts out with the declaration: "It is the sacred duty, as well as the blessed privilege, of all individual Christians and churches to take part in the fulfillment of Christ's great commission to evangelize the world."

In the fulfillment of this calling the Board of Foreign Missions is thankful, as the servant of synod, to submit once again its report on the work that has been done, that is now being conducted, and that is being proposed. We have every reason to give thanks to God for the doors of opportunity that remain open, and for the continued good response of our churches at home in supporting the work in their prayers, and with their gifts. We have also been blessed in that workers have come forward to offer their services. The executive committee of the board met each month except in August of last year, and the full board met at its annual session in February of this year. The agenda regularly brings before the executive committee or the board the activities of missionary outreach in three areas of the world: the Orient, Latin America and Africa. In our administration we have the benefit of having area secretaries for each major sphere of our work and we can report that this rather recent development in administration has served the cause of foreign missions well. During the past year Dr. Roger S. Greenway has been added to the office staff while Mr. Alvin Huibregtse has after nineteen and one-half years of faithful and competent service retired from his position as assistant secretary. His services were highly appreciated by both those in the home administration and the missionaries on the field.

As a Board of Foreign Missions we are very much aware that we are not the only agency at work bringing the gospel to other lands. The Lord has his many servants serving under various and many other church bodies. We also recognize that there has been within the Christian Reformed Church and closely related to the Christian Reformed Church a multiplication of agencies seeking to witness to the world. The world-wide outreach of the Back to God Hour and the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee as synodical agencies have been authorized to extend their efforts beyond the range of the USA and Canada. This obviously means that we cross one another at times in terms of countries being served and in terms of nationals and churches being touched. This does mean that there will be occasions of overlap in terms of ministry, administration, and appeal for denominational support. Maybe this is all for the good. Interchallenge that this situation awakens

may be healthy stimulation. It may also bespeak the blessing of God that there is such vibrancy of concern and movement within our church that such diverse spiritual life comes to manifestation. Certainly the growth of our foreign mission effort, and at the same time the growing strength of radio witness and the growing witness of relief and mercy, are signs of God's stirring among us. God seems to be putting our church body, which is his body, to work in many and significant ways. In this development there will be need for interchange of thought and counsel, but we expect that this can be done with fruitful benefit to all and with a genuine forward thrust for the cause of Christ.

In order to meet the demand for healthy and constructive cooperation we have as a Board of Foreign Missions been engaged in studying various aspects of our work in the hope that we can work in good harmony with others closely related to us in mission outreach, and in order to keep our lines of administration clear. For this reason our board has during the past year sought to establish for her own use a series of specialized guidelines for service, such as guidelines for the employment of national workers; for deaconal ministries within our own program; for cooperation with the World Home Bible League; for interrelations between our board and the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee. These are not finalized, some call for further study. But they do indicate that we are working to clarify our pattern of operations so as to have healthy interrelations with others engaged in the various ministries that are closely akin to us.

### Section One

#### Organization and Personnel

##### A. Board

The board met in annual session on February 6-8, 1973, at the Brookside Christian Reformed Church. The executive committee met regularly on the second Thursday of each month, excepting February when the full board was in session.

The officers of the board are as follows: Rev. Henry N. Erffmeyer, president; Rev. Jerrien Gunnink, vice-president; Mr. Wilbert J. Venema, treasurer; Rev. Alvin Vander Griend, minute clerk; Rev. Henry J. Evenhouse, executive secretary.

B. *As standing procedure we ask that synod consider for approval the following delegates representing the various classes of our denomination:*

Classis	Delegate	Alternate	Term Expire
Alberta North.....	Rev. C. Vriend.....	Rev. E. O. Holkeboer	1973
Alberta South.....	Rev. H. De Moor.....	Rev. C. H. Salomons	1976
British Columbia.....	Rev. P. Dekker.....		1974
Cadillac.....	Rev. A. Poel.....	Rev. S. Bultman	1974
California South.....	Rev. A. P. Veenstra.....	Rev. J. Howerzyl	1973
Central California.....	Rev. C. W. Flietstra.....	Rev. G. Ebberts	1975
Chatham.....	Rev. R. Kooops.....	Mr. J. Vander Heide	1975
Chicago North.....	Rev. G. Vander Hill.....	Rev. A. Walma	1973
Chicago South.....	Rev. A. MacLeod.....	Rev. R. Timmerman	1975
Columbia.....	Rev. R. D. Posthuma.....	Rev. H. Spaan	1974
Eastern Canada.....	Rev. H. Vander Plaat.....	Rev. J. Veenstra	1975

Classis	Delegate	Alternate	Term Expire
Florida.....	Rev. A. Cammenga.....	Rev. F. Diemer	1974
Grand Rapids East.....	Rev. W. Timmer.....	Rev. D. M. Stravers	1975
Grand Rapids North.....	Dr. R. O. De Groot.....	Rev. O. Duistermars	1973
Grand Rapids South.....	Mr. A. Verduin.....	Mr. H. Scholten	1975
Grandville.....	Rev. H. N. Erffmeyer.....	Rev. A. Bultman	1973
Hackensack.....	Rev. E. G. Cooke, Jr.....	Rev. S. Cooper	1975
Hamilton.....	Rev. G. H. Polman.....	Rev. W. Renkema	1975
Holland.....	Rev. J. Gunnink.....	Rev. F. Van Houten	1974
Hudson.....	Dr. R. De Ridder.....	Rev. I. Apol	1975
Huron.....	Rev. H. W. Kroeze.....	Rev. P. L. Van Katwijk	1974
Illiana.....	Rev. A. Vander Griend.....	Rev. J. De Vries	1974
Kalamazoo.....	Rev. H. Brink.....	Rev. J. A. Bultman	1974
Lake Erie.....	Rev. J. Steigenga.....	Rev. A. J. Hoogewind	1975
Minnesota North.....	Rev. G. Vande Riet.....	Rev. P. Ouwinga	1975
Minnesota South.....	Rev. W. Dubois.....	Rev. H. Vanderaa	1974
Muskegon.....	Rev. N. Meyer.....	Rev. J. Morren	1974
Northcentral Iowa.....	Rev. J. Elenbaas.....	Rev. J. Entingh	1974
Orange City.....	Mr. F. Vogel.....	Rev. F. Handlogten	1975
Pacific Northwest.....	Rev. J. Fondse.....	Rev. J. Gray	1973
Pella.....	Rev. G. Stuit.....	Rev. S. Kramer	1973
Quinte.....	Rev. R. W. Popma.....	Rev. W. De Jong	1973
Rocky Mountain.....	Rev. S. Redhouse.....	Rev. B. Byma	1975
Sioux Center.....	Rev. M. P. Van Houten.....	Rev. G. L. Essenburg	1973
Toronto.....	Rev. C. T. Fennema.....	Rev. W. Van Dyk	1973
Wisconsin.....	Rev. J. Hoeksema.....	Rev. P. Vis	1973
Zeeland.....	Rev. O. De Groot.....	Rev. B. Van Antwerpen	1974
Member-at-large			
(Can.).....	Mr. J. Wiggers.....		1974
Member-at-large.....	Mr. W. J. Venema.....		1974
Member-at-large.....	Mr. J. Wielsma.....		1973
Member-at-large.....	Mr. S. De Young.....		1974
Member-at-large.....	Mr. D. Bratt.....		1975

*Member-at-large.* Dr. John Vroon served as a member-at-large for six years. He had to sever his connections with our board when he accepted the assignment to go to Ethiopia for a term of foreign missionary service for another mission board. We are thankful to him for his capable and dedicated service and wish him well as he once again takes up the active role of missionary on the field. His withdrawal meant that he had to be replaced and Mr. John Wielsma, one of the board alternate members, entered into the position vacated. His services as replacement for Dr. Vroon conclude at this session of synod and his name will be presented for nomination to synod that he may, if synod so chooses, enter into full term of his own. Mr. Abe Stroo who served five years asked that his services be terminated because of press of other duties. His resignation was also accepted with regret. We now therefore place before synod the following nominations for member-at-large:

1. Delegate-at-large:

Mr. John Wielsma, member of Calvin Christian Reformed Church, Grand Rapids, Michigan; treasurer of the city of East Grand Rapids.

Mr. John Vander Velde, member of the Wheaton, Illinois, Christian Reformed Church; private businessman.

2. Alternate member-at-large:

Mr. Edward Dykstra, member of the Beckwith Hills, Grand

Rapids, Michigan, Christian Reformed Church; has an insurance agency in Grand Rapids.

Mr. David Luikaart, member of the Burton Heights Christian Reformed Church, Grand Rapids, Michigan; a Grand Rapids business executive.

3. Alternate member-at-large:

Dr. Martin Sharda, medical doctor at General Motors; member of the Shawnee Park Christian Reformed Church, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Dr. Edward Stehouwer, member of the Cadillac, Michigan, Christian Reformed Church; medical doctor, general practice.

C. Organization of the executive committee

In order to carry on the vast amount of work relating to mission administration, the executive committee has the following committees which report monthly to the executive committee and the board: Officers, Finance, Recruiting and Personnel, Promotion; and the following area committees: Far East, Latin America, Africa.

D. Field personnel

Argentina

Rev. and Mrs. Ramon Borrego  
 Rev. and Mrs. W. Thomas De Vries  
 Miss Cecelia Drenth  
 Rev. and Mrs. John Hutt  
 Rev. and Mrs. Robert Jipping  
 Dr. and Mrs. Sidney Rooy  
 Rev. and Mrs. Arnold Rumph  
 Rev. and Mrs. Harvey Stob  
 Rev. and Mrs. Louis Wagenveld  
 Mr. Robert Vander Roest\*

Rev. and Mrs. Ronald Hempel  
 Rev. and Mrs. Raymond Hommes  
 Rev. and Mrs. Gerrit Koedoot  
 Rev. and Mrs. Dick Kwantes  
 Dr. and Mrs. Harvey Smit  
 Rev. and Mrs. William J. Stob  
 Rev. and Mrs. Richard D. Sytsma  
 Rev. and Mrs. Richard E. Sytsma  
 Dr. and Mrs. John Timmer  
 Rev. and Mrs. Maas Vander Bilt

Mexico

Australia

Dr. and Mrs. Sierd Woudstra

Brazil

Rev. and Mrs. Willem Dirksen  
 Mr. and Mrs. Bernard Oldenkamp  
 Rev. and Mrs. Charles Uken  
 Rev. and Mrs. Simon Wolfert

Rev. and Mrs. Paul Bergsma  
 Mr. and Mrs. Fred Boersma\*  
 Mr. and Mrs. Wayne Clousing  
 Mr. and Mrs. Clarence De Boer  
 Mr. and Mrs. John De Young  
 Mr. and Mrs. Henry Faber\*  
 Rev. and Mrs. John Groen  
 Rev. and Mrs. Donald Lagerwey  
 Mr. and Mrs. Abe Marcus  
 Rev. and Mrs. Gerald Nyenhuis  
 Rev. and Mrs. J. Jerry Pott  
 Rev. and Mrs. J. Lawrence Roberts  
 Mr. and Mrs. Jack Roeda  
 Rev. and Mrs. Robert Ruis  
 Rev. and Mrs. Chester Schemper  
 Mr. David Vander Schuur\*  
 Rev. and Mrs. Gerald F. Van Oyen  
 Mr. and Mrs. Jan Van Ee  
 Rev. and Mrs. Hans Weerstra

Cuba

Cuba Pastors

Guam

Rev. and Mrs. Henry Dykema  
 Mr. and Mrs. Conrad Dourma  
 Rev. and Mrs. John O. Schuring

Honduras

Rev. and Mrs. G. Bernard Dokter  
 Rev. and Mrs. Cornelius Persenaire

Japan

Rev. and Mrs. Henry Bruinooge  
 Rev. and Mrs. Michiel De Berdt  
 Mr. and Mrs. John De Hoog  
 Mr. and Mrs. Philip De Jonge\*\*  
 Rev. and Mrs. Ronald W. De Young  
 Dr. and Mrs. Martin Essenburg

Nigeria

Mr. and Mrs. Daniel Achtyes  
 Mr. and Mrs. Le Roy Baas  
 Rev. and Mrs. Ralph Baker  
 Mr. and Mrs. Albert Bierling  
 Dr. Harry R. Boer  
 Rev. and Mrs. John Boer

\*Short term and volunteer workers

\*\*Seminary Interns

Mr. and Mrs. Donald Bremer	Miss Ruth Salomons
Mr. and Mrs. Norman Brouwer	Mr. and Mrs. George Schutt
Mr. and Mrs. Raymond Browneye	Mr. and Mrs. Dick Seinen
Mr. and Mrs. Gordon Buys	Rev. and Mrs. George Spee
Dr. and Mrs. John Channer	Miss Dorothy Sytsma
Miss Nancy Chapel	Mr. and Mrs. Willem Termorshuizen
Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Cok	Mr. and Mrs. Engbert Ubels
Mr. and Mrs. Warren De Boer	Miss Jean Van Beek
Mr. and Mrs. Fred De Jong	Miss Geraldine Vanden Berg
Rev. and Mrs. Harold De Jong	Mr. and Mrs. Nolan Vander Ark
Miss Neva De Vries	Dr. and Mrs. John Vanderkooy
Mr. and Mrs. David Dykgraaf	Miss Julie Vander Laan
Miss Margaret Dykstra	Miss Ruth Vander Meulen
Mr. and Mrs. Aldrich J. Evenhouse	Mr. and Mrs. Dick Vander Steen
Mr. and Mrs. William Evenhouse	Miss Frances Vander Zwaag
Mr. and Mrs. Harry Faber	Rev. and Mrs. Lester Van Essen
Mr. and Mrs. Fred Feikema	Miss Gertrude Van Haitsma
Mr. and Mrs. Allen Flietstra	Miss Martina Van Staalduinen
Miss Marjorie Franz	Rev. and Mrs. William Van Tol
Miss Nancy Friend	Mr. Case Van Wyk
Mr. and Mrs. Leonard Gabrielse	Miss Ruth Veltkamp
Dr. and Mrs. G. Paul Groen	Miss Marina Verdun
Miss Angie Hoolsema	Mr. and Mrs. Stanley Vermeer
Dr. and Mrs. Peter Ipema (Liberia)	Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Visser
Mr. and Mrs. Charles Jansen	Miss Anita Vissia
Miss Frances Karnemaat	Miss Evelyn Vredevoogd
Miss Mary Kaldeway	Mr. and Mrs. Abe Vreeke
Mr. and Mrs. Frank Kass	Mr. and Mrs. Ronald Zoet
Rev. and Mrs. Harvey Kiekover	<b>Appointees to Nigeria</b>
Dr. and Mrs. Stuart Kingma	Mr. William De Jong
Miss Margaret Kooiman	Dr. and Mrs. Donald Zeilenga
Mr. and Mrs. Robert Koops	Miss Jean Zoet
Mr. and Mrs. Cornelius Korhorn	<b>Philippine Islands</b>
Rev. and Mrs. Paul Kortenhoven	Mr. and Mrs. Vicente Apostol
Mr. and Mrs. Johannes Kotze	Rev. and Mrs. Barry B. Blankers
Mr. and Mrs. William Lemcke	Rev. and Mrs. Dick C. Bouma
Mr. and Mrs. Bauke Lodewyk	Rev. and Mrs. Henry De Vries
Miss Mae Mast	Rev. and Mrs. Robert De Vries
Rev. and Mrs. Timothy Monsma	<b>Puerto Rico</b>
Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Oosterhouse	Rev. and Mrs. Merle Den Bleyker
Mr. and Mrs. Gerrit Ouwerkerk	Rev. and Mrs. Ronald Sprik
Dr. and Mrs. Keith Plate	Rev. and Mrs. Marvin Vugteveen
Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Posthumus	<b>Taiwan</b>
Miss Lois Pothoven	Rev. and Mrs. William Kosten
Dr. and Mrs. Ray Prins	Rev. and Mrs. Alvin Machiela
Mr. and Mrs. Alan J. Reberg	Rev. and Mrs. Dennis Mulder
Dr. and Mrs. Martin Reedyk	Rev. and Mrs. Peter Tong
Miss Christine Roos	Rev. and Mrs. Kenneth Van De Griend
	Rev. and Mrs. Mike Vander Pol

\*Short term and volunteer workers

\*\*Seminary Interns

### E. Representation at synod

The board respectfully requests that the Rev. Henry N. Erffmeyer, the chairman of the board; Mr. Wilbert J. Venema, treasurer of the board; and the executive secretary, the Rev. Henry J. Evenhouse, be permitted to represent the board on all matters relating to foreign missions.

### F. Presentation of missionaries

Each year the synod sets apart a time for the introduction of missionaries who are home on furlough and those who are preparing to leave

for their first assignment in a foreign country. The board is grateful for this opportunity and the missionaries appreciate the privilege of meeting with synod and bringing greetings from the various fields. We trust we may again have this privilege. If some time can be given early in the sessions of synod it would be greatly appreciated.

#### *G. Area secretaries*

Two years have elapsed since Dr. Eugene Rubingh and the Rev. Edward Van Baak were appointed by synod to serve as area secretaries for the Board of Foreign Missions, Dr. Rubingh serving in behalf of the work in Africa and Mr. Van Baak in behalf of the work in the Far East. The board at this time submits the name of Dr. Eugene Rubingh to the Synod of 1973 for reappointment as Africa Secretary for a period of two years: and the name of the Rev. Edward Van Baak for reappointment as area secretary for the Far East for a period of two years.

## Section Two

### General Matters

#### *Faith Promise Program*

Much has been heard in some religious circles of Faith Promise Giving. It is the concept of giving promoted especially by the well-known pastor from Toronto, the Rev. Oswald Smith. In several of our congregations this method of giving for missions has been adopted and in every instance it has proven to be a great blessing for both the congregation itself and the work of the kingdom. While many congregations have found the rising quota for the various church agencies becoming a burden the concept of giving cultivated through the Faith Promise method has awakened a new joy in sharing. We would appreciate having a time set aside during the sessions of synod when this concept of giving may be explained before synod. We are ready to provide the information and commentary at the given time. This is not meant to be a promotional thrust just for foreign missions. The board believes this concept of giving can become a blessing for the entire church body.

#### *Church Relations*

The number of churches participating in the special missionary support program continues to increase. A list of the calling and/or supporting churches under their respective classes is a subsequent part of this report. Since the synodically approved budget is only 36% supported by the synodically approved per family quota, we are eager to include more and more churches in the support program. We are grateful for the several churches willing to take on this added responsibility and we hope others will join them in these support relationships with missionary personnel abroad.

Closely allied to the special missionary support program is the faith promise stewardship plan, a plan adopted by several churches to undergird their missionaries with prayer and gift. The number of congregations involved is steadily on the increase. Mission emphasis weeks, coupled with the faith promise commitment, have been held for the first

time during the past twelve months in Heritage, Byron Center, Michigan, Cottonwood Heights and Twelfth Avenue, both in Jenison, Michigan and Park Lane, Evergreen Park, Illinois. Others are in the initial planning stages. The results have been nothing short of outstanding as churches have ventured out in the faith promise plan of giving for missions.

A regular program of distribution of information and appeal for financial assistance continues to be followed. We are grateful for the response and trust that many more individuals and organizations within the church will add their contributions in the establishment of a sustained program of giving and praying, so very vital for the ongoing task of reaching out with the gospel around the world.

A Mission Education Tour of the Orient, conducted by veteran missionaries, the Rev. and Mrs. Edward Van Baak, is scheduled for October 2-22, 1973. In every area to be visited, contact with churches, pastors, worshipping Christians, and experienced missionaries has been arranged. To quote from the prepared brochure, "From the industrial centers of modern Japan to the border of the People's Republic of China, the emphasis will be on the Christian witness to the Asian world."

### CALLING AND/OR SUPPORTING CHURCHES BY CLASSES

#### Alberta North

- Edmonton II, Alta.
- Neerlandia, Alta.
- Red Deer, Alta.
- Rocky Mountain House, Alta.

#### Alberta South

- Classis Alberta South
- Granum, Alta.
- Bethel, Saskatoon, Sask.

#### British Columbia

- Abbotsford I, B.C.
- Chilliwack I, B.C.
- Terrace, B.C.
- Victoria, B.C.

#### Cadillac

- Cadillac, Mich.
- Prosper, Falmouth, Mich.
- Lucas, Mich.
- Rudyard, Mich. SS
- Vogel Center, Mich.

#### California South

- Latin American, Anaheim, Cal.
- Arcadia, Cal.
- Bellflower I, Cal.
- Bellflower III, Cal.
- Honolulu, Hawaii
- Ontario, Cal.
- Redlands I, Cal.
- Highland Ave., Redlands, Cal.
- Bethel, Sun Valley, Cal.

#### Central California

- Escalon, Cal.
- Modesto, Cal.
- Ripon I, Cal.
- Moorpark, San Jose, Cal.

#### Chatham

- Chatham I, Ont.
- Essex, Ont.
- Sarnia I, Ont.
- Sarnia II, Ont.
- East, Strathroy, Ont.

#### Chicago North

- Cicero I, Ill.
- Elmhurst, Ill.
- Oak Park, Ill.
- Western Springs, Ill.
- Wheaton, Ill.

#### Chicago South

- Evergreen Park I, Ill.
- Park Lane, Evergreen Park, Ill.
- Roseland I, Lynwood, Ill.
- Oak Lawn I, Ill.
- Kedvale Ave., Oak Lawn, Ill.
- Palos Heights, Ill.

#### Columbia

- Bethel, Manhattan, Mont.
- Manhattan I, Mont.
- Calvin, Portland, Ore.
- Sunnyside, Wash.

#### Eastern Canada

- Kemptville I, Ont.
- Calvin, Ottawa, Ont.
- Zion, Pembroke, Ont.
- Williamsburg, Ont.

#### Florida

- Bradenton, Fla.
- Lake Worth, Fla.
- Calvin, Pinellas Park, Fla.

**Grand Rapids East**

Ada, Mich.  
 Caledonia, Mich.  
 Boston Square, Grand Rapids  
 Brookside, Grand Rapids  
 Calvin, Grand Rapids  
 Cascade, Grand Rapids  
 Eastern Ave., Grand Rapids  
 East Paris, Grand Rapids  
 Faith, Grand Rapids  
 First, Grand Rapids  
 Fuller Ave., Grand Rapids  
 Mayfair, Grand Rapids  
 Mayfair, Grand Rapids SS  
 Millbrook, Grand Rapids  
 Neland Ave., Grand Rapids  
 Plymouth Heights, Grand Rapids  
 Princeton, Grand Rapids  
 Seymour, Grand Rapids  
 Shawnee Park, Grand Rapids  
 Sherman St., Grand Rapids  
 Calvary, Lowell, Mich. SS

**Grand Rapids North**

Coopersville, Mich.  
 Eastmanville, Mich.  
 Alpine Ave., Grand Rapids  
 Arcadia, Grand Rapids  
 Beckwith Hills, Grand Rapids  
 East Leonard, Grand Rapids  
 Highland Hills, Grand Rapids  
 Riverside, Grand Rapids  
 West Leonard, Grand Rapids  
 Westview, Grand Rapids  
 Grant, Mich.  
 Lamont, Mich.  
 Plainfield, Mich.

**Grand Rapids South**

Covenant, Cutlerville, Mich.  
 Cutlerville Hills, Cutlerville, Mich.  
 East, Cutlerville, Mich.  
 Cutlerville I, Mich.  
 Alger Park, Grand Rapids  
 Bethel, Grand Rapids  
 Burton Heights, Grand Rapids  
 Burton Heights, Grand Rapids SS  
 Godwin Heights, Grand Rapids  
 Grandville Ave., Grand Rapids  
 Ideal Park, Grand Rapids  
 Kelloggsville, Grand Rapids  
 LaGrave Ave., Grand Rapids  
 Moline, Mich.  
 Wayland, Mich.

**Grandville**

Byron Center I, Mich.  
 Heritage, Byron Center, Mich.  
 Hanley, Grandville, Mich.  
 Hope, Grandville, Mich.  
 Ivanrest, Grandville, Mich. SS  
 South Grandville, Grandville, Mich.  
 Baldwin St., Jenison, Mich.  
 Cottonwood Heights, Jenison, Mich.

Jenison I, Mich.

Ridgewood, Jenison, Mich.  
 Trinity, Jenison, Mich.  
 Twelfth Ave., Jenison, Mich.  
 Beverly, Wyoming, Mich.  
 Calvary, Wyoming, Mich.  
 Lee St., Wyoming, Mich.  
 Rogers Heights, Wyoming, Mich.  
 Wyoming Park, Wyoming, Mich.

**Hackensack**

Northside, Clifton, N.J.  
 Lodi, N.J.  
 Newton, N.J.  
 Bethel, Paterson, N.J. SS  
 Pompton Plains, N.J. SS

**Hamilton**

Brantford I, Ont.  
 Aldershot, Burlington, Ont.  
 Calvin, Dundas, Ont.  
 Mount Hamilton, Hamilton, Ont.  
 Maranatha, St. Catharines, Ont.  
 Immanuel, Simcoe, Ont.  
 Riverside, Wellandport, Ont.

**Holland**

East Saugatuck, Mich.  
 Graafschap, Mich.  
 Hamilton, Mich.  
 Bethany, Holland, Mich.  
 Calvary, Holland, Mich.  
 Central Ave., Holland, Mich.  
 Fourteenth St., Holland, Mich.  
 Harderwyk, Holland, Mich.  
 Holland Heights, Holland, Mich.  
 Maple Ave., Holland, Mich.  
 Maranatha, Holland, Mich.  
 Montello Park, Holland, Mich.  
 Niekerk, Holland, Mich.  
 Ninth St., Holland, Mich.  
 Park, Holland, Mich.  
 Prospect Park, Holland, Mich.  
 Providence, Holland, Mich.  
 Noordeloos, Mich.  
 Pine Creek, Mich.  
 South Olive, Mich.  
 West Olive, Mich.

**Hudson**

Midland Park, N.J.  
 Midland Park, N.J. SS  
 Paterson IV, N.J.  
 Rochester, N.Y.  
 Pleasant St., Whitinsville, Mass.  
 Calvin, Wyckoff, N.J.

**Huron**

Kitchener I, Ont.  
 Owen Sound, Ont.

**Illiana**

De Motte I, Ind.  
 Highland I, Ind.  
 Highland II, Ind.  
 Bethel, Lansing, Ill.  
 Lansing I, Ill.

- Oak Glen, Lansing, Ill.  
 Munster, Ind.  
 Bethany, South Holland, Ill.  
 Cottage Grove, South Holland, Ill.  
 South Holland I, Ill.  
 Peace, South Holland, Ill.
- Kalamazoo**  
 Battle Creek, Mich.  
 Alamo Ave., Kalamazoo, Mich.  
 Comstock, Kalamazoo, Mich.  
 Kalamazoo I, Mich.  
 Grace, Kalamazoo, Mich.  
 Milwood, Kalamazoo, Mich.  
 Parchment, Kalamazoo, Mich. SS  
 Prairie Edge, Kalamazoo, Mich.  
 Kalamazoo III, Mich.
- Lake Erie**  
 Akron, Ohio  
 Parkview Heights, Cincinnati, Ohio  
 Maple Heights, Cleveland, Ohio  
 Dearborn, Mich.  
 East Lansing, Mich.  
 Community, Saginaw, Mich.  
 North Hills, Troy, Mich.  
 Willard, Ohio
- Minnesota North**  
 Brandon, Man.  
 Bunde, Minn.  
 Community,  
 East Grand Forks, Minn. SS  
 Ermo, Ont.  
 Pease, Minn.  
 Prinsburg, Minn.  
 Raymond, Minn.  
 Ernden, Renville, Minn.  
 Bethlehem, Thunder Bay, Ont.  
 Kildonan, Winnipeg, Man.
- Minnesota South**  
 Chandler, Minn.  
 Edgerton I, Minn.  
 Hills, Minn.  
 Holland, Minn.  
 Holland Center, S.D.  
 Ebenezer, Leota, Minn.  
 Luverne, Minn.  
 Pipestone, Minn.  
 Volga, S.D.  
 Worthington, Minn.
- Muskegon**  
 Ferrysburg, Mich.  
 Fremont I, Mich.  
 Fremont I, Mich. SS  
 Fremont II, Mich.  
 Trinity, Fremont, Mich.  
 Trinity, Fremont, Mich. SS  
 Grand Haven I, Mich.  
 Grand Haven II, Mich.  
 Allen Ave., Muskegon, Mich.  
 Bethany, Muskegon, Mich.  
 Calvin, Muskegon, Mich.  
 East, Muskegon, Mich.
- Green Ridge, Muskegon, Mich. SS  
 New Era, Mich.  
 Reeman, Mich.  
 Spring Lake, Mich.  
 Spring Lake, Mich. SS
- Northcentral Iowa**  
 Austinville, Iowa  
 Holland, Iowa  
 Kanawha, Iowa  
 Wellsburg I, Iowa  
 Wellsburg II, Iowa. SS  
 Woden, Iowa
- Orange City**  
 Hull I, Iowa  
 Ireton, Iowa  
 Orange City I, Iowa  
 Calvary, Orange City, Iowa  
 Sanborn, Iowa  
 Sheldon, Iowa
- Pacific Northwest**  
 Trinity, Anchorage, Alaska  
 First, Everett, Wash.  
 Everson, Wash.  
 Bethel, Lynden, Wash.  
 Lynden I, Wash.  
 Lynden III, Wash.  
 Monroe, Wash.  
 Mount Vernon, Wash.  
 Sumas, Wash.  
 Community, Tacoma, Wash.
- Pella**  
 Cedar, Iowa  
 Trinity, Iowa City, Iowa  
 Leighton, Iowa  
 Bethel, Oskaloosa, Iowa  
 Calvary, Pella, Iowa  
 Faith, Pella, Iowa  
 Pella I, Iowa  
 Pella II, Iowa  
 Sully, Iowa
- Quinte**  
 Maranatha, Belleville, Ont.  
 Rehoboth, Bowmanville, Ont.
- Rocky Mountain**  
 Denver I, Colo.  
 Denver II, Colo.  
 Rehoboth, N.M.  
 Immanuel, Salt Lake City, Utah
- Sioux Center**  
 Doon, Iowa  
 Lebanon, Iowa  
 Calvin, Rock Valley, Iowa  
 Rock Valley I, Iowa  
 Bethel, Sioux Center, Iowa
- Toronto**  
 Barrie, Ont.  
 Brampton II, Ont.  
 Orillia, Ont.  
 Grace, Scarborough, Ont.
- Wisconsin**  
 Delavan, Wis.

Kenosha, Wis.	Hillcrest, Hudsonville, Mich.
Brookfield, Milwaukee, Wis.	Immanuel, Hudsonville, Mich.
Oostburg I, Wis.	Messiah, Hudsonville, Mich.
Randolph II, Wis.	Jamestown, Mich.
Waupun I, Wis.	Oakland, Mich.
<b>Zeeland</b>	Overisel, Mich.
Allendale I, Mich.	Bethel, Zeeland, Mich.
Allendale II, Mich.	Zeeland I, Mich. SS
Borculo, Mich.	Haven, Zeeland, Mich.
Drenthe, Mich.	Zeeland III, Mich.
Hudsonville I, Mich.	Zutphen, Mich.

### *Recruitment and Orientation*

The call to missionary service overseas continued to appeal during 1972 to a large number of people who were willing to devote their talents and energies to the cause of foreign missions. Some thirty-three new missionaries were appointed during the course of the year. This large addition to our work force overseas strengthened our outreach during the year and we were able to fill various posts that had been understaffed previously.

We are particularly thankful that we received acceptances from seven ordained men who are now all engaged in missionary ministries overseas. This had been our greatest unmet need as far as personnel is concerned for several years. Particularly Argentina felt the lack of ordained men for its staff. While during 1971 all five calls issued to Argentina were declined, during 1972 two of the four calls issued for that field were accepted. In addition we were able to place ordained men in Puerto Rico, the Philippines, Nigeria, Guam and Mexico.

The response from laymen during 1972 was also very rewarding. We were able to fill requests from our fields in the areas of lay evangelism, the healing arts, teaching and aviation.

While new missionaries arrived on nine of our fields worldwide during 1972, the greatest influx as usual, occurred in Nigeria. The favorable attitude with respect to visa acquisition gave us new hope for our ongoing ministry there. Ten new missionaries began service in Nigeria during the course of the year, while several veterans of the work returned home to a well deserved retirement.

Several volunteer workers entered into appointment during the course of the year. Currently volunteers are serving with our missions in Argentina and Mexico, while several short-term appointees are engaged in Japan and Nigeria. This avenue of service appeals to young people who are seriously considering a career in missions. Certain professional people who feel unable to make a long-term career in missions are, however, able to support the missionary enterprise through offering themselves for several months of work on a mission field. For example, in Mexico, volunteers are at work in the areas of lay evangelism, film ministry, Christian school teaching and field treasurer.

At the present time the board is seeking to fill twelve vacancies in the Foreign Missions fields. Ordained men continue to be the most crucial personnel needs at present. Thus the work of recruiting continues to be significant, involving the initial contact, interviews, physical and psycho-

logical examination, and orientation before departure to the field. For in-service orientation a Missionary In-Service Conference was held for the first time during 1972. This conference was attended by nearly all the missionaries home on furlough and the results were so favorable that additional conferences are planned. This conference indicates the necessity of orientation to mission work both at the beginning of one's career and during the course of missionary service. Another aspect of the orientation program involves the up-dating of the field libraries which have now been established on four of our fields. Thus orientation to the field to be served continues to be an important aspect of preparation, involving area studies as well as interviews with missionaries home on furlough and members of the office staff.

### Section Three

#### Far East

National boundaries conveniently segment the Far East. Japan, Taiwan, Philippines, Guam and Australia have no areas of overlap. Between them there is minimal cultural interchange.

Throughout the Far East, however, there is a very large group of people, the overseas Chinese, whose ethnic and cultural associations remain strong and cross all national boundaries. These people are estimated at some 30,000,000. They look to the mainland of China as their rallying point. That land has a government which concerns these overseas Chinese: some love it, some fear it, some see it as their greatest hope, and some see it as their nemesis.

Therefore in Hong Kong, Singapore, Indonesia, the Philippines, and especially Indochina new allegiances are going to be drawn in the months and years to come. The ending of wholesale hostilities in Indochina, the withdrawal of western military power, the new or renewed diplomatic relationships between Asia and the West, the expansion of trade between the People's Republic of China and Canada and the United States—all these will affect the lives of the 30,000,000 overseas Chinese, and the Asian nations in which they live.

Realignment in the Far East took place suddenly and thoroughly in 1972. A new Asia perspective was born. For the Christian mission this means crisis, which the Chinese define as "dangerous opportunity." The crisis is opportunity because vast segments of the world's population are suddenly reopened to influences from the rest of the world, and sooner or later, in one way or another, the influence of the Gospel of Jesus Christ will also be felt by the Chinese people. The crisis is dangerous for those who will be influenced, because the Gospel changes lives and the society in which changed lives are lived.

There was a triumph of the grace of God in Asia in the past year, as certainly exercised over the rulers of the nations as in former days when Pharaoh, Darius, Nebuchadnezzar, and Caesar did the bidding of the Lord. *That* this shall work out for the progress of the Gospel cannot be doubted: *how* it shall be utilized by the Spirit remains as yet to be seen in the unfolding of the scroll of history.

Christian Reformed missions are at work in five countries in Asia. The major concerns of these missions are church planting, the development of a Reformed national church, the encouragement of theologically competent national leadership, and such ministries as will contribute to the establishment of the national church.

## Japan

In the oldest of the Asia missions, gathering congregations is still the focus of the work. Inage (Rev. Michiel De Berdt) and Takesato (Rev. Richard E. Sytsma) are the names added to the growing list of areas in which churches will be found proclaiming the Reformed faith. Kohoku New Town was chosen for future work by the Rev. Raymond Hommes. The Rev. Ronald De Young is now choosing his future location. A chapel was decided upon in Kohokudai under the direction of the Rev. Richard D. Sytsma. There is continued progress in the posts at Aobadai (Rev. Maas Vander Bilt), Kamakura (Dr. Harvey Smit), Takashimadaira (Dr. John Timmer), Hanamigawa and Katsutadai (Rev. William J. Stob), and Chishirodai (Rev. Michiel De Berdt). Church planting evangelism by the Christian Reformed Japan Mission has produced fifteen other congregations now affiliated with the Reformed Church in Japan.

Nowhere in Japan does the church show spectacular growth, so there is praise to God that the Reformed Church in Japan shows a gradual growth. Stagnancy is not a problem, but patience with the rate of growth is a concern for the pastors who long for greater numerical impact on Japan's society. Secularization in Japanese society increases as Japan becomes a major international competitor. A united church voice has been raised against the nationalization of the Yasukuni (Shinto) Shrine to the war dead, with the RCJ taking an active leadership role. RCJ pastors have been leaders in Bible translation. Church planting has been a successful RCJ activity, stimulated by the almost friction-free mission-church relationships established by the RCJ. Within the RCJ there is a committee for overseas missions, and this committee intends to send the Rev. Irfune to Indonesia in 1973.

Both the mission and the church have stressed good theological education. Kobe Reformed Seminary is wholly operated by the Reformed Church in Japan, receiving help only to the extent of part-time foreign teachers, occasional lecture series by visiting professors from overseas, and assistance in library development. Dr. Harvey Smit is teaching ethics and apologetics on a commuting basis and is thus exhibiting the continued interest of the mission in the leadership produced at Kobe Seminary. Every church thus far established by the mission has called its pastor from among Kobe Seminary graduates.

The advantage of having a number of supportive ministries was stressed when the value of the dollar declined some 37% within fourteen months, increasing costs both to missionaries and the mission budget by that amount. The financial crisis can be anticipated, but cannot be avoided. Ministries involving less capital expenditure have been developed in past years; student evangelism (the Rev. Gerrit Koedoot and

seminary interns Mr. John Ouwinga, Mr. and Mrs. Philip De Jonge), itinerant evangelism (the Revs. Dick Kwantes and Maas Vander Bilt), and the successful radio evangelism efforts directed by the Rev. Henry Bruinooge. Further study of Coffee House evangelism has been assigned to the Rev. Ronald Hempel. The Christian Academy in Japan provides education for missionary children, and fully supported staff members are Dr. and Mrs. Martin Essenburg and Mr. and Mrs. John De Hoog. Other Christian Reformed Church personnel supported by the school rather than the mission are Miss Norma Siebenga and Mr. and Mrs. John Kooiker.

### Taiwan

Progress was made in fulfilling plans for further church planting when a new post was begun by the Rev. Alvin Machiela in the city of Kaohsiung at the southern extremity of Taiwan. This is urban evangelism in an industrial environment, an example of bringing the Gospel to the masses who are being enmeshed in the industrial revolution which is making whole new cities and a whole new way of life for the one million people of Kaohsiung. Chapels in the Taipei area continue under the direction of the Rev. Kenneth Van De Griend (Jing Mei and Sung Shan), the Rev. Mike Vander Pol (Pu Hsin) and the Rev. Peter Tong (Hsin Tien). These men also supervise chapels at Villa II and Shwei Nan Tung for the New Zealand Reformed Churches. Chang Tua in central Taiwan will be the post of the Rev. William Kosten when he returns from furlough this year.

The Christian Reformed Mission has worked with the New Zealand, Korean, and Orthodox Presbyterian missionaries in establishing four congregations in the first Presbytery of the Reformed Presbyterian Church on Taiwan. The four pastors of the presbytery and the missionary advisors are discussing the basis and occasion for ordination of additional pastors for the Presbytery. Pastor candidates are providentially available, and the Presbytery is seeking to establish standards for ordination.

No school of Reformed theology exists on Taiwan. The mission is alert to the possibilities of sending men to the China Evangelical Seminary, formed by a number of evangelical churches and missions who cannot maintain independent seminaries. All of these missions face the paucity of candidates for the Gospel ministry. There is some encouragement in the development of a School of Graduate Studies in Hong Kong, staffed entirely by Chinese scholars, some of whom have been associated with Presbyterian and Reformed schools in the past. This school hopes to begin in 1975.

The Rev. Peter Tong continues his efforts in radio evangelism, his broadcast being sent both to Taiwan (local broadcasting stations) and the China mainland, from FEBC facilities in Manila. The Rev. Mike Vander Pol has a broadcast of Bible studies in English. The Rev. Dennis Mulder supervises literature distribution, and has recently been assigned to be Campus Minister at Kaohsiung Medical College in a min-

istry which will involve a closer contact with the Taiwan Presbyterian Church.

### Philippines

Major occurrences in the experience of the Philippine Mission were the disastrous floods in the Manila area, the opening of the Manila Post by the Rev. Dick C. Bouma and his family, the declaration of martial law (still in force), and the arrival of two new missionary families. Among the congregations already in existence, the church in Pulupandan began use of the parsonage behind the new church building, a great assist to the work of Mr. and Mrs. Vicente Apostol. Mr. Apostol also supervises the church in Bago City. In Bacolod City the Rev. Barry Blankers has stimulated the church to capacity attendance and worship and participation in outreach in the city. Manila is now the site of gathered groups in White Plains, Tala Leprosarium, and a suburban area called San Francisco De Monte. The Rev. and Mrs. Dick Bouma began these activities in 1972, joined later in the year by the Rev. and Mrs. Robert De Vries, working primarily in language study.

A national church of Reformed character has not yet been organized. The groups developing now have increased in numbers, have solid prospects of theologically trained Filipino leadership, and have received guidance and encouragement toward self-support from the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee workers in the mission. No timetable for organization exists, but the event of an organized church lies within the foreseeable future.

The Reformed Institute of Theology in Bacolod City has begun operating on a day school basis, with about twenty students enrolled, and including most of the missionaries and their wives on the staff of the school. There is also a strong interest in practical application of the students' training in the evangelistic work of the mission. The Rev. Henry De Vries is coordinating the curriculum and the teaching assignments.

The World Relief Committee is supporting missionaries to the Negros Island area of the mission. Mr. and Mrs. William Fernhout arrived in 1972 to begin projects in health and hygiene, and are already working with the church in Pulupandan. Mr. and Mrs. Fred Schuld continue their efforts in agriculture, animal husbandry, and self-help cottage industry projects, in an attempt to raise the income levels and skills of those who participate in the programs.

### Guam

There is one congregation on Guam, but it ministers to several distinct groups. Worship services are attended by native Guamanians, Micronesians from other islands, American servicemen, temporary employees from the mainland, contract workers from Korea, Japanese tourists, and some people who have permanently settled on Guam. The church is organized with elders and deacons, and recently bridged a language barrier by calling a Korean pastor to minister to men in the building trades under contract to Korean employers.

The able pastor of the congregation is the Rev. Henry Dykema. Because Guam is an American island and the needs of the pastorate can be filled by men from the Christian Reformed Church, little attention was previously given to theological education on Guam. Changing circumstances have been observed by missionaries Dykema and Schuring in visits to Ponape and other islands, and the possibility of using personnel and facilities of the Guam Mission for pastor and evangelist training cannot be overlooked.

Guam has also benefited from the support ministries which have been developed to aid the outreach of the church. The Faith Bookstore managed by Mr. Conrad Douma has increased its activity in 1972 by an even greater margin than in previous years. All three missionaries participate in the *Call to Faith* radio ministry which is heard twice daily on the Guam radio station. The missionaries are active in civic affairs, with particular responsibility resting in the Rev. Henry Dykema's membership on the Guam school board.

The arrival of the Rev. and Mrs. John Schuring in 1972 helped the progress of the Hospitality House which had been previously served by Seminary Intern Mr. and Mrs. Bruce Bode. A full program of hospitality to students and servicemen is an extremely taxing ministry in terms of physical energy, but has also been notably successful in terms of spiritual responses from those using the facilities.

### Australia

Though the Reformed Churches of Australia are small in a land that is very secularized, it is a denomination with great sensitivity to its calling in Australia. It has further provided the church-home context for many of the immigrants from Ceylon, former members of the Dutch Reformed Church in Ceylon. Because the Australian Reformed Church is completely self-sustaining, the seminary professor sent from the Christian Reformed Church is loaned to the seminary in Australia. Since the arrival of the Woudstra family in Geelong in 1972, the talent of Dr. Sierd Woudstra has been fully incorporated into the work of the Reformed Theological College in Geelong. The school has a faculty of four positions, one of which needs to be filled (replacement for Dr. Klaas Runia). Of great encouragement recently has been the enrollment of students from Southeast Asia: Indonesia, India, and hopefully also Ceylon.

The Board of Foreign Missions has given a grant for the development of the church in Canberra, the capital, directed by the mission board of the Australian churches and the Rev. Gerald Hanscamp, their missionary.

Each of the Asia missions has an interest in church planting. It is the focus of the Japan Mission, and in Taiwan and the Philippines. The church on Guam is organized, and the Australian Reformed Church has a home mission program.

The national church in each country is encouraged toward self-determination. In Australia and Guam the churches have an adopted heritage. The Reformed Church in Japan has theological and ecclesiastical maturity. The Reformed churches on Taiwan are in their church infancy, and in the Philippines are yet to be born as a Reformed denomination.

The growth of the national church is somewhat proportionate to the maturity and viability of its leadership training facilities. A trained ministry is essential to the devolution of the mission and emergence of a self-conscious church.

The missions have shown the churches an example of stewardship of talent in utilizing the gifts of the Spirit with which the missionary personnel are endowed. Among the sometimes unsung blessings are the loving labors of the wives of those who preach and teach and manage. The ladies serve in countless ways to support their husbands' ministries, in addition to the difficult task of maintaining a home in foreign surroundings, compensating for frequent lack of educational facilities by becoming teachers to their own children, and stretching budgets based on a declining and fluctuating dollar.

Radio ministry is conducted in all the Asia missions, each ministry adapted to meet the needs of a specific audience, and followed-up by the staff on the field. Literature ministries likewise range from translation to publishing, but especially to the personal ministry of literature distribution, in which the person-to-person nature of the Gospel ministry is emphasized. It is in the person touched by the Gospel personally ministered that the victory of sovereign grace is revealed. These men and women and their families are the real hope for a new Asia.

#### Section Four Latin America

From the missionary viewpoint, Latin America is an exciting area in today's world. After centuries in which Protestantism was bitterly opposed by a wide variety of forces, today most of the doors are wide open and a high degree of receptivity is in evidence among a growing number of people.

Revolution and change are in the air in Latin America. Urbanization is more rapid in this area than in most other parts of the world. Everywhere people are on the move, searching for a better life. In the midst of all this there is an unprecedented openness to new ideas, new ways, and new religious teachings. Degrees of receptivities differ from country to country and between various sectors of the population, but in every country a growing number of people can be found whom God has prepared to listen to the Gospel and receive it by faith.

The peddlers of false gospels are very busy in Latin America. Mormon missionaries are everywhere, and their method of insisting that all young men give two years of volunteer missionary service provides the Mormon Church with a tremendous supply of emissaries each year to comb the cities and towns of Latin America. The Jehovah's Witnesses are busy also, using vast amounts of literature and a system of house-to-house witnessing from which Christian missionaries might well learn some lessons. Marxist propagandizers are active in Latin America also, especially on the university campuses. Judging from the literature which is being produced and the leftist sentiment among most Latin American intellectuals, it seems almost certain that Latin America will be moving steadily

in a Communist direction unless certain radical changes occur in the realms of both policies and religion.

As Calvinists, we feel that we have a particular contribution to make in Latin America. On the one hand, we mean to avoid the kind of "pie-in-the-sky-by-and-by" indifference to social injustices and material needs which often has been associated with a certain type of fundamentalism. On the other hand, we must avoid the Gospel-less activism which is sweeping the ecumenical church world. As a Reformed mission agency we aim at bringing the whole message of Scripture to the whole man, individually and in society, for this is what Latin America so desperately needs. Latin America is not accustomed to this kind of preaching, and it disturbs both fundamentalists and liberals. Nevertheless, we believe that this is the biblical approach and the one to which we as a board are committed.

### Argentina

Political unrest and economic crisis have been part of the Argentina scene for some time, and the deteriorating social conditions in which many Argentines live have had their effect on the outlook of the entire nation. Missionaries are called upon to join heart and hand in ministering in Argentina and this constitutes one of the great challenges to Christian endeavor in this country today.

Our missionaries are located in the following areas:

- Rev. and Mrs. Ramon Borrego, La Plata
- Rev. and Mrs. Raymond Brinks, Olavarria
- Rev. and Mrs. W. Thomas De Vries, Chicago, Illinois (study leave)
- Miss Cecelia Drenth, La Plata
- Rev. and Mrs. John Hutt, Mar del Plata
- Rev. and Mrs. Robert Jipping, Chascomus
- Dr. and Mrs. Sidney Rooy, Buenos Aires
- Rev. and Mrs. Harvey Stob, Buenos Aires (language study)
- Mr. Robert Vander Roest, Olavarria (volunteer)
- Rev. and Mrs. Louis Wagenveld, Comodora Rivadavia

Our Argentina missionary family has been augmented this year by the arrival of the Rev. and Mrs. Ramon Borrego and their two children, the Rev. and Mrs. Harvey Stob, and two-year volunteer Robert Vander Roest. The Rev. and Mrs. Borrego formerly served with our mission in Cuba, and their fluent Spanish and knowledge of Latin America culture have allowed them to begin their work in Argentina almost immediately. At the same time it should be noted that the Argentine field bade farewell to the Rev. and Mrs. Arnold Rumph and their six children who for health reasons have asked to be transferred from Argentina, where cold winters have been a problem to them, to the warmer climate of Puerto Rico. Miss Linda Bulthuis also left the field after fifteen months of volunteer work and the board expresses its gratitude to young people such as Miss Bulthuis who volunteer for short-term service with our mission.

The Argentine Conference reports favorable progress in the work during this past year. Many of the members of the Argentine Reformed Church with which we cooperate are poor and this creates a number of

problems in the support of the national pastors and their churches. Efforts are being put forth to train Argentine workers in greater number and eventually provide Argentine pastoral leadership for the churches.

The Executive Secretary and the Latin America Area Secretary visited the Argentine field during March and enjoyed the fellowship of both the missionaries and the national church leaders. Argentina obviously is going through a difficult period in history, but the needs of the people for the full-orbed Gospel are obvious for all to see and our staff in that country is pressing forward to meet those needs. In that connection it should be pointed out that there are two openings for ordained missionaries in Argentina, and we urge ministers who perhaps feel led to enter missionary service to contact our board with regard to Argentina.

### Brazil

Brazil is the largest and most economically progressive country in Latin America. It has within its borders the last great "frontier" in the Western Hemisphere, the Amazon Bazon which is now being opened up. Three Indian tribes were discovered in Western Brazil this past year, tribes which no one even knew existed. Brazil represents one of the great missionary challenges of our generation.

Our missionary family in Brazil consists of the Rev. and Mrs. Willem Dirksen, Mr. and Mrs. Bernard Oldenkamp, the Rev. and Mrs. Charles Uken, and the Rev. and Mrs. Simon Wolfert. The Oldenkamps joined our staff during the course of this past year. They served earlier as Peace Corps workers in Brazil, and after a short refresher course in the language school in Campinas they have entered into the work in Aracatuba.

Our missionary program in Brazil has focused on the state of Sao Paulo, and includes such cities as Aracatuba, Guararapes, Pereira Barreto, Ihla Solteira, Lins, and most recently Lencois Paulista. Closer relationship and coordination of efforts with the Presbyterian Church of Brazil have received a great amount of attention this year and we are grateful that in Brazil our mission can cooperate with a denomination which is both staunchly Reformed and warmly evangelistic. In this connection it should be noted that the Brazilian church sent one of its theological professors, Dr. Waldir Luz, to Calvin Seminary in Grand Rapids for six months of study, research and writing, and the character and commitment of this man have made a fine impression on all who come to know him. Dr. Luz is preparing the first Portuguese translation of Calvin's *Institutes*.

Brazil is ripe for the Gospel. The Protestant Church in general is growing faster than the overall population. Because of the many evangelistic opportunities open to us, the need for a strengthened staff, and the possibility of appointing a missionary-professor to the Old Testament chair of the National Presbyterian Seminary, our board felt led to endorse the request of our Brazil missionaries for two additional men for 1974, and we commend this matter to synod and to the churches of our denomination.

## Cuba

This year has been marked by new contacts with our workers and churches in Cuba. The Area Secretary has been able to exchange correspondence with some of our workers and they report that the Christian Reformed Mission in Cuba continues to operate despite severe obstacles imposed by the Communist government. Eight pastors are ministering each week in twelve cities on the island. We are watching for the right time to send a visiting committee to the island and our Cuban brethren have indicated that they are eager for such a visit. We should all be praying that the attitudes of the government officials will be changed and that liberty to evangelize and exchange visits with Christians from abroad will soon be restored to the Cuban churches.

## Honduras

Honduras is our newest and smallest Latin American field, but a great deal has been happening in that area in recent months. The Rev. Bernard Dokter and the Rev. Cornelius Persenaire, both of them veteran missionaries from other countries, have divided the work in the Tegucigalpa area between them. The Rev. Mr. Dokter serves as pastor of the downtown congregation and engages in church-planting evangelism in several suburban areas near the city. The Rev. Mr. Persenaire heads up the evangelistic program of the mission in the outskirts of Tegucigalpa and in towns and ranches at some distance from the urban center. Honduras is the most impoverished of all Central American countries. Complete religious liberty and a friendly attitude toward North Americans provide a favorable climate for evangelism. The Tegucigalpa congregation is organized and calls itself the Christian Reformed Church of Honduras. Opportunities for evangelistic growth are many and we expect to see significant progress in Honduras in the next few years.

When the devastating earthquake struck Managua, Nicaragua, on December 23, 1972, leaving 300,000 people homeless, our missionaries in neighboring Honduras immediately became involved. A number of refugees were transported to Tegucigalpa and the Rev. Mr. Persenaire and the Rev. Mr. Dokter immediately began relief and evangelistic work among them. They called for assistance in these efforts from both the Board of Foreign Missions and from the World Relief Committee. In January of this year, the Area Secretary visited the devastated area along with our two missionaries and subsequently the Honduras General Conference recommended to our board a six-month program of missionary and relief work among the earthquake victims of Managua. The mission board adopted these recommendations, and since then a program of word-deed witnessing has been initiated. Mr. Abe Marcus and two seminarians were sent from Mexico to carry out the evangelistic part of the program, and the World Relief Committee has sent to the field medical and social workers to carry on relief activities. A considerable amount of food and medical supplies were also provided, as well as funds for relief supplies.

The Honduras General Conference was placed in charge of supervising and coordinating the Nicaragua program, and various agencies were

asked to give specific services and materials. All of them gladly responded. The *Back to God Hour* immediately took steps to begin broadcasting on Nicaragua stations, with the follow-up being done by our missionary staff. The Evangelical Literature League (TELL) agreed to supply 20,000 tracts and one hundred sets of books for pastors, schools, and churches that had lost their libraries in the earthquake. Gospel Films, Inc., of Muskegon, Michigan, immediately complied with our request to furnish the missionaries with a projector and six evangelical movie films. The Christian Reformed Publishing House gifted five hundred DVBS workbooks and manuals for the use of the Mexican evangelists, and the World Home Bible League contributed more than 5,000 Bible and New Testaments along with 3,000 Correspondence Courses for distribution to the earthquake victims. Our board deeply appreciates the willingness of these organizations to cooperate in this way, for through these joint efforts our workers on the field are able to make the greatest possible impact for Christ among the physically and spiritually hungry people of Nicaragua. Our involvement in Nicaragua officially will come to a close at the end of August, and at that time the Honduras General Conference and our board will reappraise the situation. We feel that at this point our task is to reach as many people as possible in a coordinated word-deed ministry and pray that the Lord will use this emergency situation to awaken many hearts to the Gospel.

## Mexico

Our Mexico field is now over ten years old, and it has enjoyed phenomenal blessing and growth. From small beginnings through converted migrant workers, a fledgling seminary in Mexico City, and one missionary, the Mexico field has grown to a staff of eighteen missionary families and includes not only a seminary but also two Bible Institutes (in Mexico City and Merida), more than one hundred churches, congregations, and preaching points, seven bookstores located in six key cities of the Republic (Mexico City, Merida, Veracruz, Acapulco, Tijuana and Tampico), and a Mass Communications Center in downtown Mexico City where thousands hear and see the Christian message each month through preaching and gospel films.

The missionary family in Mexico has been expanded this year by the arrival of the Rev. and Mrs. Donald Lagerwey and volunteer worker David Vander Schuur. The Lagerweys are presently in the final stages of language study in Guadalajara, Jalisco, and by the end of the summer will be ready for their first regular assignment. Mr. and Mrs. Henry Faber, veteran volunteer workers, have returned to the field for another six-month period of service also.

The most exciting new project undertaken on the Mexico field this year has been the opening of the Oaxaca Training Center in Tlacolula, in the southern part of Mexico. Located in the heart of Indian tribal country, this training center was established by Dr. and Mrs. Hans Weerstra who just recently returned to the field from a two-year study leave, and it is a joint project with the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee. Mr. Duane Bajema, who holds a degree in agriculture, serves as

co-director of the program along with Dr. Weerstra, and the aim of the school is to train Indian church leaders in both the Scriptures and in better agricultural procedures. The close cooperation of Wycliffe Bible Translators is a key factor in the carrying out of the Oaxaca endeavor.

The board acceded this year to the Rev. Gerald Nyenhuis' request to spend part of his time studying toward his doctorate at a Mexican university, and the Rev. Paul Bergsma took over the directorship of the John Calvin Seminary. After the departure of the Rev. and Mrs. John Tuinstra from the field, Mr. and Mrs. Jan Van Ee moved to Merida where Mr. Van Ee took charge of the Yucatan Bible Institute. At the request of conference, Mr. Jack Roeda was sent by our board to the conferences of the Evangelical Reformed Agency in Lima, Peru, in order to participate in the literature discussions at those meetings. Remarkable progress has been made in the Baja California area, where the Rev. Robert Ruis has seen the outstanding growth of several young congregations which he began in that part of Mexico. The same kind of rapid urbanization which is found in many other parts of Latin America also characterizes Mexico at this time, and with these changes come many new openings for Christian evangelism. The significance of urbanization for Christian missions has been highlighted in a recent book written by the Area Secretary, Dr. Roger Greenway. The book, entitled, *An Urban Strategy for Latin America*, is published by the Baker Book House. It deals particularly with urban church planting in Mexico, but the material has significance for our entire Latin American program.

### Puerto Rico

Our Puerto Rico field took two giant steps forward this year with the organization of the first Christian Reformed Church of Puerto Rico in October, 1972, and the ordination and installation of the first minister of that denomination, the Rev. Carlos Ramos, to serve the church in the city of Carolina. The Rev. J. Jerry Pott of our Mexico field, who had much to do with the beginning of our work in Puerto Rico, and Dr. Roger S. Greenway our Area Secretary, were sent to the island to take part in these memorable services and to consult with the missionaries as to the future development of the work.

The Rev. Ronald Sprik is now developing a new congregation in the city of Fajardo, on the eastern end of the island, and the Rev. Marvin Vugteveen is working in Bayamon, outside of San Juan, where a good-sized congregation gathers each Sunday. The work in Bayamon has been blessed to such a degree that larger and more adequate building facilities are now needed and our board has approved the expenditure of \$10,000 in order to enlarge the auditorium in Bayamon. The Rev. and Mrs. Merle Den Bleyker joined the Puerto Rico missionary staff in the fall of 1972, and they will soon complete their language study and will be assigned a specific field for evangelism. Our Puerto Rico missionaries have deep feelings about the importance of grass roots evangelism and church-planting as the need of the hour in Puerto Rico. To that end they urged the board to send a fourth missionary and when the Rev. and Mrs. Arnold Rumph of Argentina made themselves available the board was

happy to arrange their transfer to the island. The Rumphs plan to arrive in Puerto Rico sometime this summer. The Puerto Rico missionaries will also have to bid farewell for at least two years to the Rev. and Mrs. Raul Gimenez, Argentine nationals, who have served our mission as evangelists for the past two years. The Rev. Mr. Gimenez has been granted a leave of absence by the Conference in order to study at the Reformed Bible College in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

### Spanish Literature Committee

Our board endorsed the proposal that a new, quota-supported Spanish Literature Committee be appointed, with membership consisting of knowledgeable representatives from Christian Reformed boards and committees which make use of Spanish materials, and that the administrative jurisdiction of this committee be under the Board of Foreign Missions.

It should be pointed out that there is nothing new about this committee as such, for it has been in operation for over eight years. But the Education Committee of the Board of Publications, under whose wings it previously operated, have expressed the conviction that they are not in a position to continue this operation chiefly because the people who serve on their committees are not personally acquainted with the Spanish language and the needs of the Spanish-speaking world.

Since our board is the largest agency of our church working in Spanish, it seems natural that we should assume the administrative jurisdiction over this work while at the same time serving all the agencies of synod which need and use Spanish materials. In the course of this year, the Rev. Jerry Pott of our Mexico field will be moving into more translation work also, and his services will be available as a translator and consultant.

For some years synod has assigned a budgeted amount of 75 cents per family for the existing Spanish Literature Committee, and as we move in this slightly new direction it is important that this budgeted amount not be dropped.

### Section Five Nigeria

In Africa the celebrated "winds of change" continue to blow as the newly developing nations in that vast continent strive to stand tall and strong. Tremendous conversion movements across Africa are being noted at the current hour as hundreds upon thousands of people change their religious allegiance. Dr. David Barrett of Nairobi in a well-known article has indicated that at the present rate, by the year 2000 A.D. more than one-half of the African population will identify itself as Christian. Estimates of the population at that time near the figure of 450 million. Dr. Barrett estimates that 250 million of these African nationals will hold allegiance to the Christian faith. The church in Africa is currently growing at a rate twice that of the birth rate. And before this century is out there may well be more Christians in Africa than anywhere else in the world, including North America. Thus the center of gravity may shift away from the older sending churches, and the churches that once were the diaspora will now become the heartland.

The ministry of the Christian Reformed Church continues with abundant blessing in Nigeria, the most populous of all African countries, with 60 million people. Roughly speaking one-half of the Nigerian population is Muslim, about 15 million are considered Christian and perhaps an equal adhere to traditional religions. In the valley of the Benue River in central Nigeria, our mission ministers in an area containing well over two million Nigerians.

Our work continues in support of the two national churches which have been raised up by God through our missionary effort in the valley of the Benue, the East Benue Church of Christ (EKAS Lardin Benue) and the Tiv Church of Christ (NKST). These two independent and autonomous denominations now gather for worship in some ninety congregations each Sunday while tens of thousands of other attenders gather in centers in hundreds of villages and compounds.

Today the work for our mission in Nigeria is carried on at seventeen stations and encompasses some thirty-nine separate and distinct ministries. The largest aspect of the work continues to be in the area of leadership training. Fully eight institutions are dedicated to Bible school, pre-seminary or seminary training. The Rev. Timothy Monsma has now been posted to the seminary sponsored by the NKST, the Reformed Theological College of Nigeria, while the Rev. Harvey Kiekoer teaches at the Theological College of Northern Nigeria.

Leadership training through Christian secondary schools and our teachers' training college continues to be a very significant avenue of impact for the future. Our ministry of compassion embraces the work done at our two hospitals as well as at the Benue Leprosy Settlement, the various antenatal clinics and dispensaries, the rural health work, and the midwifery tutoring program. The linguistic ministry and the translation and production of Christian literature, together with the Bible Correspondence Program, touch the lives of many people. The building department and the aviation program provide services which have saved large sums of money and contributed to the efficiency of the work that could be carried out.

The most recent notable developments regarding the Nigeria work are as follows:

1. The liaison committees which replaced the former Nigeria General Conference have now proven themselves in their first year of function. These liaison committees are formed of equal numbers of Nigerian nationals and missionaries. They send recommendations and requests directly to the Board of Foreign Missions office. In this way increasing responsibility for the administration and eventual transfer of the work to the Nigerian churches and Christian community is developed.

2. The RTCN (Reformed Theological College of Northern Nigeria) opened in 1970 and has now admitted its second class. There are now thirty-two students in this school and a sizeable complex of buildings is rising at Mkar Station to house this facility. While the Board of Foreign Missions is not itself engaged in this building program, it has agreed to forward contributions to the NKST Church for this purpose. Two missionaries also serve on the Board of Governors of the school. A Nigerian

graduate of TCNN and Calvin Seminary has recently been appointed to the staff.

3. A Twin Engine Comanche was provided for the mission by a generous gift and it is currently supporting our aviation program. The previous plane was promptly sold, thus enabling our aviation assignments to continue without interruption. The tremendous savings in wear on automobiles, as well as in manhours saved, have demonstrated the value of the aircraft to our mission.

4. Thirty-four new candidates were presented for the ministry in the NKST and EKAS Churches. Five of these candidates are from the East Benue Church and all are graduates of the Theological College of Nigeria (TCNN). Twenty-nine are members of the NKST Church, twelve of them graduates of TCNN, and seventeen are graduates of the Tiv Vernacular Pastor's Training Class.

5. During 1972 a new Nigerian Ambassador to Washington was appointed. This Christian gentleman is familiar with the area of our work and sympathetic to our needs.

6. *Nigerian Harvest*, the definitive volume portraying our missionary odyssey in Nigeria, written by the Rev. Edgar Smith appeared and has received an encouraging response in our constituency.

7. Nigerianization. Our ongoing goal of the Nigerianization of our work was furthered in significant ways during the past year.

- a. The churches have proliferated while the mission has stayed numerically stable. Thus in terms of percentage we have decreased significantly when compared to the total number of people involved in the work.
- b. Christian schools are being erected in increasing numbers by the people themselves. Christian secondary schools are springing up within the confines of several classes in both denominations.
- c. The Takum Hospital Board of Governors was established last year and began to function as the responsibility for this ministry was increasingly turned over to the national Christian community.
- d. The Takum Hospital Nursing Superintendent is now a Nigerian national. The former matron, a missionary, now works under his superintendence.
- e. Mkar Hospital has now arranged for housemen, or interns, to be given their training at the hospital. This effort will hopefully produce Nigerian physicians in the future who may serve their own people.
- f. The Christian youth centers at Gboko and Makurdi have been turned over to the Nigerian Christian community and the missionary posted to a new task. The Rural Youth Work Ministry among the Tiv also has been given over to the NKST to a much larger degree.
- g. The Mountain Tribes ministry previously carried on by the Rev. George Spee is now being transferred to the NKST. A Nigerian pastor has been appointed to this work.
- h. The Religious Knowledge Supervisor, a Nigerian, is now being supported by the NKST Church. In this important role, he visits the

Christian schools which have been nationalized, and supports and encourages the Christian teachers there.

- i. Dispensary supervisors are appointed by the Christian community and oversee the sizable net of dispensaries formerly directed immediately from the Christian hospitals.

Thus the resources of the Christian community are now being increasingly channeled to reach the two million people of the Benue Valley. We continue to be the only Protestant mission with a significant ministry in this entire area. Our current work of leadership training challenges us increasingly so that the ready multitudes may be shepherded. More and more our resources are being channeled from local ministries into more specialized and professional leadership training roles. This is a matter of joy inasmuch as the national churches themselves are now able to perform the basic functions of evangelism and church planting. Our mission continues to maintain a church growth priority, even while the mission of necessity now ministers to an increasingly broad spectrum of Christian concern. In this hour of great blessing upon our mission work in Africa we can point to no human triumph, nor can we suppose that this blessing is cause for relaxation in the face of obvious opportunity. Our mandate is for continuing faithfulness in this hour of the "fullness of time." As one of the pioneers of the Sudan United Mission said, "The future is as bright as the promises of God."

We should do well to mention in this report also the ministry of Dr. and Mrs. Peter Ipema, who are currently stationed in Liberia. Since they were unable to secure a visa for entry into Nigeria, Dr. and Mrs. Ipema were assigned to a ministry among the Muslim community in Liberia. Shortly thereafter the Islam-In-Africa Project, with which we are affiliated in Africa, invited Dr. Ipema to become the General Advisor and Director of Studies for the entire Islam-In-Africa Project ministry in the continent. This involves our missionary in a wide-ranging and continent-wide work. Our board is highly gratified for this opportunity to make a significant impact across the width and breadth of the continent in terms of an outreach to Muslims. We have heartily endorsed this ministry of Dr. Ipema and are grateful for the Reformed witness which he brings to this continent-wide project.

## Section Six

### Finance Matters

#### *A. Treasurer's Report*

The following are concise statements of balance sheets and receipts and disbursements of the various funds at the close of December 31, 1972, as prepared by our auditor. A detailed account of all transactions will be presented to the budget committees of synod.

Christian Reformed Board of Foreign Missions  
Grand Rapids, Michigan  
Gentlemen:

January 31, 1973

We have examined the balance sheet of the Operating Fund, Plant Fund and the Annuity Fund of the Christian Reformed Board of Foreign Missions as of

December 31, 1972, and the related statements of receipts and expenditures for the year then ended, and have prepared these concise statements from the audited report.

*Operating Fund:*

Balance Sheet  
Statement of Receipts and Expenditures

*Plant Fund:*

Balances and Changes in Fund Balances

*Statement of Annuity Fund:*

Balance Sheet  
Statement of Fund Balances  
Statement of Revenues and Expenditures

Our examination was made in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards and accordingly included such tests of the accounting records and such other auditing procedures as we considered necessary in the circumstances. Our examination consisted of a review of the records of the home office and of the reports received from the fields for verification of amounts spent in conformity with field budgets. Certain tests of field funds were also made.

Subject to the limitation expressed in the above paragraph, in our opinion the accompanying balance sheets and statements of receipts and expenditures present fairly the financial position of the Christian Reformed Board of Foreign Missions at December 31, 1972, and the results of its financial operations for the year then ended, in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles applied on a basis consistent with that of the prior year.

Dwight D. Ferris & Company  
Certified Public Accountants

## FINANCIAL REPORT FOLLOWS

CHRISTIAN REFORMED BOARD OF FOREIGN MISSIONS  
BALANCE SHEET  
OPERATING FUND  
DECEMBER 31, 1972

ASSETSCURRENT ASSETS

Operating Cash	\$(88,099.38)
Funds on Field and Advances to Fields	375,100.59
Accounts Receivable - Missionaries	41,711.85
Account Receivable - Other	603.50
Prepaid Pension and Insurance Payments	<u>812.90</u>

TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS

\$330,129.46

OTHER ASSETS

Note Receivable	\$ 1,000.00
Investments	24,401.65
Land Contract Receivable	<u>14,455.81</u>

TOTAL OTHER ASSETS

39,857.46

RESERVED CASH FOR SPECIAL PROJECTS

245,835.43

TOTAL ASSETS

\$615,822.35

LIABILITIES, RESERVES AND FUND BALANCECURRENT LIABILITIES

Accounts Payable	\$ 43,561.48
Payroll Taxes Withheld	1,860.97

TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES

\$ 45,422.45

FUND RESERVES

Approved Projects from Prior Budgets	\$107,000.00
Reserve for 1973 Budget Deficit	111,627.00
Reserve for Special Projects	5,993.82
Reserve for Cuba Missions Funds	21,214.61
Reserve - Nigerian Field Assets	26,386.89

TOTAL FUND RESERVES

272,222.32

FUND BALANCE298,177.58TOTAL LIABILITIES, RESERVES AND FUND BALANCE\$615,822.35STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS AND EXPENDITURESOPERATING FUNDYEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 1972RECEIPTS

Classical Quotas		\$1,385,530.77
Missionary Support		682,639.13
Gifts and Offerings		
Designated Gifts	\$244,371.42	
Non-designated Gifts	116,002.31	
General Missions	145,947.76	
Legacies	64,666.01	
Above Quota Offerings	97,807.80	
Second Protestant Reformed Church Receipts	211.75	669,007.05
Field Receipts		1,081,749.10
Other Operating Income		5,283.43
Interest and Dividends		30,284.52
Sale of Assets		42,000.49

TOTAL RECEIPTS\$3,896,494.49EXPENDITURES

	<u>Operating</u> <u>Expenditures</u>	<u>Capital</u> <u>Expenditures</u>	<u>Total</u>
Australia	\$ 33,024.56	\$ -	\$ 33,024.56
Argentina	112,843.21	34,771.21	147,614.42
Brazil	59,750.61	15,838.93	75,589.54
Cuba	17,963.79	-	17,963.79
Guam	53,995.68	2,000.00	55,995.68
Honduras	35,974.37	9,577.00	45,551.37
Japan	381,564.47	147,714.58	529,279.05
Mexico	379,940.91	25,477.53	405,418.44
Nigeria	2,016,990.38	88,344.44	2,105,334.82
Philippine Islands	55,956.13	5,950.91	61,907.04
Puerto Rico	56,224.48	4,050.00	60,274.48
Taiwan	111,766.06	26,934.96	138,701.02
Nigerian Exchange	31,326.26	-	31,326.26
Administration	122,239.67	970.75	123,210.42
General	203,849.03	1,402.03	205,251.06
Promotion	78,372.30	-	78,372.30

TOTALEXPENDITURES

\$3,751,779.91 \$ 363,032.34

4,114,812.25EXCESS OF EXPENDITURES OVER RECEIPTS\$( 218,317.76)

PLANT FUND  
DECEMBER 31, 1972

PLANT FUND

Land, Building, Furniture and Equipment	\$3,303,071.41
Less: Accumulated Depreciation	<u>900,076.28</u>
<u>PLANT FUND BALANCE</u>	<u>\$2,402,995.13</u>

CHANGES IN PLANT FUND BALANCE

BALANCE - January 1, 1972 \$2,220,098.08

ADDITIONS - 1972 CAPITAL EXPENDITURES

Purchases	\$295,262.90
Gift of Airplane	<u>78,969.44</u> <u>374,232.34</u>
<u>Total</u>	<u>\$2,594,330.42</u>

DEDUCTIONS

1972 Depreciation	\$152,022.07
Sale of Assets	<u>39,313.22</u> <u>191,335.29</u>

BALANCE - DECEMBER 31, 1972 \$2,402,995.13

ANNUITY FUND  
BALANCE SHEET  
DECEMBER 31, 1972

ASSETS

Cash in Bank	\$ 104.09
Savings Account	55,919.63
U. S. Treasury Bond - 4 $\frac{1}{4}$ % (Due May 15, 1974)	6,000.00
Investments - Corporate Bonds	<u>49,138.75</u>
<u>TOTAL ASSETS</u>	<u>\$111,162.47</u>

LIABILITIES AND FUND BALANCE

Annuities Payable	\$ 76,200.00
Fund Balance - Beets Memorial	6,000.00
Fund Balance	<u>28,962.47</u>
<u>TOTAL LIABILITIES AND FUND BALANCE</u>	<u>\$111,162.47</u>

STATEMENT OF FUND BALANCE

FUND BALANCE - January 1, 1972 \$ 9,225.45

ADDITIONS

Interest Earned	\$ 4,257.69
Transfer from Liability Account - Certificates Cancelled	<u>20,000.00</u> <u>24,257.69</u>
<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>\$ 33,483.14</u>

DEDUCTION

Annuity Payments	<u>4,520.67</u>
<b>FUND BALANCE — DECEMBER 31, 1972</b>	<b>\$ <u>28,962.47</u></b>

STATEMENT OF REVENUES AND EXPENDITURESREVENUES

Interest Earned	\$ 4,257.69
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EXPENDITURES

Annuity Payments	<u>4,520.67</u>
<b>EXCESS (DEFICIT) REVENUES OVER EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>\$ <u>(262.98)</u></b>

**B. Budget for 1974**

A complete list of budget requests for 1974 will be submitted to the officers of synod and to members of its advisory committee when synod meets. A summary of these requests follows:

## BUDGET 1974

## BUDGET EXPENDITURES

Administration		\$127,500
General Expenses		218,500
Promotion		84,500
Field Operations:		
Salaries	\$1,390,600	
Field Expenses	2,135,044	
Missionary Medical Expenses	51,050	
Travel and Freight	<u>242,164</u>	
Total Field Operations		\$3,818,858
Capital Expenditures:		
Argentina	10,000	
Brazil	4,000	
Guam	8,000	
Honduras	5,000	
Japan	124,300	
Mexico	25,000	
Nigeria	55,342	
Philippines	2,500	
Puerto Rico	8,000	
Taiwan	<u>15,500</u>	
Total Capital Expenditures		\$ 257,642
Field Expansion:		
Argentina	\$ 3,000	
Brazil	40,000	
Philippines	<u>20,000</u>	
Total Field Expansion		\$ <u>63,000</u>
Total Budget Expenditures		<b><u>\$4,570,000</u></b>

## ESTIMATED INCOME

Quota Receipts	\$1,500,000
Missionary Support and Gifts and Offerings	1,745,000
Field Receipts	1,200,000
Interest, Dividends, Sale of Assets	50,000
From Fund Balance and Released Carryovers	<u>75,000</u>

Total Estimated Income for 1974

\$4,570,000*C. Request for Special Offerings*

We are requesting approval of a \$4,570,000 budget for 1974 and a quota amounting to \$1,500,000 (32.8% of the total amount needed). The remaining \$3,070,000 must be raised through gifts and offerings, missionary support and income derived on the fields. To meet this financial need above quota receipts, it is urgently necessary that the Christian Reformed Board of Foreign Missions be recommended for one or more special offerings.

Therefore, we respectfully request that synod continue the Board of Foreign Missions on the list of denominational causes recommended for one or more offerings during 1974.

*D. Request for Quota*

The board is asking for approval of a quota of \$30 per family for 1974.

**Section Seven****Summary of Items Requiring Synodical Action**

1. Approval of board members and alternates, Section One, B.
2. Election of member-at-large and two alternate members-at-large, Section One, B.
3. Representation at synod, Section One, E; Presentation of Missionaries, Section One, F.
4. Reappointment of Far East and Africa Area Secretaries, Section One, G.
5. Explanation of Faith Promise Program, Section Two.
6. Quota, Spanish Literature Committee, Section Four.
7. Financial Matters, Treasurer's Report for 1972, Section Six, A.
8. Financial Matters, Budget Requests for 1974, Section Six, B.
9. Financial Matters, Request for Special Offerings for 1974, Section Six, C.
10. Financial Matters, Request for Quota, Section Six, D.

Board of Foreign Missions  
Henry J. Evenhouse, Executive Secretary

## SUPPLEMENT 3-A

## CHRISTIAN REFORMED BOARD OF FOREIGN MISSIONS

(Art. 26)

## DEAR BROTHERS:

A few supplemental matters must be brought to synod and we welcome this privilege to submit this report as additional to the materials appearing in Report 3 of the Agenda.

1. **MISSION ORDER REVISION.** The Board of Foreign Missions has felt for some time that the synodically approved Mission Order dating back to 1957 should be thoroughly reviewed and updated. For this reason the board at its 1972 session appointed a Mission Order Revision Committee from among its own members supplemented by others and gave it the following mandate:

A. It was decided to appoint a study committee to revise our present Mission Order with a view to making it up to date.

*Grounds:*

1. The present Mission Order, dated 1957, reflects the missionary situation of that time.

2. Piecemeal accretions since 1957 have weakened the internal consistency of the Mission Order.

B. This committee will be composed of members of the board together with the Area Secretaries and two missionaries retired from the field.

C. This committee is to report the results of its study to the annual board meeting of 1973.

In February of 1973 the board received a report from its committee indicating that there was progress but that it would not be ready for final report until February 1974. However, it is the judgment of the Board of Foreign Missions that synod should be apprised of the fact that this study of Mission Order revision is being carried on and that we do anticipate a final report on the matter at the Synod of 1974.

One of the important factors dealing with mission administration relates to field councils and relationships in administrative matters of denominational agencies. It is the intention of the Board of Foreign Missions to seek the advice and assistance of the Synodical Interim Committee in dealing with these issues before laying them before synod for synodical action.

2. **PENSION FUND FOR UNORDAINED WORKERS.** The Executive Committee of the Board of Foreign Missions took special notice of Report 20 in the Agenda and decided to endorse the proposal of the Unordained Employees Pension Fund and include this endorsement in our Supplemental Report to synod.

3. ADDITIONAL NAMES FOR BOARD MEMBERSHIP. Mr. Wilbert Venema served on our board for a period of five years and it was with great reluctance that his resignation from the board was accepted. Business obligations made this necessary. His withdrawal as a member-at-large confronts us with the need for replacement, and we propose the following brethren for synod's consideration:

Mr. Alvin W. Huibregtse—Mr. Huibregtse was an employee of the Board of Foreign Missions for nearly twenty years. He is now retired. He has had twenty years of teaching experience in our Christian School system before serving in this mission office. Has served both as a deacon and elder in various congregations. He is a member of the Twelfth Avenue Christian Reformed Church of Jenison, Michigan.

Mr. Douglas Bonnema—Mr. Bonnema is a member of the Heritage Christian Reformed Church in Byron Center, Michigan. He is a Calvin College graduate; is engaged in professional surveying business; has been in the consistory and is active in the missionary promotion of his church.

Board of Foreign Missions

Henry J. Evenhouse, Executive Secretary

## REPORT 4

## CHRISTIAN REFORMED BOARD OF HOME MISSIONS

(Arts. 28, 29, 40, 83)

DEAR BROTHERS:

## I. INTRODUCTION

Any attempt to assess the program of the denominational home mission effort for 1972 would have to note that its most obvious feature is "growth" with all its resulting changes. Perhaps the most basic "growth" change is the aroused consciousness of our Christian Reformed membership to their individual and communal calling to witness as citizens of God's kingdom to what they are—where they are. These are the first-fruits of Evangelism Thrust, and for this we thank God.

In the '60's, to plan the work of home missions meant to decide which one of many fields requesting that a new church be started should receive denominational help. Today the migration of Christian Reformed people out of areas of Christian Reformed concentration has lessened and the number of requests has declined. The former question: "Where can we start a new church?" is less frequently asked. Now the question is: "Who are we and what is our mission—where we are?"

Certainly the Holy Spirit has been working change within the church; yet he continues to move and work and reach out through the Word. We are all grateful for the evidence of marvelous changes brought about in the past year in the lives of so many individual souls of every social class and race in North America. Through the instrumentality of our home missionaries and all their disciples, many were brought out of darkness into God's glorious light. At least 1300 home missionary reports were submitted in 1972. They detail hundreds of vital contacts through which God worked with power to bring his own into the fellowship of the redeemed. Praise God for that, as well as for the thousands of unreported encounters in which the Gospel of Christ has been mediated in word and deed.

Change has also been much in evidence in the staff of the Board of Home Missions. In early fall, the Rev. Nelson Vanderzee, who had served faithfully as Field Secretary of Home Missions for eight years, left the staff to return to the parish ministry. Then in December, the Rev. Marvin Baarman vacated the position of Executive Secretary of Home Missions. The Rev. Mr. Baarman was affiliated with our home missions endeavor for over sixteen years; he served as Executive Secretary twelve years. It was his leadership that brought the program of our home missions to where it is today. Our denomination shall continue to be deeply grateful for his vision and tireless service.

In addition to these changes in home missions' staff, Home Missionaries on General Assignment have been engaged to work in closer contact with our classes and churches as these bodies initiate and supervise the home missions work.

As we look to the future, we expect that the developing patterns will bring continuing change. The emphasis of your home missions agency will be to strengthen the development of the "field-churches" begun in the former era and to *help them, and to help all our churches*, answer and respond to the new mission challenges in faithfulness to the Word of God. The prime thrust of the denomination will become more and more evangelization, less and less "church extension" in the old sense. In recognition of this basic trend this report and its recommendations are offered to you.

You are asked to participate in developing new leadership for the team that is dedicated to carrying out this program. You must test and help to guide a board and a staff which is yet feeling its way into its changed function, and probe to see how ready the churches and classes may be to give themselves in active obedience to the mandate of the New Testament to be the body of Christ, where it is, in respect to the unconverted. You are challenged to help the Board of Home Missions find the optimum degree to which presently centralized functions can realistically be reorganized or relocated nationally, regionally, or locally. The revision of central office function in favor of on-field regional men, who live near and work closely with classical committees and the home missionaries in the field, is response to the changed needs.

In the changes of the '70's your prayerful deliberations on the ministry of our church to claim the elect of Canada and the United States for the kingdom of the Changeless One are a necessary part of the campaign.

## II. ADMINISTRATION AND BOARD PERSONNEL

### A. Administration Personnel:

Executive Secretary - Vacant  
 Field Secretary for Indian Ministries - Mr. David W. Bosscher  
 Field Secretary for Urban Ministries - Rev. Duane E. VanderBrug  
 Minister of Evangelism - Rev. Wesley Smedes  
 Volunteer Program Director - Mr. Ellis Deters  
 Director of Communications - Rev. Earl J. Schipper  
 Treasurer - Mr. Gerard J. Borst  
 Secretary for Church Relations - Mr. Stanley E. Koning  
 Office Manager-Accountant - Mr. Howard G. Meyers

### B. Board Personnel:

Classis	Delegate	Alternate	Term Expire
Alberta North.....	Rev. C. Bishop.....	Rev. A. Miedema	1976
Alberta South.....	Rev. H. Wildeboer.....	Mr. J. Havinga	1975
British Columbia.....	Rev. C. Zantingh.....	Rev. P. Kranenburg	1973
Cadillac.....	Rev. P. Hogeterp*.....	Mr. G. Koster	1975
California South.....	Rev. H. Roelofs.....	Rev. L. Dykstra	1974
Central California.....	Rev. E. Marlink.....	Rev. H. Visscher	1973
Chatham.....	Rev. S. Vander Meer*.....	Rev. H. Lunshof	1976

Classis	Delegate	Alternate	Term Expire
Chicago North.....	Rev. W. Witte*	Rev. A. Mulder	1973
Chicago South.....	Rev. R. Hartwell*	Rev. J. Vander Lugt	1975
Columbia.....	Mr. J. Omta.....	Rev. J. Jeffers	1975
Eastern Canada.....	Rev. H. Uittenbosch.....	Rev. J. Klumpenhouwer	1973
Florida.....	Rev. A. Rienstra.....	Rev. E. Tamminga	1974
Grand Rapids East.....	Rev. M. Doornbos*	Rev. P. W. Brink	1975
Grand Rapids North.....	Rev. P. Vermaire*	Rev. M. Toonstra, Jr.	1975
Grand Rapids South.....	Rev. G. P. Holwerda*	Rev. J. M. Hofman	1976
Grandville.....	Rev. H. Hoekstra*	Rev. A. Jongsma	1974
Hacksack.....	Rev. A. Van Zanten.....	Rev. S. Ten Brink	1974
Hamilton.....	Rev. J. Tangelder.....	Rev. G. Ringnalda	1975
Holland.....	Rev. W. Hofman*	Rev. C. Steenstra	1973
Hudson.....	Rev. B. Van Someren.....	Rev. A. Arkema	1976
Huron.....	Rev. J. M. V. Koole.....	Rev. P. Boodt	1975
Illiana.....	Rev. J. Van Ryn*	Rev. R. Vander Ley	1973
Kalamazoo.....	Rev. S. J. Workman*	Rev. R. Klingenberg	1976
Lake Erie.....	Rev. R. Peterson*	Rev. W. Dykstra	1976
Minnesota North.....	Rev. G. Kramer.....	Rev. M. Reitsma	1974
Minnesota South.....	Rev. W. Green, Jr.....	Rev. T. Heyboer	1975
Muskegon.....	Rev. T. Verseput*	Mr. H. Poel	1974
Northcentral Iowa.....	Rev. F. Einfeld.....	Rev. F. Walhof	1974
Orange City.....	Rev. H. De Groot.....	Mr. C. Runia	1975
Pacific Northwest.....	Rev. H. Ouwinga.....	Rev. G. Pars	1975
Pella.....	Rev. R. J. Venema.....	Rev. L. Vander Zee	1976
Quinte.....	Rev. C. D. Tuyl.....	Rev. D. Habermehl	1976
Rocky Mountain.....	Rev. J. Vander Laan.....	Dr. J. Kamps	1974
Sioux Center.....	Rev. J. Botting.....	Rev. G. Heyboer	1975
Toronto.....	Rev. H. Eshuis.....	Rev. W. Van Dyk	1975
Wisconsin.....	Rev. J. Olthoff.....	Rev. R. Uken	1975
Zeeland.....	Rev. H.C. Van Wyk, Jr.*	Rev. E. Los	1973

#### Members-at-Large:

Central U.S.A.....	Mr. J. Fles*	Dr. F. Westendorp	1973
	Mr. R. De Boer*	Mr. M. Van Dellen	1975
	Mr. J. Van Eerden*	Mr. H. Soper	1974
	Mr. W. Peterson*	Mr. E. Berends	1973
	Mr. R. De Vos*	Mr. J. Volkers	1975
Eastern U.S.A.....	Mr. C. Johnson.....	Mr. W. Hommes	1975
Western U.S.A.....	Dr. J. Vander Beek.....	Mr. M. Tanis	1975
Rocky Mountain.....	Mr. E. Begay.....	Mr. E. Benally	1974
S.W. Ontario.....	Mr. L. Batterink*	Mr. D. Velthuisen	1973
Eastern Canada.....	Dr. D. H. Poel.....	Dr. B. Kieseekamp	1975
Western Canada.....	Mr. B. Bolt.....	Mr. G. Monsma	1975

\*indicates members of the Executive Committee

#### C. Officers of the Board of Home Missions:

Rev. W. Hofman, President

Rev. P. Vermaire, Vice-President

Mr. J. Van Eerden, Assistant Treasurer

Mr. G. Borst, Treasurer

Vacant, Executive Secretary

#### D. Sub-Committees of the Board:

Administration Committee: Rev. W. Hofman, Rev. P. Vermaire, Mr. J. Van Eerden

- Evangelism Committee: Rev. S. Vander Meer, Rev. M. Doornbos, Rev. R. Peterson, Rev. S. Workman  
 Campus Ministry Committee: Rev. A. Hoksbergen, Dr. S. Dykstra, Rev. R. Westveer  
 Finance Committee: Mr. J. Van Eerden, Mr. R. De Boer, Mr. R. De Vos, Mr. J. H. Fles, Dr. W. Peterson, Rev. P. Vermaire  
 Fields Committee: Rev. G. Holwerda, Rev. P. Hogeterp, Rev. H. Hoekstra  
 Urban Fields Committee: Rev. W. Witte, Rev. R. Hartwell, Rev. J. Van Ryn  
 Indian Fields Committee: Rev. T. Verseput, Rev. H. Van Wyk, Dr. F. Westendorp  
 Personnel Committee: The Administrative Staff  
 Jewish Ministries Committee: Rev. J. Draisma, Rev. B. Madany, Mr. Huisjen

III. FIELDS DEPARTMENT

A. *Regular Fields*

1. *Departures from the staff:*

Name	From	To
Rev. H. Sprik	Greeley, Colo.	Wayland, Mich
Rev. J. Hekman	Hayward, Calif.	Tucson, Ariz. (Bethel)
Mr. R. Borrego	Hoboken	Argentina (Bd.F.M.)
Rev. H. Post	Kent State U. of Akron, Ohio	Western Mich. U. of Kalamazoo, Mich. Guam (Bd.F.M.)
Rev. J. Schuring	U. of Minnesota	
Mrs. P. Feimster	Manhattan, N.Y.	
Mr. B. Greenfield	Manhattan, N.Y.	
Rev. H. Botts	Detroit, Mich.	Chicago, Illinois
	Community CRC	Pullman Chapel
Rev. A. Ho	San Francisco, Calif. Golden Gate CRC	
Mr. W. De Vries	Wayne State U.	
Intern	Detroit, Mich.	
Mr. J. Tensen	Cochrane, Ont.	
Mr. D. Sieplinga	Manhattan, N.Y.	
Intern		
Rev. D. Van Beek	So. St. Paul, Minn.	Muskegon, Michigan Allen Ave.

2. *Transfers:*

Name	From	To
Rev. H. DeBruyn	Windsor, Ont.	Detroit, Mich. Community CRC
Rev. D. Aardsma	So. Denver, Colo. Ridgeview Hills	HMGMA - Rocky Mt. Region
Rev. P. Borgdorff	Salt Lake City Utah, Immanuel	HMGMA - Eastern Canada
Rev. N. Gebben	Dayton, Ohio Kettering CRC	So. St. Paul So. Grove CRC

3. *Additions to the staff:*

Name	To
Rev. D. Van Oyen .....	Greeley, Colo.
Rev. S. Draayer.....	San Diego Servicemen's Home, Calif.
Miss M. Ribbens .....	Ogden, Utah as Second Staff Person

Miss P. De Jong .....	Salt Lake City, Utah, Immanuel CRC as Second Staff Person
Mr. J. Hagedorn .....	Terre Haute, Indiana as Second Staff Person
Rev. R. Palsrok .....	Honolulu Servicemen's Home, Hawaii
Rev. B. Becksvoort .....	Univ. of Minnesota
Mr. R. Kok, Intern .....	Wayne State U., Detroit, Mich.
Rev. A. Van Heyst .....	Salt Lake City, Utah, Immanuel CRC
Rev. D. Recker .....	Anchorage, Alaska
Rev. J. Hofman, Jr. ....	Denver, Colo., Ridgeview Hills CRC
Rev. V. Vander Zee .....	Hayward, Calif.

#### 4. *Leaves of Absence:*

Rev. R. Vredeveld - presently engaged in a one-year Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) course at Pine Rest.

#### 5. *Vacancies:*

Dayton, Ohio

East Islip, L.I., N.Y. - Rev. Thomas Yff, Stated Supply

Windsor, Ontario - Rev. F. Huizenga, Stated Supply

Jacksonville, Florida - services not yet being held

Cochrane, Ontario

#### 6. *Fields:*

Field	Missionary	Opened	Families	Sunday School	Worship
Akron, Ohio.....	Rev. H. Karsten.....	1963	40	78	124
Anchorage, Alaska.....	Rev. D. Recker.....	1953	30	150	185
Bakersfield, Calif.....	Rev. J. Versluys.....	1967	21	79	90
Bellevue, Wash.....	Rev. F. Rietema.....	1967	38	69	148
Binghamton, N.Y.....	Rev. P. Vermaat.....	1964	42	80	169
Boca Raton, Fla.....	Rev. R. Tjapkes.....	1963	20	11	44
Boulder, Colo.....	Rev. J. Vander Ark.....	1961	31	66	112
Cedar Rapids, Iowa.....	Rev. E. Dykema.....	1969	11	54	50
Champaign, Ill.....	Dr. M. Hoogland.....	1956	13	5	45
Corvallis, Oregon.....	Rev. F. Breisch.....	1969	17	29	48
Davenport, Iowa.....	Rev. S. Vander Jagt.....	1965	25	43	62
Dayton, Ohio.....	Vacant	1961	12	35	56
East Islip, N.Y.....	Vacant	1957	13	48	50
East Grand Forks, Minn.....	Rev. P. Lagerwey.....	1963	23	58	89
East Tucson, Ariz.....	Rev. O. Buus.....	1965	28	60	105
El Paso, Texas.....	Rev. O. Hogan.....	1960	12	26	12
Farmington, Mich.....	Rev. H. V. Ellens.....	1968	39	60	162
Flagstaff, Ariz.....	Rev. W. Heersink.....	1968	16	48	52
Flanders Valley, N.J.....	Rev. C. VanderMeyden.....	1965	32	80	130
Fort Collins, Colo.....	Rev. L. VanEssen.....	1963	36	78	135
Fort Wayne, Ind.....	Rev. E. Holkeboer.....	1969	17	33	63
Fountain Valley, Cal.....	Rev. R. Tadema.....	1965	34	71	103
Fresno, Cal.....	Rev. J. Vigh.....	1963	28	62	74
Greeley, Colo.....	Rev. D. Van Oyen.....	1969	21	37	70
Hayward, Cal.....	Rev. V. Vander Zee.....	1960	29	78	111
Honolulu, Hawaii.....	Rev. C. Van Winkle.....	1967	27	55	106
Indian Harbour Beach, Fla.....	Rev. J. Oosterhouse.....	1959	17	48	71
Iowa City, Iowa.....	Rev. A. Helder.....	1960	42	55	128
Jacksonville, Fla.....	Vacant	1973			
Mason City, Iowa.....	Rev. W. Stroo.....	1960	28	34	82
Norfolk, Va.....	Rev. J. Rickers.....	1962	21	75	75
Ogden, Utah.....	Rev. G. Hutt.....	1958	25	104	97
Olympia, Wash.....	Rev. B. Huizenga.....	1970	14	50	71

Field	Missionary	Opened	Families	Sunday School	Worship
Orlando, Fla.....	Rev. J. Natelborg.....	1959	34	53	129
Portland, Oregon.....	Rev. H. Spaan.....	1965	34	87	109
Quincy, Wash.....	Vacant	1963	24	40	95
Riverside, Cal.....	Rev. J. Rozeboom.....	1960	30	55	100
Salem, Oregon.....	Rev. R. Posthuma.....	1961	41	75	168
Salt Lake City, Utah.....	Rev. A. Van Heyst.....	1960	27	55	100
So. Denver, Colo.....	Rev. J. Hofman, Jr.....	1968	38	95	167
So. St. Paul, Minn.....	Rev. N. Gebben.....	1959	31	44	99
South Windsor, Conn.....	Rev. P. Mans.....	1962	26	62	89
St. Louis, Mo.....	Rev. S. Mast.....	1965	24	83	138
Syracuse, N.Y.....	Rev. F. Bultman.....	1966	16	65	75
Terre Haute, Ind.....	Rev. G. Beerens.....	1960	23	77	121
Tri-Cities, Wash.....	Rev. H. Bouma.....	1969	8	55	56
Wanamassa, N.J.....	Rev. R. Steen.....	1966	16	14	45
Wappingers Falls, N.Y.....	Rev. F. MacLeod.....	1963	24	103	175
Washington, Pa.....	Rev. R. Broekhuizen.....	1963	21	90	88
Webster, N.Y.....	Rev. N. Plantinga.....	1965	24	69	120
Yakima, Wash.....	Rev. B. Niemeier.....	1967	23	48	72
Cochrane, Ont.....	Vacant	1950	12	15	41
Fredericton, N.B.....	Rev. A. VandenEnde.....	1961	18	31	78
Penticton, B.C.....	Rev. J. Versfelt.....	1969	24	17	86
New Glasgow, N.S.....	Rev. J. Binnema.....	1969	22	26	88
Prince George, B.C.....	Rev. A. Groen.....	1957	34	40	94
Windsor, Ont.....	Vacant	1957	15	30	26

### 7. *Fields becoming a calling church during 1972:*

New Brighton, Minnesota

### 8. *Home Missionaries on General Assignment:*

West Coast - Rev. Gerrit Boerfyn

Rocky Mountain - Rev. Dirk Aardsma

Canada - Rev. Peter Borgdorff

### 9. *Observations and Comments:*

The listing above gives information regarding families. This figure is the count of families as of December 31, 1972. The figure "Worship" indicates the average attendance at the morning service during the year.

The home mission churches have Sunday services, plus an outreach into the community which indicates one or more of the following: radio broadcast, TV broadcast as in Anchorage, rest home ministry, services in jails, prison farms, hospitals, week-day Bible Clubs, service organizations, community action committees, block captain programs, and a mailing ministry.

All fields have community families in attendance who are not yet members. In several instances our mission churches have more families who are regular visitors than member families.

Generally the mission churches listed have a high percentage of people who come from no church background, or from non-Christian Reformed Church backgrounds.

The Sunday School and Daily Vacation Bible School occupy a large place in the program of the mission church. Frequently the small home mission church has a larger Sunday School than the large church. The

SWIM program and the VBS combine to make contacts in the community.

### *B. Indian Fields:*

In reflecting on a variety of things which took place under God's blessing in the area of Indian missions this past year, there is one emphasis or goal which has been particularly important. Specifically this concerns those areas or things in which the Indian Christians and churches have been encouraged and perhaps challenged to assume greater responsibility and involvement. Categorize these as related to "self-determination," "indigenization," or whatever—by design we have been attempting to assist in making this process a reality for the Indian people we serve. The following examples are illustrative of these efforts.

#### *Council of Indian Churches*

One year ago the Board of Home Missions endorsed the concepts expressed in the "Guidelines for the Council of Indian Churches." Subsequently, synod and Classis Rocky Mountain also endorsed those guidelines. January 27, 1973 was truly an historic occasion. Not only was this the day the Peace Treaty was signed ending the conflict in Viet Nam. It was also the day of the organizational meeting of the Council of Indian Churches. Indian General Conference which functioned for so many years no longer exists. Whereas IGC was comprised solely of missionaries employed by the BHM, the CIC includes three delegates from each church—the missionary plus two lay members of the congregation. Obviously, in these beginning stages, we do not know just what the future will bring. Yet, the potential for very real "grassroots" involvement is possible and we look forward to God's leading and use in this potentially very effective organization.

#### *Direct Funding*

"Direct Funding" is that policy which hopefully will help the local churches know more realistically how many dollars it takes to carry on their ministry but also to give them the opportunity to make their own financial decisions. Last year four churches formally participated in this plan. Nine churches have indicated their desire to do so in 1973. Based on the experience of just one year, certain adjustments have been made, others may become necessary. Yet, the basic objective appears to be valid and several positive results are developing. As might be expected, this policy is a bit more difficult to implement in those churches having fewer educated people. Additional effort is being made to meet with the local committees and explain the various concepts involved.

#### *Red Rock Church*

Another very delightful and truly significant illustration of "self-determination" involved the church at Red Rock, Arizona. You've already heard the story as told by Mr. B. Garnanez on the small record, "Listen to the Heart of a Navajo," mailed to each family last December. For many years these Christians had been slowly accumulating money in a building fund—for a church building badly needed. The original

building, bought from the Presbyterians in the early 1900's was quite inadequate and also becoming structurally unsafe. Not wanting to incur a large debt and feeling they had the ability to handle the project themselves, this congregation requested authorization to build a church themselves. An architect from Albuquerque advised them that the old foundation was solid but beyond that they were on their own. Tearing down the old building, constructing the new—with volunteer help from the congregation, the community and some from the Rehoboth Industrial staff—their efforts were rewarded in the form of a very excellent church building dedicated on October 14, 1972. This building is completely paid for and stands as a model to the community and the church of what can be done with that kind of local desire and initiative. Truly, missionary Garnanez and the Christians at Red Rock can be proud of what they have accomplished under God's blessing.

#### *Zuni Mission*

The installation of Mr. Rex Chimoni as head of this church is another illustration of attempts, after much ground work—including involvement by the Zuni Study Committee, to encourage native leadership to assume responsibilities of running that program. We are grateful for the fine cooperation of the staff in this transition—including the role of the Rev. Donald Klompfen in the very process which "displaced" him. Related to all of this, of course, is the personnel policy adopted during the past year, after obtaining input from IGC and others in the field, whereby deliberate effort will be given to placing qualified minority persons in various staff positions whenever possible.

#### *Rehoboth School*

Another item of major significance, again one which will require greater responsibility on the part of Indian parents, concerns the matter of weekend leave at Rehoboth School. Traditionally, boarding students at Rehoboth were permitted to go home only on scheduled weekends—an average of once per month. Changing trends in boarding schools generally—but also efforts to look at ourselves honestly and the type of experiences provided at Rehoboth in an institutional setting—contributed to diligent efforts on the part of many—including the Parent Advisory Board and staff—to see what kind of improvements might be made. During the last school year students were permitted to go home on any weekend that their parents desired, in addition to the scheduled weekends when they were required to go home. That "optional" arrangement did bring certain improvements but also created additional problems. Beginning last fall, a three-month experiment was conducted by the Parent Advisory Board whereby the students were required to go home every other weekend and could still go home on the remaining weekends, if their parents desired. Again, there were positive results of this experiment—as well as certain negative factors. In all of this, the major goal on the part of ourselves and the school administration is to develop a policy that will truly make it possible for parents and local churches to assume the primary responsibility for the spiritual training of their children on weekends, rather than continue to have this per-

formed on the part of an institution called Rehoboth. Building on the experiences of the last two years, the Board of Home Missions again endorsed the concept of a "mandatory weekend leave" and now, on a trial basis for the balance of the current school year, this policy is being implemented. Efforts have been made locally to assist with the transportation problems incurred by those from longer distances. (Implementation of this decision at this time—and not just a bit later—was hastened due to the resignation of our relief house mother at the end of the first semester. Such action makes it unnecessary to fill that position.) Again, while there will be necessary adjustments on the part of everyone concerned—not the least of which involves the local churches in assimilating these students on weekends in a meaningful way—we sincerely hope and pray that this will be one more step in the building of strong Christian families in the reservation area:

1. *Additions to the staff:*

Miss Lois Dyksterhuis to Rehoboth School as teacher  
 Miss Gloria Johnson to Fort Wingate as assistant  
 Miss Sally Kruis to Rehoboth School as teacher  
 Miss Audrey Schouten to Rehoboth School as teacher  
 Mrs. Audrey Schuurman to Rehoboth as assistant to the Minister of Religious Ed.  
 Miss Linda Wiedenmeier to Rehoboth School as teacher/relief houseparent  
 Mr. Bert Benally to Shiprock as assistant  
 Mr. Wm. Greenfield to San Francisco Friendship House as administrator  
 Mr. Carl Kloosterman to Rehoboth School as teacher  
 Mr. Tom Phillips to San Francisco Friendship House as administrator (served three months)  
 Mr. and Mrs. Ron Polinder to Rehoboth as teacher/houseparents  
 Mr. Howard Redhouse to Tohatchi as assistant  
 Mr. and Mrs. Richard Suwyn to Rehoboth as houseparents  
 Mr. Wm. Vander Hoven to Rehoboth School as teacher

2. *Departures from the staff:*

Mrs. Mary Baas (Rehoboth School) discontinued teaching (housewife duties)  
 Miss Marilyn Baker (Fort Wingate) marriage  
 Miss Lolita Benally (Crownpoint) marriage  
 Miss Gretta Bierma (Rehoboth School) other employment (Ft. Wingate BIA School)  
 Miss Trena Dekker (Zuni School) other employment  
 Miss Hermina Nyhof (Shiprock) continue education  
 Miss Audrey Schouten (Rehoboth School) other employment  
 Miss Thelma Vander Ven (Assistant to the Minister of Religious Ed.) Long-term Volunteer service in El Paso  
 Miss Lynn Veenstra (Rehoboth School) other employment  
 Miss Linda Wiedenmeier (Rehoboth School) other employment  
 Miss Gertrude Youngsma (Rehoboth School) marriage  
 Rev. Donald Klompier (Zuni) continue education  
 Mr. Jerry Lineweaver (Brigham City) other employment  
 Mr. Ivan Mulder (San Francisco-Friendship House) other employment (Bible teacher at Pella Christian High School)  
 Mr. Tom Philips (San Francisco-Friendship House) other employment  
 Mr. Jim Veltkamp (Rehoboth School) other employment

The board calls synod's attention to the forthcoming retirement of Mr. Edward Berkompas in July, 1973, having served as a member of the Rehoboth Industrial staff over 25 years. Mr. and Mrs. Berkompas began their service November 1, 1947 under the Board of Foreign Mis-

sions. We give thanks for this family and the faithful service given throughout the years, commending them to God's continued blessing upon retirement.

3. *Transfers:*

Mr. Howard Begay from Tohatchi to Crownpoint  
 Mr. Boyd Whitehorse from Farmington to Church Rock

4. *Fields:*

Field	Missionary	Opened	Families	Sunday School	Worship
Albuquerque, N.M.	Rev. A. Veltkamp	1961	15	33	43
Brigham City, Utah	Rev. E. Boer	1954	10	50	62
Chicago, Ill.	Mr. H. Bielema	1963	7	55	55
Church Rock, N.M.	Rev. P. De Jong		15	55	72
Crownpoint, N.M.	Mr. B. Whitehorse	1913	27	44	55
	Rev. A. Gelder				
	Mr. A. Becenti				
Farmington, N.M.	Mr. H. Begay	1921	12	26	72
	Rev. S. Yazzie				
Fort Wingate, N.M.	Mr. S. Siebersma	1965	14	74	70
	Miss G. Johnson				
Gallup, N.M.	Rev. A. Mulder	1932	39	77	133
	Miss E. Vos				
Los Angeles, Cal.	Mr. F. Bakker	1971	15		
Naschitti, N.M.	Rev. A. Mulder	1924	19	38	91
	Mr. M. Harberts				
Phoenix, Ariz.	Mr. A. Henry	Cook Christian Training School	29	18	46
	Rev. H. Van Dam				
Red Rock, Ariz.	Mr. B. Garnanez	1953	29	18	46
Rehoboth, N.M.	Rev. R. Veenstra	1903	30	70	170
Religious Ed.					
Office (reservation area)	Rev. G. De Velder	— not applicable —			
	Mrs. A. Schuurmann				
Salt Lake City, Utah	Mr. N. Jonkman	1960	not applicable —		
San Antone, N.M.	(Cf. Crownpoint)		5	17	19
San Francisco, Cal.					
Friendship House	Rev. R. Buining	1963	22	34	64
	Mr. W. Greenfield				
Sanostee, N.M.	Mr. and Mrs. C. Dykema	1913	11	9	24
	Mr. F. Curley				
Shiprock, N.M.	Rev. A. Koolhaas	1936	24	84	144
	Mr. C. Brummel				
Teec Nos Pos, Ariz.	Mr. B. Benally	1936		14	78
	Rev. P. Redhouse				
Toadlena, N.M.	Mr. J. Talley	1925	16	49	82
	Mr. G. Klumpenhower				
Tohatchi, N.M.	Mr. F. Frank	1898	17	41	62
	Rev. E. Henry				
Tohlakai, N.M.	Mr. H. Redhouse		11	16	80
	Mr. C. Grey				
White Horse Lake, N.M.					
	Mr. K. Whitehorse	1966	6	52	
Window Rock, Ariz.	Rev. S. Redhouse	1966	44	75	176
Zuni, N.M.	Mr. R. Chimoni	1897	9	36	64
	Mr. D. Wierenga				

5. *Educational Ministry:*

Rehoboth Mission School  
 Mr. Keith Kuipers, Educ. Sup't.  
 Miss Lois Dyksterhuis  
 Miss Mary Feyen

Dining Room/Kitchen:  
 Mr. and Mrs. Lester Dams  
 Miss Nora De Kleine  
 Mr. William Hoekstra

Miss Sally Kruis  
 Miss Mary Kuik  
 Miss Rena Vander Woude  
 Mr. R. David Baas  
 Mr. Eugene Boot  
 Mr. Ted Charles  
 Mr. Carl Kloosterman  
 Mr. Wm. Vander Hoven  
 Mr. John Van 't Land  
 Mr. Thomas Weeda  
 Supporting Staff  
 Houseparents  
 Miss Julia Ensink  
 Mr. and Mrs. Marvin Apol  
 Mr. and Mrs. Julian Baas  
 Mr. and Mrs. Gary Nederveld  
 Mr. and Mrs. Ron Polinder  
 Mr. and Mrs. Richard Suwyn

Mrs. Ann Boyd, Secretary  
 Mr. Steward Barton, Jr., Custodian

Zuni Mission School  
 Mr. Marvin J. Apol, Principal  
 Miss Marla De Jonge  
 Miss Elizabeth Hendricks  
 Miss Lois Landheer  
 Miss Eunice Post  
 Miss Wanda Van Klompenberg

### 6. Industrial Department:

Mr. Edwin Oppenhuizen, Bus. Mgr.  
 Mr. Willie Benally  
 Mr. Arthur Berkompas  
 Mr. Arthur Bosscher  
 Mr. Julius Den Bleyker  
 Mr. Neil Natewa (Zuni)

### C. Urban Missions

#### 1. Fields:

Field	Missionary	Opened	Families	Sunday School	Worship
New York, Manhattan, N.Y. Mission Dept.....	Mr. B. Greenfield.....	1952*	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
Detroit, Mich. (Community).....	Rev. H. DeBruyn.....	1964		50	106
Chicago, Ill. (Hyde Park).....	Rev. P. Han.....	1962		14	76
Hoboken, N.J.....	Rev. E. T. Lewis.....	1964	21		35
Los Angeles, Cal. (Crenshaw).....	Rev. J. Hollebeek.....	1963	18	94	60
Los Angeles, Cal..... (Spanish).....	Rev. C. Nyenhuis.....	1969	21	80	80
New York, N.Y. (Queens).....	Rev. P. Szto.....	1956	30	63	75
San Francisco, Cal. (Golden Gate).....	Rev. P. Yang.....	1965	21	36	135
Miami, Fla. Good Samaritan.....	Rev. F. Diemer..... Mrs. B. Izquierdo.....	1960	26	112	122

\*Mission Dept. phased out as of December 12, 1972.

### D. Servicemen's Ministry:

Anchorage, Alaska - Rev. D. Recker  
 El Paso, Texas - Rev. O. Hogan  
 Honolulu, Hawaii - Rev. R. Palsrok  
 Norfolk, Virginia - Mr. R. Klunder  
 San Diego, Calif. - Rev. S. Draayer  
 Seoul, Korea - Rev. J. Heerema

## IV. SUMMARY OF STATISTICS

	Indian	U.S. Fields	Canada	Totals
Adult baptism .....	27	40		67
Infant baptism .....	54	196	15	265
Confession of faith .....	28	159	9	196
Reaffirmation of faith .....	15	130		145

## V. EVANGELISM

The year 1972 has written over it: Evangelism Thrust. This was the dominant theme, demanding so much of the time and the energies of all those who shared in the responsibility for bringing this to our churches. The willingness of so many to work so hard to get the work done, to meet the deadlines, to fill all of the requests that came, to answer all the questions, to respond to the many needs is to be commended. For this we have to thank God.

Now Thrust has become a part of the life of the church. It is our prayer that Thrust will not be just another program but a continuing process to aid the church in her ministry to the world.

A. *Evangelism Thrust - 1972*1. *Work with the Pilot churches*

- a. A seminar was held with the churches of Rocky Mountain Classis at the fall classis meeting. The concern was to measure the progress that was made in goal setting and in review and evaluation. It was evident that Thrust had made a difference to the churches. It was also evident that attention had to be given to the review and evaluation phase for the continuation of the process.

Other needs surfaced which would be significant for the church, e.g. the role of the minister and the role of other leaders in ministry.

- b. Meetings were held with the Inter-Church Planning Committee of Grand Rapids. The sharing of goals the churches set was very beneficial.

Again it became manifest that the setting of goals that are measurable, realistic, and attainable and that reach out to the world is never easy. The tendency seems always to generalize and internalize goals. Assistance is always going to be needed in this. Perhaps an even more simple tool on goal setting will be needed.

Special appreciation has to be expressed to those churches who served the denomination in this pilot phase. Their help was invaluable.

2. *Consultants*

- a. Three solid days were spent at Calvin for training in the Evangelism Thrust process. At least three representatives from every classis—and a few sent more—were present. At least one third were laymen, many of whom took vacation time to be present. Two were women, one from Alberta South and the other from Alberta North.

- b. Following the training the consultants visited most of the churches of our denomination, meeting with consistories, congregations, evangelism committees and others. Many, many, hours were contributed to this important work.
  - c. In many areas consultants were called in to train small group leaders. A special manual had been prepared for this.
  - d. Seminars on goal setting were conducted in those classes which requested them.
3. *Our Churches in Thrust*
- a. Over five hundred of our congregations covenanted to engage in the process of planning and goal setting of Evangelism Thrust.
  - b. Over 100,000 copies of "Called to Serve" were distributed. Our estimate is that between 8,000—10,000 small groups were involved in this study on the nature of the redeemed community in the world. Many testified that if Thrust were no more than these studies, it would have been very worthwhile.
  - c. At the present time churches are involved in goal setting. Some of the early reports on goals set are encouraging. The reminder of the danger to set goals that affect the inner life of the church rather than the reaching out of God's people into the world is necessary.
  - d. The review and evaluation phase will be crucial, most critical. The consultants will be available to assist in this.

Note: It became very clear as Thrust progressed that the leadership given played such a significant role. The minister is still the key person in the church and her life. He can do so much to be the enabler or the neutralizer.

#### 4. *Pastor's seminars*

Thanks to the generous gift of one of our members, seminars on Evangelism Thrust were conducted in over thirty classes of our denomination. The format provided the kind of experiences in which participants

- a. experienced positive community,
- b. examined their styles of ministry and expectations for ministry,
- c. engaged in goal planning,
- d. asked questions regarding Evangelism Thrust.

#### B. *Evangelism Thrust - 1973*

##### *Areas of concern:*

##### 1. *Churches*

- a. That the goals set will be implemented by action and programming. Some sense of success is of great importance.
- b. That the churches will be sharing with other churches of classis re their goals and activities. This mutual encouragement is so essential.
- c. That the phase of review and evaluation and the setting of new goals will be taken with utmost seriousness. The process should not lapse into a program.

## 2. *Consultants*

- a. That the area training sessions for all consultants in March on review and evaluation will aid them to be enablers to the churches.
- b. That the classical Home Mission Committees will reappoint the consultants to continue for another year.
- c. That all board members will remind the churches at classis that the consultants are available to assist in any way.

## 3. *Study Material*

That, working with the Committee on Education, we will have materials available for small group studies. Some progress is being made on this.

## 4. *Key '73*

That our churches will be sensitive to areas where they can work with other churches to make an impact in their community with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. At the present time one of the most viable programs for cooperation is the distribution of Scripture portions and Bible study materials. The presses of the World Home Bible League and the American Bible Society are working overtime in the production of materials.

Note: Many of our ministers and missionaries are serving on local and area committees for Key '73.

## C. *Evangelism Materials:*

### 1. *Evangelism Aids*

- a. Although the emphasis during 1972 was on Evangelism Thrust materials, there continued to be a healthy demand for the booklets, evangelism supplies, and witnessing aids. It continues to surprise us how many of these materials are ordered by other denominations for use in local evangelism programs.
- b. The board has encouraged some changes in "The Way" magazine in order to broaden its appeal and use.

### 2. *Evangelism Thrust Materials*

- a. A major part of 1972 was dedicated to the preparation, production and distribution of Evangelism Thrust materials. The early goal of the Home Mission staff was to have five hundred churches covenant for the year-long process of Evangelism Thrust. All materials were ordered on this basis and even then, a number of reprints were needed due to high demand.
- b. Many of the materials, especially *Who in the World?*, *Called to Serve*, and the Congregational Questionnaire packet, were ordered by churches of other denominations. (Orthodox Presbyterian, Reformed Church in America, Lutheran, Mennonite, Baptist, Methodist.)

It is interesting to note that Wm. B. Eerdmans' Publisher has printed over 45,000 copies of *Who in the World?*, over 100,000 *Called to Serve*, and over 100,000 Congregational Questionnaires. It should also be mentioned that the Back to God Tract Com-

mittee cooperated in the production of three bulletin covers promoting Evangelism Thrust and Key '73.

- c. The manuals in the Idea Series have also been made available to the churches and have received wide acceptance. These serve as an "encyclopedia of evangelism strategies" for local congregations and have received an enthusiastic reception both within our denomination and outside our denomination.
- d. As churches continue to move through the Action Phase and Review Phase of Evangelism Thrust, major efforts will be expended to encourage and help local congregations make Evangelism Thrust to have a permanent impact, especially in the setting of specific evangelism goals in future years. It remains our prayerful expectation that God excite us with the many diverse evangelism goals which he has graciously offered local churches.

Without question, churches will be less and less similar in their outreach programs. This will require a broad range of expertise and materials which we shall attempt to provide. Already now, many congregations are looking to us for study materials, evangelism aids which we will seek to develop during this year.

#### D. *Campus Ministry*

The reports of our campus ministers and the visits to the campus all tell the story that God is doing some good things on the campus. Christians are being equipped to witness more effectively and there are conversions. God has called some very capable men to serve on our campuses. One of the highlights for our men this past year was the Campus Ministers Conference at the Episcopal Retreat House on Lake Michigan. Some items of note:

##### 1. *Campus program grants, 1972-73*

- a. Florida Atlantic State University—Boca Raton, Florida.
- b. Central College—Mt. Pleasant.
- c. Michigan State University—East Lansing.
- d. Northern State College—Cedar Falls, Iowa.
- e. Ferris State College—Big Rapids, Mich.
- f. University of Michigan (Chapel)—Ann Arbor, Mich.

##### 2. *Changes made*

- a. Kent State University—work was discontinued to enable further evaluation. This made possible the work in Paterson.
- b. McMasters University in Hamilton. The Rev. E. Gritter was called and he has begun work on this campus.
- c. University of Minnesota—The Rev. Ben Becksvort was appointed to replace the Rev. John Schuring who accepted a call to Guam.
- d. William Paterson State College (with I.V.C.F.)—The Rev. Ken VanderWall began work in this area in December.

### 3. *Present Campus Ministries*

#### a. *Under Board supervision*

- University of California (I.V.C.F.) Los Angeles, California—Rev. Henry Pott
- University of Colorado, Boulder, Colorado—Rev. Cliff Bajema
- University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa—Rev. Jason Chen
- University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, Minnesota—Rev. Ben Becksvoort
- Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio—Rev. Roger VanHarn
- Purdue University, Lafayette, Indiana—Rev. Dan Bos
- University of Toronto, Toronto, Ontario, Canada—Rev. Morris Greidanus
- Western Ontario University, London, Ontario, Canada—Rev. John Van Til
- William Paterson State College (I.V.C.F.), Paterson, New Jersey—Rev. Ken VanderWall
- University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wisconsin—Rev. Robert Westenbroek

#### b. *Under Grant-In-Aid*

- Central Michigan College, Mt. Pleasant, Michigan—Rev. Maynard Nieboer
- Iowa State College, Ames, Iowa—Rev. Fred Walhof
- McMasters University, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada—Rev. Everett Gritter
- Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan—Rev. Tim Limburg
- South Dakota State University—Rev. John VanEns
- Western Washington State College, Bellingham, Washington (I.V.)—Rev. Keith Bulthuis

### 4. *New Campus Ministries to begin in 1973*

- a. University of Waterloo and Guelph, Waterloo, Guelph, Ontario
- b. Wayne State University—Detroit, Michigan—with Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship (change from internship)

Note: This is a great time for us to be on the secular campus. Many of the students, having found the secularistic and humanistic philosophies unable to answer their questions about life, are searching for meaning as never before. Many are turning to the occult and Eastern religions. The CRC has a message of life and hope and meaning to bring. While many of the major denominational campus programs are fading out because they have nothing to say to students in their search, we should be moving forward. The administrations of the universities are opening the doors to groups like ours as never before.

### E. *Internships*

#### 1. 1972-1973

- a. Ft. Collins, Colorado—Rev. Larry VanEssen
- b. Garfield Park, Illinois—Rev. James LaGrand
- c. Sacramento, California—Rev. Earl Marlink
- d. Sun Valley, Denver, Colorado—Rev. Gordon Negen
- e. Wayne State University, Detroit, Michigan—I.V.

## 2. 1973-1974

- a. Big Rapids, Michigan—Rev. Robert DeVries
- b. Corvallis, Oregon—Rev. Frank Breisch
- c. Ft. Collins, Colorado
- d. Garfield Park, Illinois
- e. Olympia, Washington—Rev. Bart Huizenga
- f. Sun Valley, Denver

F. *Grants-In-Aid*

Oak Harbor, Wash.	\$ 4,000	Provided close review and evaluation during 1973 brings a favorable recommendation for continuing.
Rapid City, S.D. ....	\$ 2,500	
Paterson, N.J.—Madison Ave.	\$10,000	
Ames, Iowa .....	\$ 3,000	
Eastern, Ont. (Seaway) .....	\$ 4,500	
Cadillac Cl. (Mt. Pleasant) ....	\$ 7,000	
Lansing, Michigan .....	\$ 5,000	
Denver, Ill., Colo. ....	\$ 6,500	
Zion-Oshawa (Y.E.S.) .....	\$ 5,500	
Bellingham, Wash. ....	\$ 5,500	
Paterson, N.J.—Bethel .....	\$ 7,500	First Staff Person
	\$ 2,500	Second Staff Person
Vermillion, S.D. ....	\$ 6,000	
Toronto, Ont. ....	\$ 8,000	
Vancouver, B.C. ....	\$ 5,000	(includes \$500 toward expense of summer seminarian)
First Los Angeles—Staff .....	\$ 7,000	
First Denver—Indian work ....	\$ 7,500	
Chicago, Ill.—Lawndale .....	\$ 9,000	
Hamilton Cl.—Campus .....	\$ 7,000	
Springdale, Holland Marsh, Ont.— River Drive Park .....	\$ 4,000	With the understanding this grant to be decreased \$1,000 per year beginning in 1975.
Visalia, Calif. ....	\$ 2,500	
Chicago, South Pullman Chapel .....	\$ 8,000	
Classis Lake Erie— Ann Arbor Chapel .....	\$ 4,000	With the understanding that the Ann Arbor campus chapel committee appeal to the Michigan classes for increase in support before this amount is granted.
Cedar Falls, Iowa—Campus ....	\$ 7,000	
Alto, Wis.—Beaverdam .....	\$ 2,500	With the stipulation that this support will be phased out by December, 1976.
Pease, Minnesota—St. Cloud..	\$ 8,000	
Sacramento, California .....	\$ 8,500	
GIA Contingency .....	\$ 5,000	

The BHM requests synod to designate a \$5,000 GIA Contingency Fund for 1974.

*Grounds:*

- a. The long time span between the date of application and the year the grant is to be used (14 months) does not allow for revision due to significant changes on the field.
- b. This will give the BHM the ability to respond to such changes.

### *G. The Future - 1973 and beyond*

#### *1. Continuing Education for Ministers in Mission*

These will be area Institutes, held for one week or two weeks. We are tentatively planning two pilot institutes in the Fall of 1973. In preparation for this a questionnaire will be sent to all the ministers for an evaluation of the seminars that have been held and to discover areas of concern and need which our ministers are experiencing. These institutes will be conducted in cooperation with the Calvin Seminary.

The churches will be encouraged to send their ministers and underwrite their expenses.

The need for this continuing education has become manifest through Evangelism Thrust.

#### *2. Development of a program for Leadership Training*

One of the basic needs that has surfaced through Evangelism Thrust concerned the training of our elders and deacons for ministry and mission. Significant questions are being asked about their roles, the use of their gifts in ministry, their expectations regarding their own work and the work of the minister, how they can complement and work along with the minister so that all of the work of the ministry and mission doesn't fall on the minister, how they can enable others for mission through training programs—all of this with the awareness of their own lack of adequate training.

The Board of Home Missions has requested the CRWRC and the Committee on Education to work together with the Board of Home Missions to:

- a. Prepare a training package for church leadership, especially the elders and deacons, to better enable them to be facilitators in the mission of the church.
- b. Arrange seminars throughout the denomination in which selected church officers would be trained to lead leadership workshops for local churches.

### *H. Volunteer Programs*

Summer Workshop In Ministry (SWIM) teams served in ninety-five areas in 1972, a significantly larger number than normal. Assistant field leadership was provided by twenty-eight seminarians and twenty-two teacher volunteers. Three teams were arranged specifically for college students and served where exceptional maturity was required.

There were nineteen Long-Term Volunteers (usually one year) serving in fields in Canada and the United States. Pastors and emerging churches greatly appreciate the assistance provided by these dedicated young people. Sponsoring churches, societies, groups and individuals play a vital role and their help is gratefully received.

## VI. FINANCE

Again in 1972 we have enjoyed abundant provision for meeting the needs of our missionaries and all the required program costs. If the financial support of Home Missions by the families and churches of our

denomination are an index of their spiritual vitality and growth, we have splendid evidence that conditions are indeed "very good."

### A. General Information

In reviewing the level of receipts for the year 1972, it appears that what began in 1971, as an upward trend, continued during 1972. It is gratifying to note that the level of receipts in 1972 was higher than in 1971 in all categories, except the Armed Forces Fund.

#### 1. Quotas

Income from quotas generally increased from 83.7 percent in 1971 to 84.7 percent in 1972. During 1972, the percentage of quotas received from U.S. churches was approximately the same as the 1971 figure, whereas the percent of quotas received from Canadian churches increased five percent—the highest level to-date. The percentage of quota received over the last eight years is as follows:

	Total	U.S.	Canada
1965	85.5%	97.3%	41.0%
1966	86.2%	97.8%	43.3%
1967	86.6%	97.8%	45.3%
1968	85.1%	97.4%	41.5%
1969	85.0%	97.1%	42.8%
1970	83.0%	95.8%	38.8%
1971	83.7%	95.8%	42.3%
1972	84.7%	95.7%	47.3%

#### 2. Salary Support

Income from salary support continued to increase in 1972 as follows:

1965	\$210,154
1966	\$228,719
1967	\$261,299
1968	\$256,633
1969	\$278,631
1970	\$295,353
1971	\$311,023
1972	\$354,446

One hundred ninety-six churches (28%) participated in the salary support program during 1972. Of this number, 191 were U.S. churches and five were Canadian churches. At the end of 1972 there were 50 home missionaries without *any* supporting church. Only four missionaries have their salary fully subscribed.

#### 3. Above Quota Gifts

Income from above-quota sources reflected an overall increase in 1972 as follows:

	Total	General	Armed Forces
1965	\$145,628	\$131,073	\$14,555
1966	\$158,944	\$124,800	\$34,144
1967	\$249,592	\$157,575	\$92,017
1968	\$252,578	\$157,290	\$95,288
1969	\$251,349	\$173,187	\$78,162
1970	\$217,277	\$161,765	\$55,512
1971	\$218,811	\$173,568	\$45,243
1972	\$270,642	\$237,585	\$33,057

An analysis of the number of churches taking offerings for above quota needs and the Armed Forces Fund discloses the following:

U.S. Churches	Total		Above Quota		Armed Forces	
	1972	1971	1972	1971	1972	1971
Number .....	547	549	359	365	218	248
Percent .....	100%	100%	66%	66%	40%	45%
<b>Canadian Churches</b>						
Number .....	155	152	38	42	4	3
Percent .....	100%	100%	25%	27%	2%	2%
<b>Total of all Churches</b>						
Number .....	702	701	397	407	222	251
Percent .....	100%	100%	56%	58%	32%	36%

You will note from the above comparison that a decreasing number of churches are involved in supporting the Armed Forces Fund. There is no doubt that decreasing U.S. involvement in Viet Nam and a continued decrease in the number of Christian Reformed servicemen in uniform are the principle reasons for this declining interest within our denomination. With the cease-fire in Viet Nam, the Board of Home Missions is compelled to review the entire program of ministry to our servicemen.

#### 4. Building Programs

Activity on-field in building programs has again decreased substantially during 1972 due to the fact that no new fields were opened in 1972. The following list reflects the 1972 building program activity.

#### Fields with Building Programs Completed

Cedar Rapids, Iowa  
 Flagstaff, Arizona  
 New Glasgow, Nova Scotia  
 Corvallis, Oregon

#### Fields with Building Programs in Progress

Olympia, Washington  
 Hyde Park, Illinois  
 Greeley, Colorado

#### Fields with Site Selection in Progress

Windsor, Ontario  
 Jacksonville, Florida

As noted last year, we are in the process of producing a "Handbook for Church Building Programs." There continues to be a real interest in this project from all of our churches and we are convinced that it will serve a real need. It is our goal to complete this handbook by December, 1973.

*B. Calling and/or Supporting Churches:*

- Abbotsford, British Columbia  
 Ada, Michigan  
 Akron, Ohio  
 Alameda, California  
 Alamosa, Colorado  
 Albuquerque-Chelwood, New Mexico  
 Allendale I, Michigan  
 Allendale II, Michigan  
 Anaheim, California  
 Anaheim-Latin American, California  
 Anchorage-Trinity, Alaska  
 Ann Arbor, Michigan  
 Bakersfield, California  
 Bauer, Michigan  
 Bellflower-Bethany, California  
 Beaverdam, Michigan  
 Bellevue, Washington  
 Borculo, Michigan  
 Boulder, Colorado  
 Burnaby, British Columbia  
 Byron Center I, Michigan  
 Byron Center II, Michigan  
 Byron Center, Heritage, Michigan  
 Champaign, Illinois  
 Chula Vista, California  
 Cincinnati-Parkview Hts., Ohio  
 Cleveland-East Side, Ohio  
 Cleveland-Maple Hts., Ohio  
 Clinton, Ontario  
 Columbus-Olentangy, Ohio  
 Coopersville, Michigan  
 Cutlerville-Covenant, Michigan  
 Cutlerville-East, Michigan  
 Cutlerville I, Michigan  
 Dayton-Kettering, Ohio  
 Dearborn, Michigan  
 De Motte I, Indiana  
 Denver-Fairview, Colorado  
 Denver-Hillcrest, Colorado  
 Denver I, Colorado  
 Denver II, Colorado  
 Denver III, Colorado  
 Denver-Ridgeview Hills, Colorado  
 Denver-Trinity, Colorado  
 Detroit I, Michigan  
 Dispatch, Kansas  
 Drayton, Ontario  
 Drenthe, Michigan  
 East Martin, Michigan  
 East Palmyra, New York  
 Edgerton-Bethel, Minnesota  
 Edgerton I, Minnesota  
 Escondido, California  
 Everett, Washington  
 Evergreen Park I, Illinois  
 Falmouth-Prosper, Michigan  
 Farmington, New Mexico  
 Fort Collins, Colorado  
 Fort Lauderdale, Florida  
 Fountain Valley, California  
 Fredericton, New Brunswick  
 Fremont I, Michigan  
 Fremont II, Michigan  
 Fresno, California  
 Fulton I, Illinois SS  
 Fulton-Bethel, Illinois  
 Gallup, New Mexico  
 Georgetown, Ontario  
 Goshen, Indiana  
 Goshen, New York  
 Graafschap, Michigan  
 Grand Haven II, Michigan  
 Grand Rapids, Alger Park, Michigan  
 Grand Rapids, Alpine Ave., Michigan  
 Grand Rapids, Beckwith Hills, Michigan  
 Grand Rapids, Brookside, Michigan  
 Grand Rapids, Burton Hts., Michigan  
 Grand Rapids, Calvin, Michigan  
 Grand Rapids, East Paris, Michigan  
 Grand Rapids, Faith, Michigan  
 Grand Rapids I, Michigan  
 Grand Rapids, Fuller Ave., Michigan  
 Grand Rapids, Grace, Michigan  
 Grand Rapids, Grandville Ave., Michigan  
 Grand Rapids, Highland Hills, Michigan  
 Grand Rapids, Kelloggsville, Michigan  
 Grand Rapids, LaGrave Ave., Michigan  
 Grand Rapids, Millbrook, Michigan  
 Grand Rapids, Neland Ave., Michigan  
 Grand Rapids, Oakdale Park, Michigan  
 Grand Rapids, Plymouth Hts., Michigan  
 Grand Rapids, Seymour, Michigan  
 Grand Rapids, Shawnee Park, Michigan  
 Grand Rapids, Sherman St., Michigan  
 Grand Rapids, Westview, Michigan  
 Grand Rapids, Woodlawn, Michigan  
 Grandville South, Grandville, Michigan  
 Hamilton, Michigan  
 Harrison, South Dakota  
 Hayward, California  
 Hoboken, New Jersey  
 Holland, Bethany, Michigan  
 Holland, Central Ave., Michigan  
 Holland, 14th St., Michigan  
 Holland, Harderwyk, Michigan  
 Holland, Holland Hts., Michigan  
 Holland, Maple Ave., Michigan  
 Holland, Maranatha, Michigan  
 Holland, Montello Park, Michigan  
 Holland, 9th St., Michigan  
 Holland, Pine Creek, Michigan  
 Holland, Providence, Michigan  
 Honolulu, Hawaii  
 Hudsonville I, Michigan  
 Hudsonville, Hillcrest, Michigan  
 Hudsonville, Immanuel, Michigan  
 Hudsonville, Messiah, Michigan  
 Hull I, Iowa  
 Hull, North Dakota

Imlay City, Michigan  
 Inkster, Cherry Hill, Michigan  
 Iowa City, Trinity, Iowa  
 Jackson, Michigan  
 Jamestown, Michigan  
 Jenison, Baldwin, Michigan  
 Jenison, Ridgewood, Michigan  
 Jenison, Trinity, Michigan  
 Jenison, 12th Ave., Michigan  
 Kalamazoo, Alamo Ave., Michigan  
 Kalamazoo, Faith, Michigan  
 Kalamazoo, Grace, Michigan  
 Kalamazoo, Milwood, Michigan  
 Kalamazoo II, Michigan  
 Kalamazoo, Westwood, Michigan  
 Kemptville, Ontario  
 Lacombe, Bethel, Alberta  
 Lafayette, Indiana  
 Lake Worth, Florida  
 Lansing, Bethel, Illinois  
 Lansing, Oak Glen, Illinois  
 Leighton, Iowa  
 Le Mars, Calvin, Iowa  
 Leota, Minnesota  
 Listowel, Ontario  
 London I, Ontario  
 Los Angeles I, California  
 Luctor, Kansas  
 Lynden-Bethel, Washington  
 Lynden II, Washington  
 Lynden III, Washington  
 Madison, Wisconsin  
 Manhattan, Bethel, Montana  
 Mason City, Iowa  
 Miami, Florida  
 Midland Park, Irving Park, New Jersey  
 Minneapolis I, Minnesota  
 Moline, Michigan  
 Muskegon, Allen Ave., Michigan  
 Muskegon, Bethany, Michigan  
 Muskegon, Calvin, Michigan  
 Muskegon I, Michigan  
 Muskegon Heights, Michigan  
 New Brighton, Faith, Minnesota  
 New Era, Michigan  
 Newton, Iowa  
 Niekerk, Michigan  
 Nobleford, Alberta  
 Noordeloos, Michigan  
 Norfolk, Virginia  
 North Blendon, Michigan  
 Oakland, Michigan  
 Oak Lawn, Kedvale Ave., Illinois  
 Oak Park, Illinois  
 Ogden, Utah  
 Orange City, Calvary, Iowa  
 Orange City I, Iowa  
 Orland Park, Illinois  
 Orlando, Florida  
 Oskaloosa I, Iowa  
 Overisel, Michigan  
 Palos Heights, Illinois  
 Paterson I, New Jersey  
 Paterson II, New Jersey  
 Paterson, Prospect Park, New Jersey  
 Pella, Calvary, Iowa  
 Pella, Faith, Iowa  
 Pella I, Iowa  
 Pella II, Iowa  
 Peoria, Iowa  
 Phoenix I, Arizona  
 Phoenix-Orangewood, Arizona  
 Pinellas Park, Florida  
 Portland, Calvin, Oregon  
 Prairie City, Iowa  
 Prince George, British Columbia  
 Rehoboth, New Mexico  
 Riverside, California  
 Rock Valley, Calvin, Iowa  
 Rusk, Michigan  
 Salem, Oregon  
 Salt Lake City I, Utah  
 Salt Lake City, Immanuel, Utah  
 San Francisco-Golden Gate, California  
 San Jose, California  
 Seattle, Calvary, Washington  
 Sheboygan, Calvin, Wisconsin SS  
 Silver Spring, Maryland  
 Sioux Center I, Iowa  
 South Holland, Bethany, Illinois  
 South Holland, Cottage Grove, Illinois  
 South Holland I, Illinois  
 South Olive, Michigan  
 South St. Paul, South Grove, Minnesota  
 Spring Lake, Michigan  
 St. Louis, Missouri  
 Sully, Iowa  
 Sunnyside, Washington  
 Sussex, New Jersey  
 Toronto I, Ontario  
 Truro, Nova Scotia  
 Tucson, Elim, Arizona  
 Walnut Creek, California  
 Waupun I, Wisconsin  
 Wayne, New Jersey  
 Webster, New York  
 Welland Junction, Ontario  
 West Olive, Michigan  
 West Sayville, New York  
 Wheaton, Illinois  
 Whitinsville, Fairlawn, Massachusetts  
 Wyoming, Beverly, Michigan  
 Wyoming, Lee St., Michigan  
 Wyoming, Wyoming Park, Michigan  
 Wyoming, 36th St., Michigan  
 Yakima, Washington  
 Zeeland, Bethel, Michigan  
 Zeeland I, Michigan  
 Zeeland, Haven, Michigan SS  
 Zeeland, North St., Michigan SS  
 Zeeland III, Michigan  
 Zutphen, Michigan

### Classes

California South  
Central California  
Chatham

Lake Erie  
Minnesota North  
Pella

### C. Church Relations

We enjoyed especially fine response to two of our major mailings. In the spring, a 16-page booklet entitled "Your AAA Book of Christian Reformed Home Missions" provided highlights from the whole spectrum of home missions effort. In December, a vinyl sound-sheet recording of Evangelist Garnanez briefly narrating the experience of the Red Rock Navajo congregation as it built its own church structure brought unprecedented response.

Our staff has been gaining some radio experience providing short news tapes that are incorporated into a mission news program aired weekly on four Michigan and Iowa stations and produced without cost to us by the Media Coordinator for the Reformed Church in America.

The twice-yearly cycle of Women's Missionary Union Tours conducted in cooperation with the Board of Foreign Missions provided denomination-wide circulation for six home missionaries. An experiment in the spring worked out well: a Michigan housewife was selected to live among Navajo Christian families a couple weeks and then to report to the women on the Eastern tour what she could share of needs, feelings, and attitudes, particularly among Christian women of the Navajo reservation. A meeting of Union officers from all over the state of Michigan suggests that there is a desire among ladies with active interests in missions to study the possibilities of extending the scope of the women's supportive ministry.

Word has come from several congregations who have undertaken Faith-Promise missionary support programs for the first time in 1972. The increase in salary support commitments by these churches is almost incredible. Over fifty more congregations have requested information, and some have asked help in carrying out Mission Emphasis Weeks as a key feature of their Faith-Promise undertakings.

One of our goals for 1973 is to find at least one congregation to undertake partial salary support for each of the forty-nine home mission workers who presently do not enjoy this kind of relationship.

### D. Report of the Auditors

January, 31, 1973

To the Board Members,  
Christian Reformed Board of Home Missions,  
Grand Rapids, Michigan.

We have examined the statements of fund balances of the Christian Reformed Board of Home Missions, Grand Rapids, Michigan, as of December 31, 1972 and the related statement of changes in fund equity for the year then ended. Our examination was made in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards, and accordingly included such tests of the accounting records and such other auditing procedures as we considered necessary in the circumstances.

In our opinion, the accompanying statements of fund balances and statement of changes in fund equity present fairly the financial position of the Christian Re-

formed Board of Home Missions at December 31, 1972, and the results of its operations for the year then ended, in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles applied on a basis consistent with that of the preceding year.

Den Braber, Helmholdt & Lyzenga  
Certified Public Accountants

### FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOLLOW

#### CHRISTIAN REFORMED BOARD OF HOME MISSIONS

#### STATEMENT OF GENERAL FUND BALANCE

December 31, 1972

		<u>ASSETS</u>	
<b>CURRENT</b>			
Operating funds cash (Note A)		\$ 392,728	
Designated funds cash (Note B)		297,000	
Prepaid expenses		41,200	
Marketable securities - at cost		<u>5,811</u>	\$ 736,739
<b>REAL ESTATE AND NOTES RECEIVABLE</b>			
United States		\$4,221,887	
Canada		388,167	
Urban fields		<u>1,384,308</u>	5,994,362
<b>REAL ESTATE AND EQUIPMENT - INDIAN FIELD</b>			
Land and buildings		\$2,147,271	
Furniture and equipment		121,917	
Trucks and automobiles		<u>91,256</u>	
		\$2,360,444	
Less allowance for depreciation		<u>856,639</u>	1,503,805
<b>OTHER ASSETS</b>			
Mortgages and contracts receivable		\$ 124,388	
Furniture and fixtures - Grand Rapids - net		<u>3,267</u>	<u>127,655</u>
			<u>\$ 8,362,561</u>

Note A—By action of the Board of Home Missions, \$180,000 of the operating funds on hand at December 31, 1972 are to be used to provide the necessary funds for the 1973 synodically approved budget.

Note B—At December 31, 1972, \$297,000 was committed and budgeted for additional capital expenditures but not spent at the end of the year.

LIABILITIES AND FUND EQUITY

<u>LIABILITIES</u>	
Withheld taxes and other payables	\$ 27,421
<u>FUND EQUITY</u>	
Balance at end of year	<u>8,335,140</u>
	<u>\$ 8,362,561</u>

STATEMENT OF RESTRICTED FUND BALANCES

December 31, 1972 and 1971

<u>ASSETS</u>	Balance December 31, 1971	Additions	Deductions	Balance December 31 1972
Cash (Note C)	\$ 532,985	\$119,314	\$187,496	\$464,803
<u>FUND BALANCES (Note C)</u>				
Missionary training fund (Note D)	\$ 153,685	\$ 28,451	\$ 1,712	\$180,424
Indian tuition assistance	29,622	4,567	7,442	26,747
Fairbanks flood relief	—	50,000	50,000	—
Cuban and Indian children	658	45	490	213
Indian field expansion fund	234,575	21,267	46,634	209,208
Medical insurance fund	5,162	—	630	4,532
Jewish evangelism	9,450	—	1,507	7,943
Zuni fire	95,833	—	78,548	17,285
Project of the month—Indian field	—	1,916	133	1,383
Annuity fund	4,000	3,000	—	7,000
Trust agreements	—	10,068	—	10,068
	<u>\$ 532,985</u>	<u>\$119,314</u>	<u>\$187,496</u>	<u>\$464,803</u>

STATEMENT OF CHANCES IN GENERAL FUND EQUITY

Year ended December 31, 1972

BALANCE - JANUARY 1, 1972	\$8,138,890
<u>ADDITIONS</u>	
Budgeted additions:	
Quota receipts	\$2,102,930
Salary support	354,446
Above quota gifts	270,642
Indian field revenue	45,852
Other income	53,218
	<u>\$2,827,088</u>
Other additions:	
Transfer from restricted funds	174,327
Gain on disposal of fixed assets	12,308
TOTAL ADDITIONS	<u>3,013,723</u>
TOTAL AVAILABLE	\$11,152,613

## STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN FUND EQUITY CONTINUED

## DEDUCTIONS

Budgeted expenses:	
Administration	\$ 265,593
General home missions	48,210
Evangelism	481,670
Regular outreach	735,417
Urban fields	253,976
Indian Field	944,898
	<u>\$2,729,764</u>
Other deduction:	
Depreciation	87,709

## TOTAL DEDUCTIONS

2,817,473

BALANCE - DECEMBER 31, 1972

\$8,335,140REAL ESTATE AND NOTES RECEIVABLE - UNITED STATES

December 31, 1972

CALLING CHURCHES

	<u>Balance</u>
Albuquerque, New Mexico	\$ 92,809.38
Anaheim, California	21,241.75
Bellingham, Washington	42,500.00
Chula Vista, California	50,000.00
Colorado Springs, Colorado	52,770.79
Columbus, Ohio	51,002.45
Ft. Lauderdale, Florida	37,900.00
Franklin Lakes, New Jersey	30,600.00
Indianapolis, Indiana	31,466.17
Inkster, Michigan	32,500.00
Jackson, Michigan	41,062.18
Lake Worth, Florida	9,693.60
Lakewood City, California	26,994.90
Lemars, Iowa	2,000.00
Madison, Wisconsin	39,751.75
Matteson, Illinois	56,967.44
Miami, Florida	47,700.00
Milwaukee, Wisconsin	6,310.00
Minneapolis, Minnesota - First	9,097.05
Minneapolis, Minnesota - Calvary	50,000.00
Monsey, New York	7,725.00
New Brighton, Minnesota	50,000.00
Palo Alto, California	44,711.12
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania	57,972.74
Pompton Plains, New Jersey	13,750.00
Portland, Oregon	48,800.00
Sacramento, California	45,000.00
St. Petersburg, Florida	50,400.00
Salt Lake City, Utah	44,058.41
San Jose, California	9,000.00
Scottsdale, Arizona	85,609.43
South Bend, Indiana	38,136.93
Tacoma, Washington	50,000.00
Toledo, Ohio	49,960.91
Visalia, California	55,000.00
Walnut Creek, California	37,388.47
Wanamassa, New Jersey	61,208.39
Washington, D.C.	20,560.00
TOTAL CALLING CHURCHES	<u>\$1,501,648.86</u>

REAL ESTATE AND NOTES RECEIVABLE - UNITED STATES (continued)

December 31, 1972

<u>REGULAR FIELDS</u>	<u>Balance</u>
Akron, Ohio	\$ 56,000.00
Anchorage, Alaska	115,585.01
Bakersfield, California	63,200.00
Bellevue, Washington	78,500.00
Binghamton, New York	60,000.00
Boca Raton, Florida	52,000.00
Boulder, Colorado	51,225.87
Cedar Rapids, Iowa	81,000.00
Champaign, Illinois	21,534.67
Chester, New Jersey	58,400.00
Corvallis, Oregon	36,650.00
Davenport, Iowa	63,728.00
Dayton, Ohio	50,000.00
East Grand Forks, Minnesota	30,000.00
East Islip, New York	51,005.30
East Tucson, Arizona	63,192.50
El Paso, Texas	65,800.00
Farmington, Michigan	61,046.00
Flagstaff, Arizona	73,500.00
Ft. Collins, Colorado	30,000.00
Ft. Wayne, Indiana	69,000.00
Fresno, California	63,128.59
Garden Grove, California	87,000.00
Greeley, Colorado	66,000.00
Hartford, Connecticut	50,000.00
Hayward, California	50,000.00
Indian Harbor Beach, Florida	60,893.57
Iowa City, Iowa	50,000.00
Mason City, Iowa	55,276.00
Norfolk, Virginia	55,800.00
Ogden, Utah	70,564.76
Olympia, Washington	78,000.00
Orlando, Florida	58,154.55
Poughkeepsie, New York	50,000.00
Quincy, Washington	4,500.00
Riverside, California	50,000.00
St. Louis, Missouri	66,500.00
Salem, Oregon	50,000.00
South Grove, Minnesota	51,516.82
South Salt Lake City, Utah	50,000.00
Syracuse, New York	67,920.00
Terre Haute, Indiana	63,416.66
Tri Cities, Washington	50,000.00
Washington, Pennsylvania	58,000.00
Webster, New York	60,000.00
West Portland, Oregon	56,000.00
Yakima, Washington	66,200.00
TOTAL REGULAR FIELDS	\$2,720,238.30

SUMMARY OF REAL ESTATE AND NOTES RECEIVABLE - UNITED STATES

Calling Churches	\$1,501,648.86
Regular fields	<u>2,720,238.30</u>
TOTAL	<u>\$4,221,887.16</u>

REAL ESTATE AND NOTES RECEIVABLE - CANADA

December 31, 1972

<u>CALLING CHURCHES</u>	<u>Balance</u>
Brockville, Ontario	\$ 6,438.85
Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island	47,500.00
Coburg, Ontario	7,225.00
Grand Prairie, Alberta	48,124.62
Halifax, Nova Scotia	50,000.00
High River, Alberta	10,000.00
Kemptville, Ontario	4,374.90
Stratford, Ontario	25,446.75
Truro, Nova Scotia	8,654.04
Vernon, British Columbia	15,809.21
TOTAL CALLING CHURCHES	<u>\$223,573.37</u>

REGULAR FIELDS

Fredrickton, New Brunswick	\$ 49,993.81
New Glasgow, Nova Scotia	64,900.00
Prince George, British Columbia	49,700.00
TOTAL REGULAR FIELDS	<u>\$ 164,593.81</u>

SUMMARY OF REAL ESTATE AND NOTES RECEIVABLE - CANADA

Calling churches	\$ 223,573.37
Regular fields	<u>164,593.81</u>
	<u>\$388,167.18</u>

REAL ESTATE - URBAN FIELDS

December 31, 1972

<u>URBAN FIELDS</u>	<u>BALANCE</u>
Albuquerque, New Mexico - Indian	\$ 78,752.74
Chicago, Illinois - Chinese	118,779.25
Chicago, Illinois - Indian	20,000.00
Chicago, Illinois - Lawndale	75,000.00
Detroit, Michigan	87,605.34
Harlem, New York City	233,763.16
Honolulu, Hawaii	70,000.00
Los Angeles, California - Chinese	59,500.00
Los Angeles, California - Inner City	24,200.00
Los Angeles, California - Spanish	31,000.00
Miami, Florida - Spanish	188,291.38
Norfolk, Virginia	36,298.65
Queens, New York - Chinese	71,562.83
Salt Lake City, Utah - Indian	17,750.00
San Francisco, California - Indian	76,095.30
San Francisco, California - Chinese	67,459.20
San Francisco, California - Friendship House	128,250.00
	<u>\$1,384,307.85</u>

E. Proposed Budget for 1974

The Proposed Budget for 1974 is summarized below, a more detailed list of budget requests for 1974 will be submitted to Synod's Finance Committee.

1974 PROPOSED BUDGET

Estimated Receipts	
Quota Payments	\$ 2,175,000
Salary Support	360,000
Above Quota	280,000
Indian Field Revenue	45,000
Real Estate Repayments	90,000
Other Income	50,000
From Cash Balance	250,000
	<hr/>
TOTAL ESTIMATED RECEIPTS . . . . .	<u>\$ 3,250,000</u>
Budgeted Disbursements	
Operating:	
Administration and Promotion	\$ 283,800
General Home Missions	87,700
Evangelism	623,000
Regular Fields	920,000
Urban Fields	254,000
Indian Fields	1,061,500
	<hr/>
TOTAL OPERATING . . . . .	<u>\$ 3,230,000</u>
Real Estate and Capital:	
Indian Fields	\$ 15,000
Equipment	5,000
	<hr/>
TOTAL REAL ESTATE AND CAPITAL . . . . .	<u>\$ 20,000</u>
TOTAL BUDGETED DISBURSEMENTS . . . . .	<u>\$ 3,250,000</u>

Note C—The restricted funds represent amounts received for specific projects, the use of which is restricted by synod or the donor.

Note D—The balance in the Missionary Training Fund at December 31, 1972 includes \$31,343 which has been credited to the individual missionaries' training accounts and is available to them under the rules of the fund.

## VII. DECENTRALIZATION

Enclosed is a "Proposed Plan for Decentralization" which comes to synod through the Board of Home Missions from the Decentralization Committee. As synod considers this proposed plan it will want to keep in mind the process of decentralization presently evident in the work of the Board of Home Missions.

1. The most obvious area is in the Grant-in-Aid Program in which funding for salaries is provided by the board and supervision is maintained by the local ecclesiastical body. This began in 1959 with grants totaling \$9,102.00. The requests to be considered by the 1973 board total \$188,690.00 for thirty mission projects. This is movement toward decentralization.

2. The board through its staff has always encouraged local initiative and involvement in the establishment of new fields. The staff has always been available for assistance and advice in local programs.

3. The board has scrupulously avoided getting into any area without the request or recommendation of the classis.

4. The board has always encouraged the involvement of the Classical Home Missions Committee in the investigation of a field, the beginning of the field and the supervision of the field. Each committee is requested to visit the fields in its area at least once each year and encourage the missionaries to meet with the committee.

5. The board is making plans to encourage greater involvement on the part of the Classical Home Missions Committee (CHMC) in its work.

6. The Home Missionaries on General Assignment (HMGA), through reporting to the board, do meet with the CHMC's and have the specific mandate to assist the CHMC and churches in their mission task. Thus their work immediately becomes identified with the classes and areas for which they are responsible. Their *modus operandi* now is much the same as it would be under complete decentralization.

7. The churches established by the board are given much autonomy and encouraged to become calling churches as soon as possible. In the calling of a missionary the local group has been encouraged to be a vital part of the decision-making. No missionary is called without the consent of the local group.

### A. Report of Decentralization Study Committee

#### 1. A PROPOSED PLAN FOR DECENTRALIZATION

##### A. Definition

Decentralization is defined as a revision of present Home Mission policy to encourage local congregations and classes to assume a greater share and involvement in the initiation, development and administration of home mission work in their areas.

##### B. Implementation

1. Home Missionaries on General Assignment would be placed in specific areas to serve the Classical Home Missions Committees with advice and expertise regarding evangelism and supervision of mission fields in their area. To accomplish this the following will be necessary:

- a. Place the HMGA under the direct supervision of the classes within the area covered.

Organization as follows:

- 1) Area Home Missions Committee made up of equal membership from each Classical Home Missions Committee of the area covered by the HMGA and the members of the Classical Home Missions Committee in which the HMGA resides. This area committee will meet four times each year.
  - 2) The Classical Home Missions Committee of the classis in which the HMGA resides will be the supervising committee with which the HMGA will meet and to which he will report each month.
- b. Establish the following relationship of the HMGA's to the Board of Home Missions.
- 1) Report on activities and travel schedules each month for coordination.
  - 2) Meet with the other HMGA's every two months with meetings to be coordinated by the Board of Home Missions.
- c. Add additional HMGA's as needed for adequate service to fields and churches.

The Board of Home Missions will assume responsibility for the salary and expenses of the HMGA's and will solicit the help of the classes to share in the salary and expenses of the HMGA's.

2. Supervision of denominational home missions fields which lie within the confines of the classical boundaries would be with the home missions committees in whose areas the fields lie. However, the adoption of a field recommended by classis, appointment of personnel and discontinuance of the existing fields shall be the responsibility of the CRBHM in consultation with the local bodies.

3. The Board of Home Missions would open no new fields in areas immediately adjacent to a congregation or classis, unless requested by classes, and would instead encourage the local ecclesiastical agency to open a field of good potential with the help of the board through Grant-In-Aid funds. It is *recommended* that the Grant-In-Aid policy be modified:

- a. To include funding for capital expenditures where needed on a matching fund basis.
  - 1) Capital expenditures (loans) will be made where a facility is needed to carry on the ministry program and such facility is not available on a shared basis.
  - 2) The Board of Home Missions will expend funds for capital needs to a Grant-In-Aid field as follows:  
A loan up to an amount which equals one-third of the building program cost (land and building); with one-third secured by the local group (GIA field); and one-third pledged as a grant by the sponsoring body. The repayment of the Board of Home Missions' loan would follow the same terms and conditions of loans to Home Missions fields.

- b. To require annual review and evaluation to determine renewal of salary funding for Grant-In-Aids.

*NOTE:* All of the other policies pertaining to the Grant-In-Aid program will remain intact.

- 4. The board could open fields in areas far removed from the local classes or congregations, after consultation with the nearest classis.
- 5. The board shall phase out the supervision of specialized ministries such as Campus, Inner-City, Servicemen's Homes, Spanish, and Chinese. The only exception would be the Indian Reservation work.

## 2. THE CONTINUING ROLE OF THE BOARD OF HOME MISSIONS

### A. *Areas of Service*

#### 1. *In general*

- a. Studies on mission principles and methodology.
- b. Recommendations regarding national strategy.
- c. Creative thinking regarding experimental or pilot ministries.
- d. Missionary training for all those recruited for service, both making recommendations and being involved in the training.
- e. Recruitment of missionaries.
- f. Services to other agencies
- g. Opening fields as requested or in unique areas.
- h. Decisions regarding Grants-In-Aid.

#### 2. *In Evangelism*

- a. Training packages—ministers, lay leaders, members.
- b. Consultation with local churches regarding programs.
- c. Consultation with local churches regarding special needs.
- d. Clearing house of programs and materials.
- e. Preparation of materials.
  - 1) Study materials, training materials, tracts, "The Way."
  - 2) Articles for publication in denominational papers.
  - 3) Communication with churches regarding available materials with evaluation and ideas.
  - 4) Communications with Classical Home Missions Committees.

#### 3. *In training*

- a. Coordination of Internships and Summer Seminarians.
- b. Training of Home Missionaries on General Assignment—continuing training.
- c. Continuing education for ministers.
- d. The Volunteer Program
- e. Classical Home Missions Committees

#### 4. *In consultation (specialized)*

- a. Campus ministry
- b. Urban—churches in changing communities
- c. Financial projections
- d. Building programs
- e. Off-reservation Indian work

#### 5. *In church relations*

- a. Communicate regarding what is taking place in mission

- b. Communicate some visions for the future
- c. Raise funds for above-quota needs
- 6. *In Indian missions*  
Supervise reservation work
- 7. *In Finance*
  - a. Develop and recommend financial policies, plans and objectives.
  - b. Review and evaluate the financial reporting and building programs of all fields.

#### B. *Personnel Needed*

On the basis of services listed we envision a possible reduction in the number of staff in the Grand Rapids office as certain areas are phased out. However, there will be an increase in total personnel employed through an increase in number of HMGA's.

#### C. *The Entire Staff*

The entire staff would function as a think-tank, concerned with these areas:

1. Discussion of mission principles and methodology, for example:
  - a. Church programs
  - b. Work in urban areas
  - c. Work on campus
2. Discussions on national strategies
3. Discussion of possible experimental or pilot ministries
4. Planning for training of missionaries
5. Discussion of policy recommendations for board and synod
6. Discussion on how best to relate to the churches
7. Planning work to provide some models for mission

### 3. THE ROLE OF THE CLASSICAL HOME MISSIONS COMMITTEE

#### A. *Meetings of Classical Home Missions Committees*

##### 1. *Meetings should be held each month*

When a classis is widespread, the CHMC could be divided into two committees, with entire committee meeting at time of classis meeting.

##### 2. *Agendas*

- a. Review of work within their areas, making necessary decisions.
- b. Interview with missionaries in area.
- c. Where applicable review of work of Home Missionaries on General Assignment and taking action on recommendations.
- d. Review of evangelistic activities within the churches, formulating recommendations for churches within the classes.
- e. Think-tank time for creative work in missions within bounds of classis.
- f. Evaluation of requests and needs within bounds of classis.
- g. Questions regarding consultation with other neighboring Classical Home Mission Committees.
- h. Report of Area Classical Home Missions Committee Representative.
- i. Survey of new work for evaluation and recommendation.

**B. Visits to the Fields**

1. Each field should be visited no less than once each year, visiting with both missionary and consistory or steering committee.
2. Review program and determine to what extent the field is mission oriented.
3. Assist in resolving problems on the field.
4. Make recommendations regarding future support.

**NOTE:** This visiting and evaluation should be done in consultation with the Home Missionary on General Assignment.

**C. Plan Conferences**

1. Conferences with home missionaries in conjunction with meeting of classis. These conferences to be for:
  - a. Information
  - b. Inspiration
  - c. Sharing
  - d. Discussion of mutual concerns
  - e. Intellectual stimulation
  - f. Challenge for missions
2. Conferences of evangelism committees within the classis.
3. Classis-wide evangelism conferences.

**D. Coordination****1. With other classes**

In areas where there is a large cluster of Christian Reformed Churches divided into classes there should be regular meetings of these Classical Home Missions Committees for:

- a. Coordination of work to avoid overlap
- b. To undertake programs together for the larger area, for example:  
Grand Rapids area  
Chicago area  
Sioux Center-Orange City  
East Coast

**2. With Area Home Missions Committee**

Send representative to quarterly meetings.

**3. With Board of Home Missions (other than Annual Board meeting)**

Send a representative to an annual meeting for:

- a. Information regarding programs and materials available for churches and classes.
- b. Discussion of mission policy.
- c. Review of activities.
- d. Providing input on needs and strategy.
- e. Discussion of mission principles and methodology.

**4. EFFECT ON THE DENOMINATIONAL MISSION PROGRAM****A. Negative**

1. There is the danger that placing the supervision of mission activities with the local ecclesiastical agency will lead to sectionalism, fragmentation and isolationism. By this we mean that each area, each classis, each church will be doing its own thing in mission, without the very important and necessary process of communication regarding method-

ology and overall strategy—the kind of unifying communication which is provided by a denominational board. Any consultation becomes accidental rather than by design, concerned more with building and finances than a well-rounded, balanced program.

2. Decentralization might provide an excuse for doing little or nothing. It appears that constant prodding is necessary to move the church into the arena of the world for mission. The place of comfort is within her own walls. Without persistent challenging, through a denominational board, it will be easier for the church to sit at ease and not feel too guilty.

3. Decentralization might make it more difficult to engage in pilot or experimental ministries. There are two reasons for this. One is that the local group is more inclined to do what is traditional, mirroring its own life in its mission activity. The other is financial. The pilot or experimental ministry may be more costly than what a local group may be willing to undertake. If, on the other hand, the experimental ministries are left to the denominational board, that being its only work, there will develop a widening gap between the denominational board and the local group. With its pilot work, the board will always appear as the *avant garde*, miles ahead of the church.

4. Decentralization might make it more difficult to sustain a significant relationship to other denominations. While any relationship between the CRC and other denominations will always be what any two groups want it and make it to be, decentralization does make coordination and comity arrangements virtually impossible.

5. Decentralization could easily break the supporting tie that binds the missions as a team. There is the general consensus among the missionaries that they prefer working for the denominational board rather than separate committees. As denominational missionaries they feel they are partners in a bigger mission, that more help is provided in the way of expert advice, conferences, mutual consultation, and exchange from other missionaries.

6. Decentralization will tend to divert financial support to the local area, making it necessary for the board to request a greater percentage of the quota to meet its needs. Furthermore, fund-raising for any needs above the quota will be more difficult and costly to raise since there will be but few denomination-wide programs of wide appeal which the church can be challenged to support.

7. Decentralization presents a serious problem in supervision. The Classical Home Missions Committees made up of men already too busy, will not have the time to meet the demands of overseeing the fields within the bounds of classis.

8. Decentralization may impede some problem solving. A distant board does tend to be more objective.

9. Decentralization will be more costly. These estimated costs include the following:

	B.H.M.	Classis
Monthly meetings of the Classical Home Missions Committees (additional) .....	0	\$ 5,000
Quarterly meetings of the Area Home Missions Committee .....	0	20,000

Monthly meeting of the HMGA with his supervising committee .....	0	3,000
Four additional HMGA's (including housing) .....	\$ 92,000	0
Annual review and evaluation of Grants-in-Aid requests .....	8,000	0
Annual visits to the fields by the CHMC .....	0	9,000
Regular classical conferences with its home missionaries .....	0	2,000
Annual meetings of representatives of CHMC with Board of Home Missions .....	5,000	0
Capital expenditure funding (five per year) .....	250,000	250,000
<b>TOTAL ADDITIONAL ANNUAL COST:</b>	<b>\$355,000</b>	<b>\$289,000</b>

### B. *Positive*

1. The most positive motivating factor for decentralization is that this is in harmony with Reformed Church polity and Church Order. In Articles 74, 75 and 76 of the Church Order, the principle is laid down very explicitly that responsibility for ministry and mission lies with the local groups, both church and classes. The work of the denominational board is first of all to encourage the local groups in their work and carry on only such work as is beyond the scope and resources of the local group. There is always the temptation of the big board to be too paternalistic and do what the local groups can very well do. Furthermore there is the even greater temptation on the part of the local groups to hold its hand out to the central board when its own resources are adequate. Though centralization may be more efficient and is less expensive, is a certain "sacrifice" of Reformed principle worth what is gained?

2. The recommended plan for decentralization does appear to have built-in safeguards against fragmentation and isolation:

- a. There will be bi-monthly meetings of the HMGA's responsible for supervision of mission activity, for sharing, discussion of policy and mission methodology, mutual help in problem solving, approval of personnel, providing suggested input for national strategy, recommendations for new work, etc.
- b. Representatives from each Classical Home Missions Committee will meet annually with the board for information on programs and materials, discussion of mission policy, review of activities, provide input on needs and strategy, and discuss mission principles and methodology.
- c. The denominational board will still make recommendations to synod re matters of national strategy and policy which will provide guidelines for local work.
- d. Decisions of synod re Grant-In-Aid will hopefully be made in accord with approved national strategy.
- e. The approval and training of personnel by the Board will be a resistant to sectionalism. The continuing training and sharing through conferences may do the same.

3. Decentralization may possibly generate greater activity in mission. The closer people are to the work and the closer the work is to the people, the more lively the interest.

4. If the Classical Home Missions Committees have the responsibility for supervision of work in their area, they may want to take the time or find the time for this important work. Often a lack of reason for meeting makes them inactive. The responsibility of supervision could provide adequate reason.

5. Since the employed agents for supervision of work will be the Home Missionaries on General Assignment, they should be able to do their work and meet the needs of the fields whether they answer first to the area CHMC or to the denominational board, with whom they will be in regular contact.

6. Certain experience has shown that local ecclesiastical agencies can carry on mission activity effectively and in accord with good principles, either on their own or with assistance from others (Grant-in-Aid). Witness Big Rapids, Michigan; Madison Avenue, Paterson, New Jersey; and Grand Valley and Western Michigan Campus Ministries.

7. The modified Grant-in-Aid policy which is at the heart of these decentralization recommendations would tend to encourage the local group to use more of its own resources.

8. Certain personnel problems (e.g. life and doctrine) may be resolved more readily and speedily. In our present system there is often confusion as to whose responsibility is whose, the denominational board's, the local groups or the calling church's. In decentralization lines of responsibility may be more clear.

#### B. *Recommendation of the Board of Home Missions*

1. It is the recommendation of the Board of Home Missions that Synod of 1973 not adopt the proposals of the Study Committee Report re decentralization.

##### *Grounds:*

- a. A plan for specific decentralization as proposed should be preceded by broader discussion regarding the inter-relationship of all denominational activities engaged in mission outreach.
- b. It is evident in reports from HMGA's, Classical Home Missions Committees, Home Missionaries and board members that significant things are happening which make local people alert to the fact that decentralization is already a process at work.
- c. The proposals for decentralization are far too specific to function practically in every classis and region.
- d. The plan for Area Home Missions Committees as proposed is unmanageable for most areas:
  - 1) A pattern for authority is not defined.
  - 2) A classical committee from a rural area would have trouble understanding the needs of an urban area, and vice versa (for example, Classis Rocky Mountain and North Central Iowa).
- e. HMGA's would be saddled with an inordinate amount of organizational meetings and would be prevented from pastoral and consultation contact with fields and missionaries.

- f. Classical Home Missions Committees would be required to expend more time than they could make available for the work as outlined.
  - g. The phasing out of the BHM's involvement and supervision in specialized ministries would leave HMGA's without the needed assistance and expertise in these areas of their work.
2. It was observed—
- a. Decentralization, defined as an adjustment in present home missions' policy to allow congregations and classes a greater share and involvement in the initiation, development and administration of home missions work in their areas, is a process already operative in various degrees throughout the denomination, which must be continued in a manner that builds the unity of the denomination and allows for maximum expression of local involvement and activity.
  - b. HMGA's are key factors in promoting the decentralization process and should be used for the purpose of facilitating good communications between Classical Home Missions Committees and the BHM. At present, they are active in assisting the BHM to encourage greater involvement on the part of Classical Home Missions Committees in its work.
  - c. The GIA program has contributed significantly and is playing a strategic role in the process of decentralization.
3. Therefore, it is the recommendation of the Board of Home Missions that:

The BHM and Classical Home Missions Committees, with the assistance of the HMGA's, arrange for joint supervision of all new and existing denominational home missions fields within their boundaries on a time-line and in a manner of operation that best reflects the interests of all parties involved and will not conflict with the Mission Order.

*Grounds:*

- a. This allows for the diversity of attitude and initiative that pertains in the various areas of the denomination.
- b. This allows for the most personal kind of relationship between the BHM, Classical Home Missions Committees and fields.
- c. The personnel and program designs are already existent for such implementation.

(*Note:* the matter of possibly modifying Grant-in-Aid policy to include funding for capital expenditures will be studied by a committee of the Board of Home Missions as appointed by the Executive Committee. It is hoped that a report can be completed prior to the Synod of 1973 and included in a supplementary report.)

#### VIII. MATTERS FOR SYNODICAL ACTION

A. The Board of Home Missions respectfully requests synod to grant the privilege of the floor to the board's president, treasurer, and the Minister of Evangelism when matters pertaining to home missions are discussed.

B. The board urgently requests synod to approve the Armed Forces Fund for one or more offerings from the churches.

C. The board urgently requests synod to place the Board of Home Missions on the list of denominational causes recommended for one or more offerings.

D. The board requests synod to approve the schedule of Grants-In-Aid for evangelism as presented in Section V, F of this report.

E. Re "Policy for Appointment of Home Missionaries," the Board of Home Missions submits the following for synod's consideration and action:

*Background:*

Over the years, the Board of Home Missions has been committed to develop and maintain close personal relationships with missionaries and fields, because such relationships are essential to effective mission. Historically, this board commitment has expanded as the number of fields and missionaries increased.

The position of Field Secretary was first established to maintain healthy relationship between fields and the home board. As the number of fields continued to grow, so did the number of crisis-situations. As a result, less and less staff time was available for maintaining close relationships. Then assistant field secretaries were added who administered the affairs of Indian missions and "special fields." More recently Home Missionaries on General Assignment were appointed. Already, the Home Missionaries on General Assignment have improved personal contacts with missionaries, fields and churches. These increased visits have improved communication between the board and many fields and missionaries.

These historical developments have created a need for a standard procedure by which field information (mission progress, missionary needs, etc.) can be reported as well as regularly and systematically evaluated. Partly in response to this need, the Executive Committee

" . . . decided that the staff study and come with recommendations re possible terms of service for all home missionaries as well as the possibility of extending appointments prior to implementing the formal calling process" (Cf. Article 686, e of January 27, 1972).

As a result of that study, the Board of Home Missions adopted the following recommendations to enable it to establish a standard method of missionary appointments, supplemented by a standard procedure for review and evaluation of the missionary's work. The procedure attempts to involve all necessary persons and supervising groups in the evaluation, thus supplying a broad-spectrum evaluation of the missionary's work and his personal and professional needs. In addition, this procedure relieves the Home Missionary on General Assignment of the sole responsibility for evaluation, and more actively involves the entire network of supervising groups.

The appointment procedure also intends to enable the missionary to evaluate his personal development and ministry needs. It supports the board's commitment for personal and professional development of its missionaries and will undoubtedly provide necessary input for the proposed basic missionary training program. This should be viewed with the other Board of Home Missions action on missionary training and the

“merit pay” concept involved in the additional week of vacation in a missionary’s third term (that is, the sixth year of consecutive service by a missionary with the board) as a “package.”

It is the conviction of the Board of Home Missions that the new procedure will greatly benefit the mission program of the board, the work of our home missionaries, and the missionary’s personal growth. Although not all home missionaries may welcome the proposed review and evaluation, we believe the action is essential to enable the board to maintain close, personal relationships with missionary personnel and fields, thus strengthening our mission program.

By way of summary interpretation of the policy, it should be clearly understood that the Board of Home Missions decision re appointments are intended specifically to—

1. Enable the Board of Home Missions to maintain close, personal relationships with the home missionary on the field, with a special emphasis on maintaining a working loyalty of the board to its missionaries.

2. Assist the home missionary to develop and use his gifts to the maximum effectiveness in the mission program of the field.

3. Enable the home missionary to discover training needs for himself in his particular field assignment.

4. Learn, together with the home missionary, how well the field is utilizing the gifts and the missionary in the mission program.

5. Determine, in certain instances, whether transfer to another field (i.e., reappointment) would be advisable.

6. Advise, in unusual instances, that a home missionary seek a ministry outside the home missions field.

*Regarding the policy itself—it was decided—*

1. That all home missionaries (excluding teachers)—ordained and unordained—be appointed for an initial term of two years, followed by successive three-year terms of service.

For ordained persons and candidates, following acceptance of the initial appointment, the Board of Home Missions will arrange for a calling church in consultation with the parties involved.

*Grounds:*

- a. This will facilitate the review and process necessary for maintaining close personal relationships with the missionary and his field.

- b. This is consistent with other agency practice (e.g., Board of Foreign Missions, Calvin College—and other denominationally-related colleges, Board of Publications and Board of Home Missions for its administrative personnel).

2. That six months prior to the normal reappointment date (i.e., March 1 of the calendar year) the following review and evaluation procedure be implemented through the Personnel Committee. Such a procedure is to be completed three months prior to reappointment date. Specifically, this evaluation process would be implemented by September 1 and completed by December 1 of the year preceding the March 1 re-appointment date.

It is noted that specific evaluative "tools" must be developed or secured to implement that evaluative process. Such a process would include the following:

- a. Written evaluation and recommendation of the home missionary from—
  - 1) The consistory or steering committee of the ministry he serves (or the equivalent in a campus setting).
  - 2) From the consistory of his calling church, if different from the church he serves.
  - 3) From fellow staff members if in a staff setting.
- b. Written evaluation and recommendation from the classical home mission committee where applicable.
- c. The Home Missionary on General Assignment and/or Grand Rapids staff member(s) will be involved in—
  - 1) Personal interview with the missionary.
  - 2) Written evaluation and recommendation re same.
- d. Written self-evaluation from the home missionary.

Ground: This review process will provide the home missionary with fuller current information re his work progress, together with personal and professional development needs.

3. That a home missionary at the beginning of his first three-year appointment will be eligible for one week per year for the purpose of individualized training. This time will not be cumulative except upon prior approval of the Board of Home Missions for specific purpose.

4. That the following implementation procedure be approved:

- a. New personnel come under this policy when beginning service with the Board of Home Missions. The beginning date of a missionary's first term will begin on the March 1 subsequent to his date of employment.
- b. Home missionaries who may be transferred would come under the policy at the time of transfer.
- c. Field personnel now under "appointment" (i.e., unordained) would come under the new policy at the time of their next regular appointment.
- d. Other personnel (i.e., present ordained missionaries) would come under this policy no later than January 1, 1976.

5. That the above appointment and evaluative policies also apply to personnel serving under Grant-In-Aids fields. Decisions re reappointments will be made by the employing body, in consultation with the Board of Home Missions.

6. That four weeks vacation be allowed all home missionaries beginning with their second third-year appointment (i.e., after five consecutive years of service with the Board of Home Missions).

NOTE: The normal synodical rules apply in the matters of ordained missionaries receiving/accepting calls. The Board of Home Missions is also refining its present missionary recruitment practices. Currently, all ordained missionaries, all Board of Home Missions office staff (ordained

and unordained) and all Home Missionaries on General Assignment are on an appointment basis.

*Recommendations:*

1. The Board of Home Missions requests synod's endorsement to allow that all home missionaries (excluding teachers)—ordained and unordained—be appointed for an initial term of two years followed by successive three-year terms of service.

2. The Board of Home Missions requests synod's approval to allow that the above appointment and evaluative policies also apply to personnel serving under Grant-In-Aid fields. Decisions re reappointments will be made by the employing body in consultation with the Board of Home Missions.

F. The board requests synod's endorsement of the decentralization concept adopted by the Board of Home Missions as presented in Section VII, B of this report.

G. The board recommends that the following names be placed in nomination for Member-at-Large:

S.W. Ontario—Mr. B. Hoogendam and Mr. W. Kuindersma

Central U.S.A.—Mr. E. Berends\* and Mr. J. Holwerda

Alternate for C. U.S.A.—Dr. W. Peterson\* and Dr. D. Pruis

Central U.S.A.—Dr. F. Westendorp\* and Dr. R. Westmaas

Alternate for C. U.S.A.—Mr. H. Fles\* and Mr. H. Daverman

\* Indicates incumbent

Board of Home Missions

Walter Hofman, President

## SUPPLEMENT 4-A

## CHRISTIAN REFORMED BOARD OF HOME MISSIONS

(Arts. 37, 53, 60, 67, 76, 80)

DEAR BROTHERS:

A. The Board of Home Missions submits the following recommendation in response to Overtures 3 and 15 from Classis Central California and Classis Rocky Mountain, respectively:

“The Board of Home Missions concurs in the need for a consideration of this change and further recommends that the FNC Committee adjust its requested quota to take care of the increased costs (rather than increasing the amount to be raised by the churches).”

B. The Board of Home Missions submits the following recommendation in response to the Report 9, Chaplain Committee, recommendation to the Synod of 1973 “to appoint a fulltime, qualified ordained man to serve as Executive Secretary for the Chaplain Committee”:

“That synod delay the appointment of an Executive Secretary for one year to study carefully whether the ministry now supervised by the Chaplain Committee should remain under this supervision or should be placed with the Board of Home Missions:

*Grounds:*

1) Such a study should normally precede any projected expansion and hiring of staff.

2) The expanded ministry of the Chaplain Committee is that area which is of concern and is projected as part of the program of the Board of Home Missions, e.g. prison ministry.

3) This would create an unnecessary duplication of work, and of church relations.

4) The Board of Home Missions has a synodical mandate to initiate and conduct special ministries such as seamen’s ministry, servicemen’s ministry, campus ministry.

C. The Board of Home Missions calls synod’s attention to Report 35, New Confession, in which the committee requests “that synod arrange for the revision and up-dating of the booklet: ‘The Christian Reformed Church—What it Teaches.’” We request synod to indicate the audience for this booklet, whether for persons making an inquiry about the Christian Reformed Church, either new Christians or from other churches, or for our own people.

*Ground:*

The objective or audience of the booklet will determine its format and language and who should be assigned the responsibility for revising and up-dating it.

D. The Board of Home Missions calls synod's attention to Report 18, SCORR in which they recommend:

"That synod appoint a committee to study FNC rules . . ." and  
 "that this study committee be composed of . . ."

We request synod, that should the committee recommended by SCORR be approved, or some similar committee, that the Board of Home Missions be represented on it.

E. The Board of Home Missions submits the following in response to Printed Appeal 1, Classis Toronto:

1. The appeal requests continuance of "the Cochrane field as a special ministry to a geographically and ethnically unique situation" with the grounds that "the Cochrane field should be evaluated in terms of its special history and nature and not as a traditional suburban ministry."

The Board of Home Missions informs synod that the criteria used in evaluating any ministry is determined in the light of the special needs and opportunities in a given locality. This was true also in evaluating Cochrane, with attention given also to the history and development of the Cochrane congregation.

2. It can be demonstrated from monthly reports that the missionaries sent to the Cochrane field did attempt to involve themselves in meaningful outreach to the community and did attempt to engage the "decreasing congregation" in this outreach.
3. The Board of Home Missions has taken note of the unique characteristics of the town and people of Cochrane. There are four identifiable sub-cultures, the largest being French, but the total of all four does not exceed 5,000 people. With all due respect for the God-given abilities of the Cochrane congregation, and for the measure of their devotion, we nevertheless believe that the present congregation is not able to meet the demands of such a diversified community, and to minister to them in a meaningful way. The congregation itself is, in a sense, a sub-culture. Most of the membership, perhaps all of the leadership, is still of the first generation immigrant status (e.g. the local leadership has insisted upon regularly scheduled Dutch services).
4. Classis Toronto states that it is convinced that the Cochrane field has a "unique potential." The Board of Home Missions fails to see both the potential and the manner by which Classis Toronto arrived at that conclusion. In reading the special report of the Classical Home Missions Committee, it is our conclusion that even the "unique potential" is only potentially there.
5. The matter of the Cochrane field has been the subject of numerous hours of discussion with the Classical Home Missions Committee of Classis Toronto. We believe that the real issue of the appeal of Classis Toronto is basically internal in nature. Classis is concerned about the ten families who remain in Cochrane. We can appreciate the concern of classis, and we share that concern. However, we do not believe that the answer to that concern lies in constructing this case for mission. The concern is a pastoral one and ought to

be faced as such. At its annual meeting in February, 1973, the Board of Home Missions recommended that the Cochrane field be terminated "as a Home Missions field" and that it be referred to the continued care of Classis Toronto. It appears that Classis Toronto has not been willing to recognize the problem for what it is, and subsequently is laying the burden for the "continued care" at the door of the Board of Home Missions. The statement that Cochrane ought not to be by-passed in the present Canadian situation, is not understandable to us in the light of the fact that every Canadian delegate, except the delegate of Classis Toronto, voted for terminating our involvement in Cochrane, at our February meeting. The decision of the Board of Home Missions was made, first of all, on the basis of mission potential in terms of Cochrane's "special history and nature."

F. The officers of synod have before them an appeal from the Manhattan Christian Reformed Church "that synod grant the building now occupied by the Manhattan Christian Reformed Church to the Manhattan Christian Reformed Church as a gift." The precise reason why the Manhattan Christian Reformed Church is asking for the building as a gift and is therefore presently unwilling to purchase the building, at any price, or even lease it, is their conviction that a sale or lease agreement is inconsistent with the biblical character of giving and Christian mission administration. The Board of Home Missions is convinced that the present policy of loans to Home Missions fields, from a revolving fund originally set up from the quota-gifts of God's people is sound Christian stewardship and proper use of money given to God. It is therefore recommended that synod not accede to their appeal.

*Grounds:*

1. The present revolving fund for capital loans to Home Missions churches for erection or purchase of a church building is good, biblical stewardship and proper use of offerings given to God.
2. The terms of the loan, established by synod (Acts, 1960, Art. 171), represent and combine a substantial denominational subsidy and a responsibility of the loan recipient to make repayments which can be used to help other fields.
3. In special situations such as the Manhattan Christian Reformed Church, the exact amount of repayment commitment is open to negotiation.
4. The Board of Home Missions, at its annual meeting in February, 1973, authorized a \$1.00 per year, care-free lease to the Manhattan Christian Reformed Church for a period of five years. If such a lease arrangement were entered into, the Manhattan Christian Reformed Church could have control of their properties for their ministry design. The only exception would be their inability to mortgage the properties until a mutually agreeable purchase arrangement was made.

G. The Board of Home Missions submits the following in response to Report 34 on neo-Pentecostalism:

1. The Board of Home Missions wishes to inform synod of our deep concern in this matter since, as there are problems in some of our Christian Reformed churches regarding neo-Pentecostalism, so there are also problems in certain of our Home Missions churches.
2. The Board of Home Missions has informed all mission personnel to refrain from promoting the charismatic movement, pending the decision of synod and its study committee. Therefore, we urge synod to come to decision and state a position.
3. The Board of Home Missions requests synod to adopt specific resolutions which provide clear and definitive guidelines in dealing practically with neo-Pentecostal teachings and practices.

H. The board informs synod that, before an Executive Secretary of the Board of Home Missions is appointed and other staff replaced, the board is having a study by an independent agency made of the staff structure, assignments and needs. (A special gift was made to the board for this purpose.) The board at its annual meeting in February will be making a recommendation re an Executive Secretary. At the present time Mr. G. J. Borst is serving as the Chairman of the Staff, along with his duties as treasurer.

Board of Home Missions

G. J. Borst

Chairman of the Staff

## REPORT 5

## THE CHRISTIAN REFORMED BOARD OF PUBLICATIONS

(Arts. 33, 63, 83)

## DEAR BROTHERS:

The Christian Reformed Board of Publications submits the following report to synod for consideration. Some items are presented as information while others will require synodical action.

The Board of Publications operates under the mandate of synod which authorizes it to supervise and implement the church's program of religious education and publication. It has now completed its fourth year of operation since synod consolidated the work of the former Education, Sunday School and Publication Committees under one denominational board. During the past year the board and its committees have sought to carry on the work assigned by synod. We now wish to report our activities of the past year and present the matters that require synod's approval.

## I. ORGANIZATION OF THE BOARD

A. *Membership*

The membership of the board is composed of one delegate elected by each classis of the denomination. The board meets once each year. The annual meeting was held February 13 and 14, at which all the classes were represented. The current roster of delegates is herewith presented for the approval of synod:

Classis	Member	Alternate
Alberta North.....	Rev. Jack Westerhof.....	Rev. John Vriend
Alberta South.....	Rev. Peter Van Tuinen.....	Mr. D. Bouwsema
British Columbia.....	Mr. Syrt Wolters.....	Mr. G. W. J. Ensing
Cadillac.....	Rev. Fred Van Dyk.....	Rev. Clarence Vander Plate
California South.....	Rev. Clarence Nyenhuis.....	Rev. Robert Evenhuis
Central California.....	Rev. James Versluys.....	Mr. Kuno Maliepaard
Chatham.....	Rev. Leonard Schalkwyk.....	Rev. Jelle Nutma*
Chicago North.....	Mrs. E. Van Reken.....	Mr. Kenneth Zylstra
Chicago South.....	Dr. A. C. De Jong.....	Rev. Neal Punt
Columbia.....	Rev. Harry H. Boer.....	Rev. Francis Breisch
Eastern Canada.....	Rev. Dirk J. Hart.....	Mr. Reinder J. Klein
Florida.....	Mr. Kenneth Tanis.....	Mr. Roger Sikkenga
Grand Rapids East.....	Rev. Clarence Boomsma.....	Rev. C. Terpstra
Grand Rapids North.....	Mr. John Brondsema.....	Mr. Richard Hoekstra
Grand Rapids South.....	Rev. William Buursma.....	Rev. John T. Hofman
Grandville.....	Rev. Willard Van Antwerpen.....	Rev. L. Bossenbroek
Hackensack.....	Miss Dorothy Kelder.....	Miss Wilma Knoll
Hamilton.....	Rev. William Vander Beek.....	Rev. Jacob Kuntz
Holland.....	Mr. Raymond Holwerda.....	Mr. Donald Zwier
Hudson.....	Dr. Roger Van Heyningen.....	Mr. A. Frieling

Classis	Member	Alternate
Huron.....	Rev. Gerard Nonnekes.....	Dr. Henry Feenstra
Illiana.....	Rev. John Piersma.....	Rev. Daniel Bos
Kalamazoo.....	Rev. John A. Mulder.....	Dr. Sidney Dykstra
Lake Erie.....	Rev. Donald Postema.....	Mrs. Lois Faram
Minnesota North.....	Mr. Harold Pluimer.....	Rev. Theodore Wevers
Minnesota South.....	Rev. Peter Brouwer.....	Rev. William Green Jr.
Muskegon.....	Rev. Marvin Beelen.....	Mr. David Schelhaas
Northcentral Iowa.....	Mr. A. Cooper.....	Mr. Chris Den Ouden
Orange City.....	Mr. George De Vries Jr.....	Rev. N. Vogelzang
Pacific Northwest.....	Rev. Bartel Huizenga.....	Rev. Jack Stulp
Pella.....	Rev. Gerrit Vander Plaats.....	Mr. Joseph H. Hall
Quinte.....	Rev. Riemer Praamsma.....	Mr. Walter Vos
Rocky Mountain.....	Dr. Richard Post.....	Rev. Gary De Velder
Sioux Center.....	Dr. James Veltkamp.....	
Toronto.....	Dr. Hendrik Hart.....	Rev. Louis Tamminga*
Wisconsin.....	Mr. Arthur Meeter.....	Rev. H. Vanden Einde
Zeeland.....	Rev. Arthur Besteman.....	Rev. Enno Haan*

(\*indicates alternates attending the annual meeting in place of the regular member.)

The board elects its officers annually, and this year the following were again chosen to serve:

- President: Rev. Clarence Boomsma
- Vice President: Mr. Raymond Holwerda
- Secretary: Rev. John A. Mulder
- Treasurer: Mr. John Brondsema

**B. The Executive Committee**

Last year the board requested synod for permission to restructure the organization of the committees serving under the board. Synod took the following action (Acts of Synod, 1972, Art. 29, II, 2, p. 35) :

“Re restructuring the present organization.

a. That synod grant the Board of Publications permission to realign the structure and duties of its working committees.

*Grounds:*

1. The Synod of 1968 gave such specific details of the composition and duties of the Education Committee, Periodicals Committee and Business Committee that the board does not have authority to make changes in the structure without permission from synod.
2. The Board of Publications feels that the mandate which synod has given can better be achieved by a reconstruction of the committee organization. Adopted

b. That synod instruct the Board of Publications to report on its progress to the Synod of 1974. Adopted”

The plan for restructuring the committees as approved by the board involved reassigning the members of the Business Committee to the Education, Periodicals and Executive Committees so that business matters pertaining to each of these committees could be processed in the sessions of these committees rather than having them referred to a separate Business Committee for decision. As a result, the Executive Committee was enlarged by the addition of three members appointed directly by the board. These members-at-large are not board members as are the

other Executive Committee members, but have been appointed for three-year terms to serve on the Executive Committee. Therefore this committee is now composed of the four officers of the board, five board members chosen by the board, and three members-at-large appointed by the board. The membership of the Executive Committee for this year is:

President: Rev. Clarence Boomsma (Classis Grand Rapids East)  
 Vice President: Mr. Raymond Holwerda (Classis Holland)  
 Secretary: Rev. John A. Mulder (Classis Kalamazoo)  
 Treasurer: Mr. John Brondsema (Classis Grand Rapids North)  
 Rev. Marvin Beelen (Classis Muskegon)  
 Rev. William Buursma (Classis Grand Rapids South)  
 Mr. Joseph Daverman (Businessman from Periodicals Committee)  
 Mr. Gordon Quist (Businessman-at-large)  
 Mr. Bernard Scholten (Businessman from Education Committee)  
 Rev. Donald Postema (Classis Lake Erie)  
 Rev. William Vander Beek (Classis Hamilton)  
 Mrs. E. (Rose) Van Reken (Classis Chicago North)

Of the three members-at-large, Mr. Quist serves only on the Executive Committee, Mr. Daverman on both the Executive and Periodicals Committees, and Mr. Scholten on both the Executive and Education Committees.

The Executive Committee and the two committees serving under it, the Education and Periodical Committees, meet regularly the first Thursday of each month except March, which follows immediately after the annual meeting of the board, and August, which is largely a vacation month. The Education and Periodicals Committee meet separately during the day, and the Executive Committee meets in the evening of the same day. This helps keep travel costs at a minimum, and the arrangement has proved satisfactory.

### *C. The Education Committee*

The Education Committee as organized for this year is composed of the following members:

Dr. J. Marion Snapper, Chairman (1971-1974)  
 Mr. Marion Vos, Vice Chairman (1972-1975)  
 Rev. John A. Mulder, Secretary (Executive Committee member)  
 Mr. Herman Baker (1971-1974)  
 Mr. John Brondsema (Executive Committee Member)  
 Dr. Arnold De Graaff (1970-1973)  
 Dr. Gordon Spykman (1970-1973)  
 Rev. Earl Schipper (1970-1973)  
 Mr. Bernard Scholten (1972-1975)  
 Rev. William Vander Beek (Executive Committee member)  
 Mr. Peter Vander Kamp (1970-1973)  
 Mrs. Rose Van Reken (Executive Committee member)  
 Dr. Gordon Werkema (1971-1974)

Since the members of the Education Committee are appointed by synod, we call the following to the attention of synod:

Dr. Gordon Werkema has sent a letter of resignation in January because he has moved to Washington, D.C. to assume responsibilities with the Council for the Advancement of Small Colleges. The Education and Executive Committees accepted his resignation, thanking him for his interest in and work for the Board of Publications. Since his term does not expire until 1974, a replacement must be provided for one year. The terms of Dr. Spykman, Dr. Arnold De Graaff and Mr. Peter Vander Kamp terminate this year, and nominations for their replacements have been prepared since none is eligible for reelection according to the schedule of appointments. The Rev. Earl Schipper was appointed for a term of one year to represent the Board of Home Missions, to round out a full term, since he had served two years as a replacement for Mr. Clifford Christians. The one-year appointment was also designed to test whether he would have the time to give to this assignment. He has now indicated eagerness to continue to serve, and the board recommends his reappointment for a regular term of three years.

The following nominations are herewith submitted to synod in order that the vacancies occurring this year may be filled:

For a three year term to replace Dr. A. De Graaff:

Dr. Sidney Dykstra  
Prof. William Hendricks

For a three year term to replace Mr. Peter Vander Kamp:

Mr. Barry Foster  
Mr. Albert Bytwork

For a one year term to replace Dr. G. Werkema:

Mr. Arnold Snoeyink  
Mr. Chester Alkema

Reappointment of Rev. E. Schipper for three years as a representative of the Home Mission Board

(Concerning the nominees, this brief information is provided:

Dr. Sidney Dykstra is a member of the faculty of Western Michigan University at Kalamazoo, teaching in the Education Department. He was previously connected with the National Union of Christian Schools, and is an alternate board member for Classis Kalamazoo.

Prof. William Hendricks is Assistant Professor of Education at Calvin College.

Mr. Barry Foster is a graduate of the RBC, has served with the Christian Service Club, and is now coordinator of the United Evangelical Association for Inner City Work in Muskegon.

Mr. Albert Bytwork is working as an evangelist at Charlotte, Michigan.

Mr. Arnold Snoeyink is a teacher at Grand Rapids Christian High School, has served on the Unified Church School Curriculum, and has worked for the National Union of Christian Schools.

Mr. Chester Alkema teaches in the art department at Grand Valley College.)

A nomination for the replacement of Dr. Gordon Spykman had been prepared for approval by the board, but it was discovered that one of the nominees would not be able to serve. Therefore the board asked

the Executive Committee to prepare another nomination. Since the Executive Committee could not do this in time for inclusion in this report, this nomination will be forwarded in the supplementary report to synod.

#### D. *The Education Sub-committees*

Since the organization of the Board of Publications which included the Education Committee in the present structure, the Education Committee has worked through a number of sub-committees. These were the Catechism Committee, the Sunday School Committee, the Adult Education Committee, the Youth Evangelism Committee, the Spanish Literature Committee, and the Personnel Committee. The membership of these committees was appointed annually at the first regular meeting of the Education Committee after the annual meeting of the board. With the additions to the staff, the progress made in the planning of the new curriculum, and the production of new materials a daily ongoing process that needs full-time attention of the various staff members, the action tended to swing away from the subcommittees and center in the daily work in the office. When the principles of systems analysis were applied, it became clear that it was not necessary to have as many standing committees meeting at regularly scheduled times. Therefore the committee appointed to study this matter came with a number of recommendations. The one affecting the sub-committee structure reads as follows: "We recommend that all present curriculum committees be dissolved. *Ad hoc* committees are to be appointed with specific mandates as the needs arise and are to function only until their mandates are satisfied. Mandates and needs are to be raised in the Education Committee and at that level the need for *ad hoc* committees is to be decided.

#### *Grounds:*

1. This will allow flexibility in meeting the educational needs of the church as they arise.
2. It will provide a means to supply staff with resource personnel and guidance when needed without the harassment of a cumbersome committee structure.
3. It gives maximum responsibility to the Education Committee for coordination and scheduling in meeting the needs of the church.
4. This arrangement does not preclude the possibility of staff seeking informal reactions to ideas from individuals they may select.

A letter of thanks was sent to all committee members, explaining the new structure and alerting them to the possibility that from time to time they may be contacted as resource persons.

The committees that were retained are the following:

1. The Youth Evangelism Committee serves as an *ad hoc* committee to finalize the survey of the need for Vacation Bible School materials and to evaluate the materials available from other sources so that interested churches may be guided in their selection of materials. It is also possible that other materials for youth evangelism may be produced

under the direction of this committee in the future. The present committee members are:

Mr. Peter Vander Kamp, chairman  
 Mr. Barry Foster  
 Dr. Donald Oppewal  
 Rev. Earl Schipper  
 Mrs. Peter Bush

2. Another *ad hoc* committee is the Personnel Committee which assists the staff in its search for suitable candidates for positions to be filled. This committee interviews candidates to be considered and will present nominations to the Education Committee. The members are:

Dr. J. Marion Snapper, Chairman  
 Rev. Clarence Boomsma  
 Rev. John A. Mulder  
 Mr. Bernard Scholten

This committee also has the mandate to make eventual recommendations concerning future staff structure.

3. A newly-created *ad hoc* committee is the Promotion and Evaluation Committee. The members are Messrs. John Brondsema and Marion Vos. Since the task of the Rev. Jerome Batts is a new one and its scope without historical precedents, the definition of duties needs refinement. At the Rev. Mr. Batts' request this *ad hoc* committee was appointed to work with him, giving both advice and supervision.

4. The Spanish Literature Committee is still functioning, but a recommendation is being made to synod for an independent synodically appointed committee funded by a synodical quota, having as its members knowledgeable people from various boards and agencies now working with Spanish-speaking people. The present members of this committee are:

Mr. Herman Baker, Chairman  
 Dr. Roger Greenway  
 Rev. Juan S. Boonstra  
 Mr. Stephen Bellin

#### *E. The Periodicals Committee*

The Periodicals Committee is composed of the following members:

Rev. William Buursma, Chairman (Exec. Comm. member)  
 Rev. Donald Postema, Vice-chairman (Exec. Comm. member)  
 Mr. Raymond Holwerda, Secretary (Exec. Comm. member)  
 Rev. Marvin Beelen (Exec. Comm. member)  
 Dr. Andrew J. Bandstra (Theologian, 1972-1975)  
 Dr. William Oldenburg (Journalist, 1971-1974)  
 Mr. Joseph Daverman (Exec. Comm. businessman, 1972-1975)  
 Mr. Casey Wondergem, Jr. (Businessman, 1970-1973)

The term of Mr. Wondergem expires this year. We submit the following nominations to Synod:

Mr. Casey Wondergem, Jr. (incumbent, eligible for reelection)  
 Mr. Robert Hooker

(Note: Mr. Wondergem is employed by the Daverman Architectural Firm, and is knowledgeable in the field of advertising. Mr. Hooker is vice president of Import Motors.)

#### F. *The Education Staff*

The staff of the Education Department is made up of the following members:

Acting Director and Theological Editor: Rev. Andrew Kuyvenhoven  
 Pedagogical Editor: Mr. Robert Rozema  
 Assistant Editor: Mrs. Ruth Vander Hart  
 Associate Editor: Coordinator of Field Services: Rev. Jerome Batts  
 Business Manager: Mr. Peter Meeuwsen  
 Staff Artist: Mr. Paul Stoub  
 Secretary and Receptionist: Mrs. Alida L. Arnoys

The Rev. Andrew Kuyvenhoven and Mr. Rozema are synodical appointees, and both their terms expire this year. Therefore the board recommends that synod reappoint them for terms of two years as follows:

Editor-Theological Type: Rev. Andrew Kuyvenhoven  
 Editor-Pedagogical Type: Mr. Robert Rozema

As reported to synod last year, the resignation of the Rev. William Vander Haak as Director of Education left a vacancy on the staff. Last year the board appointed the Rev. Mr. Kuyvenhoven to serve as Acting Director in addition to his duties as Theological Editor and gave the Education Committee the mandate to begin immediately to assess what kind of functions are needed to complete the staff, either by way of new appointments or restructuring the present staff by reassigning duties. The Education Committee reported to the board this year that it was not yet prepared to make final recommendations concerning staff structure and the appointment of a Director of Education, and therefore requested the board to reappoint the Rev. Mr. Kuyvenhoven as Acting Director until September 1, 1974. Therefore the Rev. Mr. Kuyvenhoven continues to fill this dual role assigned him. Matters taken from his report to the board at its annual meeting will be included in a separate section of this report. Suffice to say here that the staff has been extremely busy this past year in carrying out its assignments.

#### G. *The Periodicals Staff*

The Periodicals Staff, operating under the direction of the Periodicals Committee includes the following members:

Editor of *THE BANNER*: Dr. Lester DeKoster  
 Assistant to the Editor of *THE BANNER*: Miss Gertrude Haan  
 Secretary: Miss Judy Bronsink  
 Business Manager: Mr. Peter Meeuwsen  
 Staff Artist: Mr. Wayne De Jonge  
 Editor of *De Wachter*: Rev. William Haverkamp

The term of Rev. Haverkamp ends this year. Although he retired from the active ministry in March, he wishes to continue as editor. He serves ably with enthusiasm and dedication. The board recommends that he be reappointed for three years.

## II. FINANCIAL REPORT

The board operates on a fiscal year of September 1 to August 31 rather than following the calendar year. This is more adaptable to the entire program of the board and facilitates budgeting for the following year. The board presents the following information to synod as prepared by our auditor. A detailed account of all transactions is available to the budget committees of synod.

October 20, 1972

To the Board of Publications of  
the Christian Reformed Church  
Grand Rapids, Michigan

We have examined the balance sheet of the Board of Publications of the Christian Reformed Church, Grand Rapids, Michigan as of August 31, 1972 and the related statements of income (loss) and contributed capital for the year then ended. Our examination was made in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards, and accordingly, included such tests of the accounting records and such other auditing procedures as we considered necessary in the circumstances.

In our opinion, the accompanying balance sheet and statements of income (loss) and contributed capital present fairly the financial position of the Board of Publications of the Christian Reformed Church at August 31, 1972 and the results of its operations for the year then ended, in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles applied on a basis consistent with that of the preceding year.

Pruis Carter, Hamilton & Dieterman  
Certified Public Accounts

BALANCE SHEET  
BOARD OF PUBLICATIONS OF THE CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH  
GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN  
August 31, 1972

ASSETS

Current			
Cash	\$	12,053	
Certificates of deposit		140,000	
Accounts receivable		143,467	
Land contract receivable (Note A)		10,870	
Accrued interest receivable		1,946	
Inventories		102,418	
Prepaid expenses		18,163	\$428,917
Other			
Land contract receivable (Note A)		43,853	
Rental property - net		6,736	
Inventory - supplies		7,109	57,698

NOTE A—The land contract receivable dated March 19, 1971 with an unpaid balance of \$54,723 at August 31, 1972, requires quarterly payments of \$3,500 including interest at six percent. The contract may be paid in full anytime after two years but must be paid in full within five years.

Property, plant and equipment (at cost)		
Land, building and improvements	\$ 843,684	
Machinery, office furniture and fixtures and automotive	<u>485,537</u>	
	1,329,221	
Less—allowance for depreciation	<u>438,906</u>	890,315
		<u>\$1,376,930</u>

## LIABILITIES

Current		
Accounts payable	\$ 55,609	
Accrued expenses	<u>16,885</u>	\$ 72,494
Deferred income		183,042
Reserve for future repairs		<u>2,913</u>

## EQUITY

From operations		
Balance — September 1, 1971	\$748,404	
Net income(loss) for the year ended August 31, 1972	<u>(64,216)</u>	
Contributed	\$684,188	
Balance — August 31, 1972	<u>434,293</u>	<u>\$1,118,481</u>
		<u>\$1,376,930</u>

NOTE —The 1972 Synod of the Christian Reformed Church approved the following 1973 denominational family quota for the Board of Publications of the Christian Reformed Church:

Church-School Curriculum	\$2.00
Denominational building addition	1.00
Spanish literature	.75
De Wachter	.25

Total \$4.00

STATEMENT OF CONTRIBUTED CAPITAL  
BOARD OF PUBLICATIONS OF THE CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH  
August 31, 1972

Building			
Balance — September 1, 1971		\$ 90,484	
Less—depreciation on portion of the original building		<u>2,609</u>	\$ 87,875
Building addition			
Balance — September 1, 1971		\$194,165	
Synodical quotas received	\$ 48,580		
Building improvements capitalized	<u>6,239</u>	\$54,819	
Less:			
Depreciation on building addition and improvements	\$ 8,021		
Interest	1,266		
Other expenses	<u>6,239</u>	\$15,526	
Other		<u>39,293</u>	233,458
Excess of assets over liabilities assumed in the merger of the Committee on Education of the Christian Reformed Church			<u>112,960</u>
			<u>\$434,293</u>

STATEMENT OF INCOME(LOSS)  
BOARD OF PUBLICATIONS OF THE CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH  
Year ended August 31, 1972

Income		
Subscriptions and sales		\$891,741
Costs		
Material	\$365,457	
Direct labor and artist	120,069	
Manufacturing expenses	126,684	
Writers	16,476	
Mailing expenses	75,576	
Other	<u>7,730</u>	<u>711,992</u>
		\$179,749
General and administrative		
Direct (clerical-editorial-managerial)	\$196,761	
Indirect (depreciation-insurance-office supplies-postage, etc.)	<u>59,815</u>	<u>256,576</u>
Operating income (loss)		\$(76,827)
Other income (loss)		<u>12,611</u>
Net income (loss)		<u><u>\$(64,216)</u></u>

### III. MATTERS RELATING TO PERIODICALS AND PUBLICATIONS

#### A. *The Banner*

1. The Synod of 1972 encouraged the churches to adopt the Every Family Plan of subscribing to THE BANNER. At present there are 120 congregations that have adopted this plan, which accounts for 7300 subscribers receiving THE BANNER in this way. There have been twelve churches that adopted the plan for the first time during the fiscal year 1972-1973. The board would like to see a larger number of churches following this pattern and requests that synod again encourage the churches to consider adopting the Every Family Plan.

2. The total number of subscribers to THE BANNER is at present 42,776. Last year the figure stood at 43,350. Some of this loss is due to the reduced number of servicemen subscriptions which accompanied the withdrawal of troops from Vietnam.

The Executive Committee, noting the decline in income for THE BANNER and the loss sustained in the past fiscal year in its publication, took steps to increase the revenue. As of Feb. 1, 1973, the subscription price of THE BANNER was raised from \$5 to \$6 per year. Meanwhile, the advertising rates have been raised 10 percent. The sharp rise in production costs and postal rates has necessitated these advances in subscription and advertising rates. An increase in the number of subscriptions would do much to alleviate the situation and plans are being considered to achieve this goal.

3. The Synod of 1972 (Acts, Art. 58, c. 5) referred to the Publications Committee the matter of having only "Calls Accepted" published in the church periodicals. After studying the matter the Periodicals Committee recommended that the present policy of publishing calls extended, calls declined and calls accepted be continued, and that consistories be requested to supply the information. The board adopted this recommendation, and we so inform synod.

4. The board sends representatives to the annual meeting of the Evangelical Press Association and copies of *THE BANNER* are submitted for judging and in competition for various awards. We are happy to report the following:

#### “THE BANNER WINS AWARD”

*THE BANNER* was selected as the best denominational periodical of 1971, by the Evangelical Press Association. This is the second consecutive year that our church weekly has been chosen for this prestigious award. The judge evaluating our church paper said: “This magazine does well its self-defined task of keeping members of its denomination informed about *the* Church and *their* church and as a forum for discussions of denominational issues. Its content is an accurate—and fascinating—mirror of the ‘world’ it serves. Typographic packaging is appropriate to the audience. It is lively yet dignified, contemporary yet not faddish. Photo reproduction is excellent and is especially well demonstrated by a portfolio that shows winners in the magazine’s photography contest. But, as always, it is the excellence of content that makes this a significant magazine and a courageous editorial voice that makes it a potent influence in his service.” Several other awards were earned by *THE BANNER*. They included a first place for the sensitive and nostalgic article by Marinus Swets entitled “Where Did That Innocence Go?” A striking poem “The Age of Metal,” by Arthur O. Roberts, also captured a first place rating. *THE BANNER* photo contest apparently found favor not only with the many entrants, but also with the judge who awarded a second place to this feature. David Hoekema’s photo “I Corinthians 13” was given a third place award, and Miss Haan received an honorable mention for her in-depth study of the rock opera, *Jesus Christ Superstar*. *THE BANNER* was singled out for its design and graphics.

#### B. *De Wachter*

Since synod last year approved a quota of 25c per family for the continued publication of *De Wachter*, the board requests that this quota be continued for 1974. During the past year the number of subscribers has decreased from 2650 to 2590, a loss of 60 subscriptions or 2.26 percent. Since the subscription rate has maintained this level the board is asking continuation of the quota.

#### C. *The Sale of Bibles*

Since synod has approved the use of the Revised Standard Version of the Bible in our churches, the board requests permission to stock and sell this version as well as the American Standard Version as a service to the churches and individuals. Since our office has been selling the American Standard Version with synodical approval, it would be a real service to the churches to be able to supply all versions of the Bible commonly used by the churches. Therefore we seek approval of this request.

#### IV. MATTERS PERTAINING TO THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

##### A. Report of the Acting Director of Education

The Rev. Andrew Kuyvenhoven, Acting Director of Education, submitted a full report of the activities and plans of the education staff to the annual meeting of the board. Since this report contains much material that will be of interest to synod, we present it here as information.

TO THE BOARD OF PUBLICATIONS OF THE CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH FROM THE ACTING DIRECTOR OF THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT.

##### 1. *The Making of Tools and Policies*

During 1972 we completed one job and began another. We completed the production of a catechetical curriculum with the publication of *Living Members*. Now we have a complete line of "catechism books" for students of (school) grades three to twelve, ten courses in all. It took ten years to produce this curriculum, from 1962 to 1972. No doubt, all board members are familiar with the titles of this series: *Light Upon My Path* (3rd grade), *With All My Heart* (4th), *Teach Me Thy Way* (5th), *Steps In Faith* (6th), *That I May Know* (7th), *My Church* (8th), *Never On Your Own* (9th and 10th), *Christian Life Series* (11th) and *Living Members* (12th).

However, the catechetical curriculum which was produced between 1962 and 1972 has not yet been fully accepted by all churches. Many catechists continue to use the manuals on the Compendium, which were produced prior to 1962: *What Must I Know?* (for beginners), *Saved From Sin* (which deals with the first half of the Compendium), and *Saved To Serve* (which deals with the second half of the Compendium).

Meanwhile, we are promoting a new curriculum, the Unified Curriculum. The theory of this curriculum was accepted by the Synod of 1970, the editors for this curriculum were appointed in 1971, and the first products of the new approach hit the churches in September of 1972.

In view of this rapid shift in church educational policy, there is no reason to be amazed when we meet preachers and elders who are either uninformed or suspicious or both.

The idea of a Unified Curriculum is not new. Since the Synod of 1928, the church has been bothered by the relationship between Sunday school and catechism (Acts, pp. 30-38) and the idea of a Unified Curriculum which would put the Sunday school and catechism instruction on a one-track program was already presented, defended and defeated in 1930 (pp. 313-334) and 1936 (pp. 76-78, 254-261).

In 1970 the church accepted the idea of the one-track program when the synod adopted the document "Toward a Unified Church School Curriculum." But when the theories of church education had been accepted, nobody was quite sure what the implications would be for the institutions of Sunday school and catechism classes, and how this decision would affect existing educational tools. Our document of 1970 defended the rationale for the new program: it did not explicitly evaluate existing programs and tools. Now we receive many requests to clarify

board policy. The churches wish to know especially whether we are committed to maintaining the Heidelberg Catechism as the heart of our educational program. They have a right to ask this, since the Church Order prescribes that "the Heidelberg Catechism and its Compendium shall be the basis of instruction" in the church school (Art. 64c). However, this stipulation of the Church Order is not reiterated in our document of 1970.

In our preliminary outline of the courses from grades one to twelve, as presented to the board in 1972, we designated two years (grades nine and ten) for an intensive study of the Heidelberg. Thus far we have assumed that *Never On Your Own* would be the textbook for these courses. However there are no definite plans for this part of the program.

Throughout our program we will reflect and expound the content of the Reformed confessions; but the Catechism and the Compendium will not constitute the "basis" of our instruction in a formal sense. In fact, we have consciously abandoned the approach which makes the Catechism the only pedagogical method for teaching the truth of God.

The Education Committee did decide that all existing "catechism books" will remain available to the churches, as long as the demand for these books makes it feasible to do so. After all, we do not intend to force the churches to relinquish manuals which we produced for them a few years ago.

However, our policy will be to advise a one-track core program of education which combines the former Sunday school and catechism instruction; and the mandate of your staff is to produce such a program according to the principles and guidelines adopted in 1970 and 1972.

## 2. *The Old Catechism Curriculum*

As mentioned above, *Living Members* was produced during the past year as the last book in the old curriculum. The Teacher's Manual of 224 pages was written by Tymen E. Hofman. The student's book was prepared by the staff. The book is addressed to young adults shortly before or after their public profession of faith.

The textbook *Never On Your Own*, by Gordon Spykman, was well received by the churches. It certainly filled a need. When it was first published, in 1969, 12,000 copies were sold. Also the Study Guides "A" and "B" which were written by Marion Snapper have been well accepted. However, a survey confirmed our suspicion that the student manuals and the textbook did not relate sufficiently; students would soon discover that they could answer the questions in the Guide, without doing the assigned reading in the textbook. We decided to prepare alternate student manuals. The first one appeared in September of 1972. The second one is due before September of this year. These manuals are prepared by the staff. We make use of materials submitted by the Rev. Neal Punt. A special feature of these new manuals is the inclusion of the new translation of the Heidelberg Catechism which is being considered by the churches.

In spite of the fact that present editors have serious objections to *My Church*, a limited reprint was authorized to meet continuing demand.

There is still one booklet missing in the *Christian Life Series*, the one on "Politics and the Word of God."

### 3. *The Old Sunday School Curriculum*

Our former Sunday school papers and the *Key* are no longer published.

We still have preschool materials of the old line. They sold exceptionally well this year, although the course is an embarrassment to the staff.

On the level of Junior and Senior High School, we have joined the Great Commission Publications for the last two years. Demand for these courses has dropped sharply. This is partly due to the nature of the materials, and partly due to our emphasis on a one-track program.

We are recommending that the joint publication of Junior and Senior High materials be arranged for another year with Great Commission Publications. (See report of the Executive Committee of the Board.) The recommendation is made in the interest of those churches and groups who depend on us for supply. An evaluation of the materials to be used September 1973 through August 1974 has been made by the staff.

We continue to publish a Sunday school paper for adults, entitled *Bible Studies*.

### 4. *The New Curriculum: BIBLE WAY*

We call the new curriculum "Bible Way." Three courses are now being produced: *Bible Steps*, *Bible Trails* and *Bible Guide*. Three quarters of the first year will be available when the board meets. Staff and writers are working on the summer quarter. We are caught in a very tight schedule.

*Bible Steps* is for 1st and 2nd graders (ages 6 and 7). The author is Sheri Haan. The first quarter of this material came under severe criticism from several sides for its prominent display of a little dog, called Mini Mutt. Valid criticisms have been accepted and corresponding changes have been made. The student materials consist of a take-home paper with four color illustrations and a workbook with thirteen activities on perforated sheets. A teacher's packet contains a manual with detailed instructions for teaching the lesson and various visual aids.

The lesson plan for the third quarter, originally titled "People Around Me," was changed to "God's Family." For the other three quarters we have followed the outlines and plans as they were presented to the board in February 1972.

#### *Original plan for the Third Quarter, Year One, Primary:*

1. I live in a family. I need my family's love and care.
2. God gave me my parents. When I obey them, I am obeying God.
3. I love my parents.
4. I want to obey my parents. By obeying them I show that I love them.

5. Sometimes I lie to my parents. God wants me to be truthful.
6. I ask my parents to forgive me. Forgiveness means . . . .
7. I trust my parents. Trust means . . . .
8. My parents teach me. I learn from them.
9. God gave me brothers and sisters to love.
10. God gives me friends to love. A friend is . . . . Jesus is my best friend.
11. God gave me my teachers. When I listen to them, I make God happy.
12. God wants us to be willing to help those people who need us.
13. God wants us to show love to everyone, even those who are mean to us.

*Revised plan for the Third Quarter, Year One, Primary:*

1. God chooses us to be his family (Gen. 12:1-9).
2. God gives his people many great promises (Gen. 18).
3. God's family has been saved from enemies (Ex. 12).
4. God's family sings songs of joy (Ex. 15).
5. God's family has rules (Ex. 20).
6. God feeds His family (Ex. 16).
7. God lives with his family.
8. God's family has teachers and rulers (Ex. 18-Dt. 6).
9. God's family sees to it that no one is poor (Acts 4:32-37).
10. God's family prays for those who suffer (Acts 4).
11. God's family tells the good news.
12. God's family has peace and joy.
13. God's family travels to another country.

*Bible Trails* is for 3rd and 4th graders (ages 8 and 9). The author is Betty Oostendorp. This is a two year course which leads the students through Bible history. The three quarters on the gospels have been completed and the fourth quarter, on the Book of Acts, is now being produced. The format of the materials is similar to *Bible Steps*: the students have a take-home paper and a workbook with projects on perforated sheets. The Teacher's Materials consist of a teacher's manual with a discussion of the Bible background and a step-by-step instruction for teaching the lesson. Additional visual aids and teaching cards are provided.

*Bible Guide* is for 5th and 6th graders (ages 10 and 11). Of the materials produced thus far, Dr. Fred Walker has written part and Sharon De Vries is our main author at present. The three quarters produced deal with "The Gospel of John," "The Great Conflict," and "Sharing Christ's Victory." The summer quarter, now being produced, deals with the church. The basic tool for instruction is an eight-page weekly paper. Under guidance of the teacher, the students should spend 40 minutes going through the first six pages during the lesson hour. The additional pages contain stories written by Ruth Vander Hart or activities thought up by Fred Walker. The Teacher's Manual gives further explanation of the Biblical content of the lesson and detailed instruction on the way in which the lesson ought to be taught.

The production of these three courses fully occupies the time of the staff.

The first production of these courses must be considered a field test. It is the special responsibility of the Rev. Jerome Batts to gather and evaluate the criticism which he receives and to pass it on to the staff. Improvements are made as we go along. A more thorough review will be made this spring with the help of a questionnaire which the teachers will be asked to answer. Major revisions, if required, will be made in the second cycle of the materials.

Especially *Bible Guide* should show if we can successfully combine Sunday school and catechism instruction in a one-track church school course. If the traditional Sunday school lesson consisted of a Bible story with moral application, and if the traditional catechism lesson consisted of the memorization of the church's teaching with biblical proof texts, the new course aims at presenting a biblical theological teaching of the Bible. Thus the first course demonstrates the unity and central message of the Gospel of John in thirteen lessons, explains in detail what "incarnation" means, what "Christ" means, and what the confession of the "Son of God" involves. At the same time the lessons carry strong appeal for personal commitment. In the second quarter the two natures of Christ are discussed, and in the third one the relationship of the Spirit to Christ is emphasized. The fourth quarter, on the church, is written with frequent reference to Lord's Day 21.

At the same time our new courses should prove if we can write a curriculum that can be a useful tool for the instruction of covenant youth and children of non-Christian homes. The staff believes that this is possible at least for materials addressed to children until grade seven.

**PROJECTED PRODUCTION**

Date	"Bible Way" Curriculum	Old Catechism Curriculum	Adult
Sept. 1972	1st Year - <i>Bible Steps</i> 1st Year - <i>Bible Trails</i> 1st Year - <i>Bible Guide</i>	<i>Never On Your Own - Part I</i> (Alternate Student Manual)	
Sept. 1973	2nd Year - <i>Bible Steps</i> 2nd Year - <i>Bible Trails</i> 2nd Year - <i>Bible Guide</i>	Four Titles) <i>Never On Your Own - Part II</i> (Alternate Student Manual)	
Sept. 1974	Revision - 1st Year of: <i>Bible Steps</i> <i>Bible Trails</i> <i>Bible Guide</i>		
	1st Year - Preschool Course 1st Year - Jr High Course	<i>In addition:</i>	
Sept. 1975	Revision - 2nd Year of: <i>Bible Steps</i> <i>Bible Trails</i> <i>Bible Guide</i>	Each year - weekly production of <i>Bible Studies</i> - bi-weekly production of adult materials in THE BANNER	
Sept. 1976	2nd Year - Jr. High Course Revision - 1st Year of: Junior High Course 2nd Year - Preschool Course	January 1974 - Teacher's Training Program	

### 5. *Further Development of Curriculum*

*Course for preschoolers.* Together with Great Commission Publications we are planning the production of a one-year course for preschoolers, age four, to be released by both publishers in the fall of 1974.

We consider this important for several reasons: Although the instruction may seem to be less meaningful on a kindergarten level than at a more advanced stage, all preschool children love to go to church school and to have a teacher of their own. Therefore, there is always much demand for preschool Sunday school materials. We have done rather extensive research in available courses, but were unable to choose any. The difficulty was not so much in the area of pedagogy, but in the way these courses "use" the Scriptures. We were happy to find that our Orthodox Presbyterian friends shared our concern and it ought to be possible for us to plan and produce a course together.

This joint venture might also lead to broader cooperation. The president of the board and the Acting Director received the assurance of the Committee on Education of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church that they are eager to work with us toward a shared curriculum.

*Course for Junior High.* Last year we had hopes to have a new course available in the fall of 1973. This appears to be impossible. We will proceed to write materials and to produce a two-year course as outlined last year.

A writers' conference-workshop will be called for April 1973. After this meeting, a final decision on format should be made and the different quarters will be assigned to various authors. We will begin production in 1974.

6. *Teachers' Training.* The document "Toward a Unified Church School Curriculum" spelled out the importance of teachers' training in the following paragraphs (III. J. and III. K.):

"Recognizing the crucial importance of the teacher in the church's educational program:

1. regional conferences should be held to explain the new curriculum, its basic principles, objectives, materials, and teaching methods;
2. extensive teacher-training programs should be produced to equip the teacher to use the new curriculum and increase his teaching skills;
3. the teaching materials should include extensive teacher manuals that indicate how the material may be used and how it can be adapted to the unique characteristics of the various fields."

"To promote leadership within the churches, educational conferences should be planned to equip the ministry of the church to give competent guidance. As for those training for the ministry, they need additional education courses in the preseminary program, while their seminary training should provide ample opportunity to study the new curriculum intensively."

Our three teacher's manuals attempt to do what the document stated. In addition, we are eager to supplement our present teacher's course, "Teaching for Changed Lives," with materials that are more directly

related to the subject matter of the new curriculum. The board is being asked for permission to make the necessary investment.

7. *Adult Education.* The marriage enrichment course, which has been in committee for a couple of years, was abandoned during 1972. Pine Rest Hospital sponsors a cassette ministry for marriage enrichment which can be very useful to interested groups.

At last year's board meeting the staff was instructed to prepare an annotated booklist, so that churches might be helped in their selection of adult educational materials. In its meeting of April 6, 1972, the Executive Committee moved "to postpone until a future date the mandate given by the board in Article 72-A33 regarding an extensive annotated bibliography for available adult educational materials for the use of the churches, because of the priority of other projects engaging the staff's time and efforts at present."

It is regrettable indeed that the effort to meet the deadline for our present program of production has brought all other activities to a standstill. This is especially painful in the area of adult education. We intended to present materials to those churches and groups which had studied *Called To Serve*, but we missed this opportunity because we could not make time free for another project.

At present we produce *Bible Studies*, our adult Sunday school paper. It is a weekly publication which has six thousand subscribers. Every issue contains four articles for which we engage four writers. The Rev. Jack Vander Laan formerly served as editor, but editorial functions have now been taken over by the staff.

In cooperation with *The Banner* we will present bi-weekly adult studies in a pull-out section of *The Banner*, beginning in September 1973. Every installment will have two essays with questions for discussion. The one will be a series of Bible Studies on the Covenant, written by the theological editor. The other essays will deal with the sects and cults. Writers for the latter series must yet be appointed.

In this and all other areas of our work, we need the blessings of our God and the sympathetic-critical help of all board members.

Yours in his service,  
Andrew Kuyvenhoven  
Acting Director of Education

### B. *The Continued Use of Great Commission Materials*

Since the development of new curriculum materials has not yet reached the point of producing our own courses for Junior and Senior High levels, the board requests synod for permission to continue to use the Great Commission levels for 1974. If synod approves, our Business Manager will be advised to negotiate a new contract with the Great Commission Publications because of changed conditions affecting the sale of these materials.

### C. *Vacation Bible School Materials*

The VBS Committee, a subcommittee of the Education Committee, has made an extensive study of our present materials and potential

market for revised courses. The results of this study and the conclusions to which the committee came are presented for synod's consideration.

The results of 221 responses to our questionnaire regarding the use of VBS materials in Christian Reformed Churches had been tabulated by staff and was studied by the committee. The following conclusions were drawn by the committee:

a) Only 41 percent of the respondents (or 93) state that there is a definite need for VBS courses published by the Christian Reformed Board of Publications. Since the questionnaires were addressed to seven hundred churches and chapels, only 13 percent of those whom we addressed stated a need for Christian Reformed materials.

b) Many of those who are using our materials asked for improvements and revisions.

c) VBS classes in our Christian Reformed churches are definitely evangelistic: the majority of the students is non-Christian Reformed. Apparently our courses are not sufficiently geared to this situation.

d) A great number of churches are currently using VBS courses published by other groups or churches.

e) All respondents place high value on the use of crafts in the courses. Our market is limited. Therefore, if we were to publish a course that is pedagogically sound and visually attractive, our few customers would have to pay an exorbitant price or the church should be willing to subsidize heavily.

In light of the above, the following motion was made and adopted: The Youth Evangelism Committee recommends to the Education Committee that it requests the board to ask synod to release us from the mandate "to provide DVBS materials" (Acts of Synod, 1959, p. 39).

The board, having considered the information presented by the VBS Committee, was persuaded to adopt the recommendation, considering also the following additional reasons:

1. The courses as presently constituted need extensive revision.
2. Time and personnel for such revision are not available.
3. In view of declining sales, good stewardship forbids further investment in the present materials.

Because of the above, we request synod to release the board from the mandate to provide VBS materials.

#### *D. Spanish Materials and Possible New Committee*

We have now produced the Spanish edition of three Vacation Bible School courses. Two catechism books, *With All My Heart* and *Teach Me Thy Way*, have been produced and the first draft of the translation of a third one, *Light Upon My Path*, is in the office. Our translator, Mrs. Leo Schlink, the former Miss Ann Franken, now resides in California.

The Spanish Literature Committee has studied its place within the total denominational effort of ministering to Spanish-speaking people. At the request of the Spanish Committee, the Executive Committee of the Board of Publications has contacted all denominational boards and agencies now ministering to Spanish-speaking people, and has asked their

reaction to the formation of a new committee with board representation in order to make the ministry more effective.

The proposal of the Spanish Literature Committee, adopted by the board reads as follows:

That the Board of Publications request synod to appoint a quota-supported Spanish Literature Committee of the Christian Reformed Church; that the membership of this committee consist of a knowledgeable representative of the Board of Publications, of the Board of Foreign Missions, of the Board of Home Missions, and of the Back to God Radio Committee; that the committee be given the prerogative to appoint additional members, when the committee considers such an appointment to be in the interest of the work; and that this committee function under the administrative jurisdiction of the Board of Foreign Missions.

*Grounds:*

1. The need for printed Spanish materials of a distinctively Reformed character is much in evidence in the emerging evangelical churches in Latin America.

2. The Board of Foreign Missions has begun the development of a program aimed at meeting the challenges of the Latin American world and elsewhere by:

- a. Appointing a Latin American secretary.
- b. Creating the possibility of translation and distribution services.
- c. Expanding its mission fields in the Spanish-speaking world.

3. Most of our denominational agencies are involved in some phase of work with Spanish-speaking people.

The other boards and committees contacted have taken favorable action on this proposal. Both the Board of Home Missions and TELL have requested that a member of the board of TELL be included in the appointments to this committee, which request we mention here as information to synod.

*E. Teacher-Training Program*

The Acting Director of Education, the Rev. Andrew Kuyvenhoven, has made reference to the need of a teacher-training program in his report (Art. VI under IV A above). Mr. Rozema presented a document in which a number of proposals were outlined by which such a program could be developed. The board adopted a motion authorizing "the Education Committee to begin research on and development of a teacher-training program, also conferring with the Great Commission Publications of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church and the Education Committee of the Reformed Church in America" with the idea that in this area we may be able to develop a cooperative effort. This is reported to synod as information.

*F. Quotas for the Education Department*

1. The quota for developing the Unified Church School Curriculum.

In 1970 synod approved *Toward A Unified Church School Curriculum* as a working document for the development of such a curriculum. In 1972 the board presented *Additional Curriculum Guidelines* and the *Curriculum Plan* to synod for approval, which synod gave. At that time

synod was informed that "if the plan is approved and the board and its Education Committee are authorized to proceed with the production of the new curriculum materials, it is estimated that funds in the amount of \$200,000 will be required for research, development, production and implementation of the new educational materials. As the staff proceeds with the production of presently approved materials and considers plans for preparing and publishing new courses in the curriculum it has become very evident that the addition of a graphic artist to the staff is imperative . . . . Besides the artist a number of competent writers and resource people will have to be involved in the production of the new curriculum. Since finances derived from the sale of educational materials are inadequate to cover the initial expenditure in the production of the new curriculum series and these funds are not available until well after the work has been produced, the Board of Publications is requesting synod to grant a quota of \$2 per family in order that funds may be made available for the necessary research, the development and production of the materials, the subsidizing of writers' conferences that will have to be held, and the many incidental costs that will be involved in the implementation of the new curriculum plan.

Since the program has just begun and will continue for some time, all the reasons for requesting the quota last year are still valid. Therefore the board is asking synod to grant a quota of \$2 per family for 1974, the same amount as was granted for 1973.

#### 2. The quota for translating Spanish educational materials.

Synod has designated a quota of 75¢ per family in 1971, 1972 and 1973 for the work of translating and publishing religious educational materials into Spanish for use by our missionaries and Spanish-speaking churches. In view of previous commitments and the present work in progress, the board seeks synod's approval for continuing the quota for 1974. Even if synod approves the appointment of an independent quota-supported committee to take over the work of translating educational materials into the Spanish language, the request should be made by the Board of Publications as the body presently responsible for this work. Therefore we request the approval of a quota of 75¢ per family for 1974.

#### G. *The Overture of Classis Zeeland Re the Unified Church School Curriculum*

At its meeting in January, Classis Zeeland adopted an overture to synod requesting synod to diverge from the decision taken in 1970 concerning the Unified Church School Curriculum. The Stated Clerk of Classis Zeeland sent a copy of the overture to the Secretary of the Board of Publications with the notation that the board might wish to discuss the matter in its annual meeting. The board took up the matter and decided to reply. For the convenience of the synodical delegates we are inserting the content of the overture here together with the reply of the board.

#### **The Content of the Overture**

Classis Zeeland respectfully overtures the Synod of 1973 of the Christian Reformed Church to:

I. Diverge from the 1970 decision of synod which made the Unified Church School Curriculum the pattern for religious instruction for *all*

the churches within the denomination, and reestablish or recognize again catechetical instruction as we have known it in the Reformed heritage as an accepted mode for religious instruction.

II. Instruct the Board of Publications to continue research, development and publication of materials suited particularly for catechetical instruction of our covenant youth as historically practiced in the Christian Reformed Church for congregations that find the two-track (catechism and Sunday school) system necessary and preferable to the Unified Church School Curriculum.

*Grounds:*

1. A survey of all the churches of Classis Zeeland indicates that:
  - a. None of the churches of Classis Zeeland intend at this time to phase out the two-track (Sunday school-catechism) system.
  - b. None of the churches of Classis Zeeland consider the materials being provided in the Unified Church School Curriculum to be adequate to replace catechism materials provided previous to the 1970 decision of synod.
  - c. The Unified Church School Curriculum necessitates placing the responsibility of teaching the doctrines of the church primarily in the hands of those who are *not* pastors or elders; however the churches of Classis Zeeland desire that the work of teaching the doctrines of the church should remain primarily the task of the pastors and elders.
2. The consistories of Classis Zeeland find it difficult to observe the spirit of articles 63 and 64 of the Church Order if they adopt the Unified Church School Curriculum, particularly in the requirements that:

“The instruction shall be given by the minister of the Word with the help, if necessary, of the elders or those appointed by the consistory.”

“The Heidelberg Catechism and its compendium shall be the basis of instruction. Selection of additional instructional help shall be made by the minister in consultation with the consistory.”

### **The Response of the Board**

The board, having considered the overture at its annual meeting, desires to present the following points in reply:

1. In 1970 the board presented an argument for the development of a unified curriculum that would “seek to do justice to the two-track program current in our churches by way of Sunday school and catechism instruction” (III C). The argument was based on the conviction that the Word of God has one message which must be imparted within a single curriculum by the church to all who receive its instruction. Neither the board nor the Synod of 1970 addressed itself explicitly to the merits or de-merits of the dual track instructional program. However, by their decision they implied that they considered a one-track program superior. The board is now giving priority to the development of “this core program” (III D).
2. The board expresses its willingness to supplement its core program to meet the pedagogical imperative resulting from a diversity of local

situations in the church. However, the board may expect classes, consistories, missionary pastors and evangelism committees to provide specific evidence which adequately demonstrates a need for supplemental materials.

3. The board has adopted the policy to make available all existing catechism materials as long as there is sufficient demand for them, as determined by the board at its annual meeting.

4. A number of churches are using the present Bible Way curriculum as they have traditionally used Sunday school materials in a two-track program.

5. "In overall coverage the curriculum shall include . . . The witness of the creeds as meaningful reformulations of the central teaching of the Bible" (III F, 2). This concern is evident in the materials now being produced for (school) grades five and six, and it will no doubt be increasingly felt when we continue to write for higher age levels. Two years of the curriculum will be devoted to an intensive study of the confessions, especially the Heidelberg Catechism (Art. 64 C.O.).

6. The appointment and supervision of teachers in the local church school is the responsibility of the local consistory. A one-track program does not eliminate elders and ministers from a teaching function in the church educational program.

7. It is difficult to answer precisely the overture of Classis Zeeland because we are not sure what its central thrust is. We hope, however, that this overture will initiate an open and deliberate discussion in the churches of the nature, purpose and methods of our educational task.

(Note: the references appearing in the above indicate sections of the document *Toward A Unified Church School Curriculum*).

We would further like to cite the salient points of the document *Toward A Unified Church School Curriculum*, adopted by synod to clarify the mandate under which the board is operating in producing the new curriculum materials.

## TOWARD A UNIFIED CHURCH SCHOOL CURRICULUM

(Adopted by Synod, 1970—Acts, page 206ff)

### I. REVELATIONAL DIRECTIVES

#### A. *The Word of God*

In responding to the Word of God in our educational ministry, we should recognize that all revelation comes to us as the one Word of God, incarnate (Jesus Christ), inscripturated (Bible), and establishing order in creation (General Revelation). Through the power of the Spirit we must call all men to respond to this full-orbed Word as it confronts us today in the church and in the world, summoning them to faith and obedience through proclamation, service, and fellowship. Since the Scriptures speak comprehensively to man's heart, the center of his being, and thus the whole man in his total life situation, we should strive for a truly scripturally-directed church education and in our entire educational enterprise we should seek to elicit a hearty response to the biblical message.

### B. *The Church*

1. The church is the body of Christ-believers, called to declare the mighty acts of God in Jesus Christ, to serve God (understood as keeping both commandments of the Law), and to live as his healing community in a broken world.
2. The church as institute in administering the Word of God and calling men to faith and obedience should equip men for work in God's service.
3. The church's educational task, which finds its focus in the administration of God's Word in its life-relatedness today, is to present that Word to all men who come under its ministry as a message to be believed and obeyed. In all its education, the church's instruction should lead to commitment and upbuilding in the Christian faith, in accordance with Christ's mandate to his church.

### C. *Confessions*

1. The institutional church is a confessing community of believers in Christ called to respond to the gospel by a wholehearted commitment to Christ as Savior and Lord and by an effective translation of this commitment into God-centered living and witness in the world.
2. The institutional church is a confessional community of believers in Christ bound together by a common allegiance to the witness of the prophets and apostles.
3. As a confessing and confessional community, the institutional church must teach faith-knowledge in a living, religiously whole, experiential, practical way as a message to be believed, confessed, and obeyed by all men.

### D. *Man*

1. Man is created in the image of God as a servant of God, a neighbor-brother-guardian to his fellowmen, and a steward of God's creation.
2. In his whole life, in his total selfhood, man is a religiously unified creature, called to faithful, loving, obedient service with all his heart.
3. Man in his threefold office as prophet, priest, and king was vitiated by the fall into sin, whereby his whole life has become religiously misdirected.
4. The redeeming work of Christ makes man a radically new creature through the Spirit of Christ, who is the pledge of the ongoing and final full restoration of man and the whole creation.

## II. EDUCATIONAL PRINCIPLES

In responding to these revelational directives in a unified educational ministry, the church should:

A. *Focus* the message of God's comprehensive Christocentric Word on the educational enterprise by

1. *recognizing* Scripture as powerfully active in the teaching-learning process and view the Word itself, in a significant sense, as the educator.

2. *striving* for a more meaningful understanding of the interrelationship of the Scripture with the revelation of God in the creation, including man, God's vice-regent in the world.
  3. *honoring* the full claim of the gospel message in its universal address to the basic religious needs of all men in our contemporary pluralistic society.
  4. *making thankful use* of those Scripture passages which embody and capture the thrust of Scripture as a whole.
  5. *making proper use* of Scripture by
    - a. avoiding deriving specific theoretical principles of education from selected Bible texts,
    - b. avoiding imposing schema, pedagogical or other, that distort the total message of Scripture or the meaning or intent of any of its parts.
    - c. avoiding moralizing on Bible stories.
- B. *Preserve* the integrity of the church, which is governed in all its activities by its biblical identity and is geared to the realities of its time and place in history by
1. *recognizing* that the basic goal and essential element in the church's educational program is the administration of God's Word.
  2. *calling* all men to perform their service of God and man in a truly biblical sense, and teaching the basic directives and principles for living the life of faith in every sphere of life.
  3. *recognizing* that a unified program of Christian nurture is the goal of the Christian church and the Christian community, and accordingly, that such a program would in most cases be broader than the unified educational ministry of the church.
  4. *performing* its distinctive educational task as an institution, while responding to present human needs.
  5. *respecting* the integrity and identity of other institutions and educational agencies in the Christian community. This means encouraging them to make their appropriate contributions to a unified program of Christian nurture, and both within the institutional church and in the Christian community continuing cooperative efforts at every level to better define and implement the unique and appropriate contributions of all institutions to a unified program of Christian nurture.
  6. *setting educational priorities* in view of the eschatological urgencies of the day.
  7. *constantly engaging* in basic reevaluation of its pedagogical effectiveness, especially in communicating the gospel to all kinds of people.
- C. *Produce* confessionally oriented materials and conduct a confessionally united educational ministry that:
1. *does justice* to the historic Christian creeds of the church.
  2. *communicates* the contents of the churches' confessions as pedagogically meaningful reformulations of the central truths of Scripture for life in today's world.

3. *seeks to lead* all persons of all ages and particularly younger members of the church to a meaningful public profession of faith and to full participation in the life and work of the church.
4. *presses* the full claim of Christ upon men by evoking a positive response to the biblical message and by stimulating God's people unto effective translations of faith-knowledge into kingdom service and Christian witness in the world.
5. *directs* the learner to believe and instructs him in what he ought to believe and how he ought to practice his belief, while recognizing that only the Holy Spirit can bring men to believe.

D. Administer God's Word so that it speaks comprehensively to man's total life situation by

1. *taking seriously* the developmental levels of the learner, such as the religio-experiential, the verbal-analytical, and the socio-cultural.
2. *gearing* its ministry to the various life calling roles which differentiate among the persons to whom it ministers.
3. *gearing* its methods to the faith experience of the learner.
4. *calling* for personal involvement and dynamic engagement with each other on the part of both teacher and learner.
5. *respecting* the freedom and responsibility of the learner in answering the call of the gospel.
6. *employing* all means that are pedagogically effective to convey the scriptural directives in the lives of those to whom the church's educational ministry is directed and all approaches and methods which are in keeping with the developmental stages and life situations of the learners.
7. *responding* to the basic needs of persons in their diversified life situations and seeking to lead them to become happy and profitable servants of God.

### III. CURRICULUM GUIDELINES

In response to the Revelational Directives and as an outcome and embodiment of the Educational Principles articulated above, the following basic Curriculum Guidelines are presented:

A. The goal of the educational curriculum of the church, as it administers the Word of God, is to impart to all who come under its nurture a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ and to direct them to the source of power which he dispenses to his servants through his Spirit for living the life of faith and obedience. In seeking to achieve this basic goal, the educational ministry of the church should strive for

1. a meaningful profession of faith and full participation in the life and work of the church.
2. a broader expression of Christian discipleship in the service of God and man and in a wholesome and effective witnessing in every area of life, for the promotion of the kingdom of God.

B. Curriculum materials shall seek to communicate the historical-redemptive message of Scripture in its meaningful interrelationship with the revelation of God in Christ and in creation, and shall be confessionally

oriented so as to do justice to the historic creeds of the church in communicating the message of the church's confessions.

C. In order to attain a unified educational ministry in which the church aims to lead people to Christian maturity in the most effective way, a single unified curriculum must be developed which will serve as a core program for the educational task of the church. This single-track curriculum must seek to do justice to the two-track program current in our churches by way of Sunday school and catechism instruction.

D. This core program, in communicating educationally the single comprehensive message of Scripture, shall seek to adapt this message to all kinds of people representing the highly diversified religious commitments confronting us in our contemporary pluralistic society, and accordingly shall seek to do justice to both the catechetical and evangelistic dimensions of gospel teaching as a single educational task, teaching all who come under the influence of the church's educational ministry the Word of God in its life-relatedness as a message to be believed and obeyed.

E. This core program shall address itself to persons of all ages from earliest youth through the various stages of adulthood.

F. In overall coverage the curriculum shall include the following elements:

1. The central teaching of Scripture as normative for Christian faith and life.
2. The witness of the creeds as meaningful reformulations of the central teachings of the Bible.
3. The extant testimony of the church, for example, synodical studies and pronouncements on various current issues.
4. The maturing witness of the Christian community in the light of the above and in the light of general revelation.
5. Problems which remain unresolved among Christians and alternatives which confront the church in today's world.

G. In planning and implementing its program the church shall take with utter seriousness the developmental levels of the learners for whom the materials and programs are prepared. It shall take into account all the dimensions of the total persons in their full life-situations. The following factors, for example, shall be taken into consideration:

1. religio-experiential developmental levels.
2. verbal-analytical developmental levels.
3. socio-cultural developmental levels.
4. vocational and institutional roles which differentiate among adults in particular.

H. In taking seriously the developmental levels of the learners, all materials must be carefully graded in aims, selection of materials to be taught, and method of treatment. To assure that materials communicate well for the age level and developmental level intended all educational materials should be field-tested before publication.

I. Respecting the integrity and identity of other institutions and educational agencies in the Christian community, steps should be taken to establish staff liaison and continue cooperative efforts to better define and

implement the unique and appropriate contributions of all institutions in developing curricula for a unified program of Christian nurture.

J. Since the most crucial element in the teaching program is the teacher,

1. regional conferences should be held to explain the new curriculum, its basic principles, objectives, materials, and teaching methods;
2. extensive teacher-training programs should be produced to equip the teacher to use the new curriculum and increase his teaching skills;
3. the teaching materials should include extensive teacher manuals that indicate how the material may be used and how it can be adapted to the unique characteristics of the various fields.

K. As for those training for the ministry, they need additional education courses in the preseminary program, while their seminary training should provide ample opportunity to study the new curriculum intensively.

Having received the approval of synod for developing a Unified Church School Curriculum, the board employed necessary staff for the implementation of the directives given and the production of the new materials. Great care was taken to consult those knowledgeable in the field of education, and some of the finest talent in our Christian schools was employed in constructing the curriculum and applying the best pedagogical principles in current practice. Remembering that the church must appeal to and train children reared in the modern age of television, and keeping in mind the criticisms constantly being leveled at the old systems, our staff began the production of the Bible Way series. The staff surveyed the field of religious educational materials being produced today and has been in consultation with other denominational agencies of the Reformed tradition involved in such publication activity, most of whom use the "one track" system.

One of the criticisms against the former "two track" system was the contention it did not do justice to Scripture. In Sunday school often a Bible story was told and a moral application made, while in catechism a confession was memorized and the Bible used only as a source of proof texts. The result was moralizing on the one hand and a too restricted intellectual approach on the other. The Bible never really came into its own. With the scriptural and pedagogical principles outlined above as the guide, the education staff has been producing the new materials. Although these are still, as a matter of fact, in the stage of field-testing, the board is assured it may confidently recommend them to the churches for use in their educational programs, and that they are superior to that produced on the open market of religious educational materials. They are Reformed in content and pedagogically sound.

However, no congregation is forced to a "one-track" system. A congregation may choose to use as many tracks as it desires, and all the catechism books produced by the Education Committee in the past remain on the market and are available for those desiring them. Only when the sales of a particular book fall to such a low point that it is no longer

feasible to reprint a new supply will the board consider whether a certain title should now be removed from the market. Meanwhile, the board welcomes all constructive criticism and hopes to constantly improve what is being produced.

## V. DENOMINATIONAL BUILDING ADDITION

The Long Range Planning Committee submitted its report to the board for approval, and we are sending it on to synod with the indication that the board has endorsed the work of the committee to date and seeks the approval of synod for the same. Along with this request and information the board is also asking that the quota of \$1 per family be approved for the year 1974, the same amount that was requested last year.

The report of the Long Range Planning Committee is submitted as follows:

### REPORT OF DENOMINATIONAL BUILDING LONG RANGE PLANNING COMMITTEE TO THE SYNOD 1973

#### I. *Committee Composition*

A. Voting membership of the committee consists of the following:

- \*J. T. Daverman, chairman
- \*R. Holwerda, secretary
- K. Marcus
- A. E. VanderMale
- R. VanKuiken

\*Member of Executive Committee of Board of Publications

B. The committee acknowledges the able and helpful assistance of advisors from the staff of participating agencies, listed as follows:

Board of Publications	P. Meeuwssen
	A. Kuyvenhoven
Board of Home Missions	G. Borst
Board of Foreign Missions	H. Evenhouse
	D. Zwier
World Relief Committee	L. VanEss
	R. Baukema
Synodical Committee on Race Relations	K. Westerhof
Stated Clerk	W. Brink

#### II. *Progress and Status of Planning*

##### A. *Meeting*

The committee continues to convene regularly with reasonably good attendance and participation on the part of all committee members and staff advisors.

Ample opportunity has been given to representatives of participating agencies to be involved in the planning of their respective areas, since they are notified of the time and place of each meeting and are urged to attend.

### B. *Architect*

Mr. James K. Haveman, the board-appointed architect, has met with the committee regularly and participated in all discussions and has successfully translated the program statement into space diagrams and sketches.

### C. *Status of Planning*

1. Preliminary drawings have been approved by each agency and by the Long Range Planning Committee, and authorization has been given by the Executive Committee of the Board of Publications to the architect to proceed with the preparation of bidding documents (final plans and specifications).
2. *Parking* — The committee decided at its meeting on September 23, 1972, to recommend to the Executive Committee of the Board of Publications, to proceed at once with additional parking for approximately 24 cars. This involved the razing of a house owned by the Board of Publications, grading, drainage, and bituminous surfacing. The new parking space was in operation by early November, 1972.

### D. *Description of Proposed Expansion*

New space being planned involves:

1. An east wing consisting of 3 levels projecting toward the rear parking lot from center of existing building, designed to contain:
  - a. Needed storage space on a lower level.
  - b. World Relief Committee offices, and central mailing and shipping space for all agencies, on the main level.
  - c. Synodical Committee on Race Relations offices, a common board meeting room, a small eating space and kitchen, and toilet and wash room facilities, on the upper level.
  - d. Elevator serving all 3 levels for passengers, supplies and material.
  - e. A tunnel from lower level of new east wing north to lower level of existing building, integrating the two storage areas.
2. A south wing—consisting of 2 levels projecting to the south from existing Board of Publications general office and west of the existing printing plant space, designed to contain:
  - a. Education department offices on the main level, integrated with the Board of Publication facilities.
  - b. Storage space on the lower level connecting with existing storage space below the printing plant area.
3. *Alterations to Existing Building*
  - a. Space on the main floor now occupied by the education department is to be assigned to the expanded services of the denomination, anticipating the employment of a Denominational Financial Coordinator and two additional offices assigned to the Board of Foreign Missions.
  - b. Space on the second floor now occupied by the World Relief Committee is to be assigned to the Board of Home Missions.

#### 4. *Central Mailing and Shipping*

Reference has been made earlier to a central mailing and shipping space to be located on the main floor level of the new east wing. The intent of this central facility is to unify the function of mailing, duplicating and shipping of certain printed productions for all the agencies, thereby avoiding the necessity for each agency to provide space and to invest in expensive equipment on its own.

All of the agencies appear to be pleased with this innovation, even though it is understood this will require some testing to determine the degree of unification to be achieved. The Board of Foreign Missions has been somewhat reluctant in accepting this concept and is the only agency expressing concern as to their degree of participation.

The Long Range Planning Committee enthusiastically endorses the attempt to avoid duplication of equipment and services among the separate agencies.

#### 5. *Heating - Ventilating - Air Conditioning*

The new additions are to be equipped with air handling systems somewhat more sophisticated than that of the existing building. A low velocity variable volume system is planned, providing heated or cooled air as may be required by individual room thermostats. For extreme cold weather, perimeter (outside wall) hot water radiation will be included.

Since our present boiler is not large enough for the increased area, a smaller, rather inexpensive, boiler is to be provided as a heat source for the additions.

The present boiler is in good condition with a life expectancy of 10-15 years. When it becomes obsolete it will be possible to abandon the smaller boiler now being planned and replace the present boiler with one of larger capacity capable of serving the entire building.

#### 6. *Square Foot Areas*

	<i>Sq.ft.</i>
Original building (completed 1956) .....	34,000
Addition - North Wing (completed 1968) .....	13,600
Proposed expansion (estimated completion 1974) .....	17,600
Total area .....	65,200

#### E. *Cost Estimates and Schedule*

The committee has carefully studied the economics of expanding the denominational building, having concern about being short-sighted while at the same time endeavoring not to overbuild. The committee believes that the planning to date comes close to achieving that goal.

##### 1. *Cost Estimates*

a. At this stage of the planning, the committee is anticipating the cost of the expansion to be \$485,500, not including equipment and carpeting.

This compares with an earlier estimate given to synod in June, 1972, in the amount of \$440,000, exclusive of equipment and carpeting.

- b. It is estimated that the equipment for the central mailing and shipping area will cost from \$25,000 to \$30,000, depending on the degree of central services to be furnished.
- c. It is estimated that carpeting will cost from \$12,000 to \$15,000.
- d. Several factors have contributed to the increase in the cost since the presentation to synod in June of 1972, some of which are:
  - (1) More area required by some agencies because of anticipated increased personnel.
  - (2) More area required for central mailing, shipping, and storage space, than originally allowed.
  - (3) Construction of tunnel to integrate storage areas.
  - (4) Decision to include an elevator.

e. Summary of total costs estimated:

Building .....	\$485,500
Equipment (minimum) .....	25,000
Carpeting (minimum) .....	12,000
	\$522,500
Total .....	\$522,500

**2. Time Schedule**

The committee has reviewed a time schedule and believes the following to be realistic, barring any unforeseen delays:

- a. Complete plans and specifications by April 1, 1973.
- b. Bidding and contract award by May 1, 1973.
- c. Complete construction by February 1, 1974.
- d. Occupancy of space - March 1, 1974.

**III. Financial Report of Building Fund Account**

FINANCIAL REPORT OF BUILDING FUND ACCOUNT

RECEIPTS

Quotas	\$358,887	
Union Bank & Trust Co. (Mortgage)	190,000	
Total receipts		\$548,887

DISBURSEMENTS

Building Improvements	\$316,991	
Interest (Mortgage)	38,458	
Repaid on mortgage (Principal)	190,000	
Total disbursements		\$545,449

\$ 3,438

BALANCE AS OF JULY 31, 1972RECEIPTS

Quotas	\$ 32,018
Interest and Exchange	194
	<hr/>
Total receipts	\$ 32,212

DISEBURSEMENTS

Williams & Works	\$ 284
Riverside Gravel	3,764++
Reith-Riley	767++
Committee Expense	32
Materials Testing	278
	<hr/>
Total disbursements	\$ 5,125

BALANCE ON HAND AS OF 1-31-73	\$ 30,525*
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++ Cost of new parking area completed already.  
\* \$25,000 in savings deposit receipts @ 5% interest.

## VI. BOARD REPRESENTATION AT SYNOD

The board requests that the following be permitted to represent the Board of Publications at the sessions of synod in all matters pertaining to the board when these are being considered by synod:

The President of the Board: the Rev. Clarence Boomsma

The Secretary of the Board: the Rev. John A. Mulder

The Acting Director of Education (in all matters pertaining to the Education Department): the Rev. Andrew Kuyvenhoven

The Business Manager (in all matters pertaining to the business aspects of the board's operation): Mr. Peter Meeuwssen

The Chairman of the Denominational Building Addition (in matters pertaining to building and finances): Mr. Joseph Daverman

The Editors, Dr. De Koster and the Rev. Mr. Haverkamp (in matters pertaining to their periodicals).

## VII. SUMMARY OF MATTERS REQUIRING SYNODICAL ACTION

1. Approval of membership of the board (I, A)
2. Appointment of members to the Education Committee from nominations submitted to synod (I, C)
3. Appointment of a member to the Periodicals Committee from a nomination submitted to synod (I, E)
4. Reappointment of:
  - Editor-Theological Type: the Rev. Andrew Kuyvenhoven for a term of two years (I, F).
  - Editor-Pedagogical Type: Mr. Robert Rozema for a term of two years (I, F).
5. Reappointment of the Rev. William Haverkamp as Editor of De Wachter for a term of three years (I, G).

6. Request that synod again encourage the churches to consider adopting the Every Family Plan (III, A, 1).
7. Approval of a quota of 25¢ per family for subsidizing the continued publication of De Wachter (III, B).
8. Request that synod approve the sale of the Revised Standard Version and all Versions commonly used by the Churches (III, C).
9. Approval of the use of Great Commission Publications on the Junior and Senior High levels for 1974 (IV, B).
10. Request to be released from the mandate of publishing VBS materials (IV, C).
11. Request for the appointment of a new quota-supported committee for the work of Spanish translation (IV, D).
12. Approval of quotas for the Education Department:
  - A. Quota of \$2 per family for the necessary research, development and production of education materials for the Unified Church School Curriculum (IV, F, 1).
  - B. Quota of 75¢ per family for Spanish translation work (IV, F, 2).
13. Consideration of the board's response to the Overture of Classis Zeeland re Unified Church School Curriculum (IV, G).
14. Approval of the plans of the Long Range Planning Committee for Denominational Building Addition (V).
15. Approval of quota of \$1 per family for 1974 for the Denominational Building Addition (V).
16. Approval of board representation at synod (VI).

Board of Publications of the  
Christian Ref. Church Inc.

John A. Mulder, Secretary

**REPORT 5-A**  
**BOARD OF PUBLICATIONS**  
(Art. 33)

DEAR BROTHERS:

The Board of Publications of the Christian Reformed Church desires to bring the following additional matters to the attention of synod:

**I. NOMINATION FOR REPLACEMENT OF DR. GORDON SPYKMAN  
AS MEMBER OF THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

As reported in the Agenda for Synod, Report 5, a nomination for the replacement of Dr. Gordon Spykman had been prepared for approval by the board, but it was discovered that one of the nominees would not be able to serve. Therefore the board asked the executive committee to prepare another nomination for submission to synod. The executive committee now presents the following names:

Dr. Derke Bergsma  
Dr. Sidney Greidanus

Dr. Bergsma is a member of the faculty of Trinity College of Chicago, teaching in the Department of Religion. Dr. Greidanus is pastor of the Christian Reformed Church of Clarkson, Ontario.

**II. PSALTER HYMNAL SUPPLEMENT**

The executive committee requests synod to approve the inclusion of all the new approved and provisionally approved liturgical forms, the Liturgical Committee's report as it appears in the Acts of Synod, 1968, and the new provisional translation of the Heidelberg Catechism in the "Supplement to the Psalter Hymnal of the Christian Reformed Church." By so doing, churches having older copies of the Psalter Hymnal will then have the new approved forms in the Supplement to the Psalter Hymnal, and all the churches will have copies of the provisionally approved forms and the new translation of the Heidelberg Catechism.

**III. THE QUOTA FOR THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

In Report 5 the board requested the approval of synod for a quota of \$2 per family for the necessary research, development and production of education materials for the Unified Church School Curriculum (VII-12, A). In the months since the annual meeting of the board it has become increasingly clear that there is great need for an increase in the amount requested due to the changing financial situation. Therefore, the executive committee is now requesting that, instead of a quota of \$2 per family, a quota of \$3 per family for 1974 be granted by synod. A

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summary of the board's financial statement and proposed budget is herewith included for the scrutiny of synod. The Business Manager, Mr. Peter Meeuwsen, is prepared to give any additional information that may be desired.

Board of Publications of the  
Christian Reformed Church, Inc.  
John A. Mulder, Secretary,

## REPORT 6

**CHRISTIAN REFORMED WORLD RELIEF COMMITTEE**  
 (Art. 26)

DEAR BROTHERS:

**I. INTRODUCTION**

The year 1972 marked CRWRC's first full decade of diaconal ministry. The specific outreaches of each of the past ten years have been different. The purpose and character of the work is unchanged: to provide care and aid to the needy in Christ's name. This is also the mandated task of our congregational diaconates. As CRWRC grows with God's blessings, this central purpose motivates all aspects of our outreach.

During the past year our efforts found fulfillment in both planned benevolent programs in addition to responding to a wide range of disaster needs, both inside and outside of the United States and Canada.

**II. BOARD**

Annual review and planning is provided by the yearly meeting of the classical diaconal representatives in February. During the interim period between annual meetings, the Executive Committee of the board holds its meetings on alternate months for periodic review and action.

Our 1972 Board consisted of:

Classis	Delegate	Alternate
Alberta North.....	J. Vanden Born.....	H. Vriend
Alberta South.....	J. Kreeft.....	D. Vander Wekken
British Columbia.....	M. Blok.....	A. Breedveld
Cadillac.....	P. Schierbeek.....	J. Gernaat
California South.....	C. De Kruyf.....	B. De Young
Central California.....	H. J. Veneman.....	L. Fondse
Chatham.....	P. Berghuis.....	A. Bisschop Jr.
Chicago North.....	C. Taylor.....	H. Buurma
Chicago South.....	F. Iwema.....	R. Wolterink
Columbia.....	J. Braaksma.....	H. E. Dykema
Eastern Canada.....	C. Hogeveen.....	E. De Kleer
Florida.....	D. Bouwer.....	J. Meiste
Grand Rapids East.....	D. Bosscher (Treasurer).....	P. Brouwers
Grand Rapids North.....	R. Meeuwsen.....	D. Molewyk
Grand Rapids South.....	G. Rietberg, D.D.S.....	J. F. Kuiper Jr.
Grandville.....	H. De Jong (Secretary).....	F. Visser
Hackensack.....	R. Van Essendelft.....	A. Staterna
Hamilton.....	K. Mantel.....	P. De Vries
Holland.....	J. Vander Meulen.....	K. Beelen
Hudson.....	A. Malefyt.....	Dr. R. Rosendale
Huron.....	H. Exel.....	M. Dijkstra
Illiana.....	G. Kroll.....	N. Zuidema
Kalamazoo.....	A. Woltersom.....	E. Joling
Lake Erie.....	C. J. Vrieland.....	P. Bouman

Classis	Delegate	Alternate
Minnesota North.....	H. Ahrenholz.....	D. Groen
Minnesota South.....	L. Christoffels.....	R. Van Essen
Muskegon.....	L. Van Rees.....	C. Van Coevering
Northcentral Iowa.....	C. Henze.....	H. Eiten
Orange City.....	F. Ten Napel.....	C. Postma
Pacific Northwest.....	J. Tjoelker.....	J. Van Ry
Pella.....	L. Nugteren.....	H. Nieuwsma
Quinte.....	W. Piersma.....	E. Rhebergen
Rocky Mountain.....	H. Hubers.....	
Sioux Center.....	R. De Stigter.....	Dr. W. Alberda
Toronto.....	W. Rekker.....	J. Gehrels
Wisconsin.....	W. Navis.....	E. Vander Weele
Zeeland.....	O. Aukeman.....	R. Kalmink

#### Members at Large

Medical.....	D. A. De Vries, M.D.....	J. A. Rienstra, M.D.
Businessman.....	T. Prins (President).....	P. Kool
Sociologist.....	D. Hoekstra, Ed.D.....	J. Tuinstra
Attorney.....	H. Meyers Jr.....	D. Vander Ploeg
	(Vice Sec.-Treas.)	
Accountant.....	C. Ackerman (Vice-Pres.).....	D. Pruis
Minister.....	Rev. W. M. Van Dyk.....	Rev. J. Bergsma

### III. DISASTER AND EMERGENCY EFFORTS

Each year has seen at least one or more major disasters to which CRWRC found opportunities for administration of Christian concern. A reflection on the past decade of activity shows the following major outreaches:

Year	Disaster
1962	Guam Typhoon
1963	Taiwan Typhoon
1964	Japan Typhoon
1965	Fulton, Illinois Flood
1966	Mexico Flood
1967	No major disaster
1968	Fairbanks, Alaska Flood
1969	Nigeria Civil War
1970	Mississippi's Gulf Coast Hurricane
1971	East Pakistan (Bangladesh)
1972	South Dakota - Pennsylvania Flood and Bangladesh

While no two disasters are precisely identical there are some common observations and lessons from each successive disaster. There has been marked evolution in the approach to disasters. In the early outreaches the emphasis was on material aid, food and clothing. To be sure, these are most critical needs in the first stage following a catastrophe. One of the clearly learned lessons is that the effectiveness of such aid depends on the proximity to the disaster scene. In an overseas disaster this means that direct CRWRC involvement is more prompt and meaningful when the need occurs in areas served by our own staff or that of foreign mission personnel. Such conditions led to substantial CRWRC involvement in providing aid in 1970 following the Nigeria-Biafra Civil War and in two serious floods during 1972 in Korea and in the Philippines.

Denominational presence in a disaster area makes for a more effective combined use of material aid and personnel. Such a combination of circumstances prevailed in the summer 1972 flood in Rapid City, South Dakota.

In other disasters in 1972 CRWRC found it possible to serve effectively as our denomination's arm of Christian concern. The summer flood in Eastern Pennsylvania and New York called for a massive assist from governmental, secular agencies such as Red Cross and CARE as well as many church relief agencies. CRWRC provided material aid and volunteer personnel. The Pennsylvania disaster found effective cooperation between many groups in meeting a vast number of complex needs. CRWRC volunteers served in a range of personal counseling need of victims who had lost family members, sustained injuries or experienced loss of property. In meeting these needs our volunteers found many opportunities for adding the spiritual dimensions to their efforts through words of scriptural comfort and advice.

Effectiveness in serving both the South Dakota and Pennsylvania flood need was greatly increased through on site planning by Mr. C. Molenaar who joined our Grand Rapids staff in April, 1972 as Domestic Program Advisor. Plans are to cooperate in Disaster Training Sessions with selected diaconal conferences in Canada and the U.S. to meet future disaster needs more effectively.

The most devastating of all disasters during 1972 struck on the Christmas weekend in Managua, Nicaragua. A violent earthquake destroyed more than 75% of the capital city. An estimated 5,000 of its 250,000 inhabitants are either known dead or missing in the rubble of demolished buildings. Before the year end CRWRC sent an inspection team and began shipping food and medicines. Meeting this need promises to be a major effort for 1973.

The proximity of Nicaragua to Mexico and Honduras where our Board of Foreign Missions carries on missionary outreaches led to a cooperative plan for aid. Missionary personnel accompanied our task force members in choosing an area for work and responsible Christian national church groups with whom to cooperate. As of this writing CRWRC has four volunteers in Nicaragua who are serving in medical and social-community type programs. Their work is centered in the Masaya area where both expatriate and national missionaries are serving our denomination. Present indications are that need for such an outreach may continue for six months or longer.

A pattern of long term aid has developed in what a year ago was described as aid to East Pakistan, refugee aid for civil war refugees. With the termination of the bloody civil war in December of 1971 the country of Bangladesh, become the world's 123rd independent nation. A mere change in name, however, did nothing toward diminishing the dire need for help for 75,000,000 people. CRWRC continued its assistance by channeling funds and material aid through the Mennonite Central Committee program. A long term volunteer, Peter Vander Zaag, from Alliston, Ontario, Canada, has been appointed to serve as a horticulturist, under a cooperative arrangement between CRWRC and the MCC. An additional volunteer has been requested.

As other disasters strike, either in our continent or overseas, CRWRC will gather all pertinent data regarding the catastrophe so that our deacons and pastors can be promptly advised of relevant details and of CRWRC's plans to provide assistance. CRWRC has a broad range of information and is therefore in a position to report and recommend and outreach. Our \$50,000 Disaster Fund is immediately available along with the resources of our Chicago Clothing Center.

Volunteers played an important role in meeting the needs of the summer floods. Their services are now being utilized in our 1973 aid program in Nicaragua. Their generous services have markedly extended CRWRC's outreach. Countless victims have been helped in Christ's name while the volunteers themselves have enriched their own lives through their services.

*The following served in CRWRC programs:*

Name	From	Area of Service
Doris Binder.....	Pigeon, Michigan.....	Wilkes Barre, Pa.
John De Groot.....	Hull, Iowa.....	Rapid City, S.D.
Arthur De Vries.....	Grand Rapids, Michigan.....	Rapid City, S.D.
Anthony DuBois.....	Holland, Michigan.....	Harrisburg, Pa.
Anthony Ehlers.....	Kalamazoo, Michigan.....	Harrisburg, Pa.
Roger Ericks.....	Holland, Michigan.....	Harrisburg, Pa.
Rosalie Huiizenga.....	Detroit, Michigan.....	Wilkes-Barre, Pa.
Carl and Jean		Rapid City, S.D. and
Kammeraad.....	Lambertville, Michigan.....	Harrisburg, Pa.
John Mokma.....	Grand Rapids, Michigan.....	Wilkes-Barre, Pa.
Dirk and Sharon Pegman.....	Grand Rapids, Michigan.....	Rapid City, S.D.
James R. Ritsema.....	Grand Rapids, Michigan.....	Harrisburg, Pa.
Thomas and Harriet		
Schipper.....	La Crosse, Wisconsin.....	Rapid City, S.D.
Carol Teusink.....	Holland, Michigan.....	Wilkes-Barre, Pa.
Vaughn Vanden Brink.....	Holland, Michigan.....	Rapid City, S.D.
Peter and Helen		
Vander Ark.....	Grand Rapids, Michigan.....	Wilkes-Barre, Pa.
Henry and Janet		
Van Elderen.....	Martin, Michigan.....	Rapid City, S.D.
Marion Van Soelen.....	Orange City, Iowa.....	Rapid City, S.D.
Wesley and Frances		
Vryhof.....	Grand Rapids, Michigan.....	Rapid City, S.D.
Benjamin Yoder.....	Goshen, Indiana.....	Harrisburg, Pa.

#### IV. FOREIGN PROGRAMMED OUTREACHES

##### A. Korea

Efforts continue in training and encouraging a high measure of planning and staffing the Christian Adoption Program of Korea—CAPOK—by national Christian personnel. Thankfully, we can report a measure of progress. Many other Christian aid programs have left Korea. However, CRWRC western staff and board feel that we must be assured that the CAPOK program will continue to be motivated by the scriptural principles of concern. In the meantime efforts in foster home care, placement in Korean homes for adoption continue. Efforts in counseling unmarried parents (mainly unwed mothers to be) continue. Such an outreach assists those who are counseled with an invitation to a Christian life and by offering care for the expected child.

The program employs forty-seven national workers in such roles as social workers, foster care mothers, nurses, and various office personnel. The work is carried on in the cities of Seoul and Taegu. One hundred and fifty-six children were placed for adoption in 1972. The average foster home caseload was 110. Three hundred and eighty cases of counseling were reported.

During the year the phaseover of the agricultural work progressed to the point that our agriculturist, Robert Faber, left the field after four years of rewarding service.

CRWRC's medical work in Korea continues through the efforts of a national Christian doctor who provides pre-natal and children's medical services in rural areas. Medicines and drugs are provided for a local indigenous group of Christian doctors and nurses that continue to provide assistance programs begun by CRWRC.

Our CRWRC staff is as follows:

- Sydney Byma—Social Worker and Agency Development
- Charles Vander Sloot—Field Director
- Kenneth Venhuizen—Social Worker

## **B. Philippines**

Increased attention to community needs of health, sanitation and child nourishment were achieved during the past year. Work was expanded to additional communities served by our missionaries and by national Christian evangelists.

Efforts continued in providing several families with agricultural aid through modest self-help loans. Training in the care and development of pigs, poultry, child nourishment programs and vocational training will be further implemented in 1973.

CRWRC staff in the Philippines:

- William Fernhout—Community Development
- Fred Schuld—Agriculturist and Field Director

## **C. Mexico**

Continued efforts in improving agricultural opportunities for many underprivileged families continue in two areas—Yucatan and Oaxaca. Improving crop yields through adequate soil treatment beginning with land clearing, plowing, cultivating, use of fertilizers and herbicides has brought improved yields for many participating farmers in the Merida, Yucatan area. Work continues in close cooperation with graduates of the Merida Bible School who take on pastorates and preaching assignments in the Yucatan peninsula.

CRWRC and our Board of Foreign Missions' personnel cooperatively operate the Oaxaca Training Center where short term courses are offered in Bible training and agriculture skills. Such efforts are aimed at providing comprehensive training for national evangelists in taking on village preaching duties. Such training makes possible a ministry by nationals who are equipped with a measure of self support through their "tent-making" resources.

Our Mexican program was the beneficiary of a year of voluntary service by Allan and Carol Wassenaar of Denver, Colorado. They provided

valuable study for added possibilities of Christian service in Mexico. The needs of the Mexico people continues to be carefully studied through joint meetings by our missionary staff and CRWRC personnel. Every effort is made for a responsible Christian fulfillment of the needs of the whole man—soul and body.

CRWRC staff in Mexico:

- Duane Bajema—Agriculturist Oaxaca Center
- Calvin Lubbers—Agriculturist in Yucatan

#### D. Nigeria

An active agricultural program is carried on in the EKAS Benue area served by our missionaries. CRWRC's program covers some thirty villages or preaching stations served by national Christian evangelists and our western missionaries. This 7,500 square mile area is covered with the help of forty nationals serving as agents in their respective communities. Their role is a most strategic one. Our staff reports:

"So much of our work depends on our voluntary agents which is good and also effective. However, sometimes our evangelistic witness is not what we would like it to be. We, of course, are involved in giving the church a financial base, encouraging truly Christian development in the radically changing society of Nigeria, and showing God's love to the unsaved world. How well we are showing God's love to the point of converting non-Christians I do not know. I know of no single person saved directly through our work. I do know we are going into Moslem homes where in the past Christians did not go nor were welcomed. I also know that over twelve thousand items were sold, each with a Gospel or Christian tract. We are creating a receptive audience to the Gospel. Can we harvest this crop of souls for the Lord? How do we do with our work? Do we need more reapers? We are holding these questions before us all the time."

CRWRC staff in Nigeria:

- Bruce Buurma—Agriculturist (waiting for visa)
- Louis Haveman—Agriculturist

#### E. Jordan

This represents our newest synodically approved field of programed aid. Our goal is to provide Christian mercy for refugees in government camps and indigent individuals and families. CRWRC's effort adds a dimension to the earlier Arabic radio ministry and thereby seeks a Christian answer to the needs of the total man.

Program investigation and planning began in September through an arrangement whereby Dr. Bert De Vries, a member of Calvin College History Department on leave for archaeological surveys in Jordan, was engaged by CRWRC on a part time basis.

Immediate physical needs were met during the fall and winter through distribution of two thousand blankets to needy families. Drugs and medicines were made available to health centers and United Nations Camp dispensaries. A medical van was purchased to assist in camp work and school furnishings were provided for a recently rebuilt school.

Our first long term personnel began language training in January of this year. Efforts will be directed toward vocational, medical and community rehabilitation of numerous victims of recent wars and economic depression. Development of irrigation systems in the Jordan valley and selected desert areas as well as providing potable water to villages and rural districts is planned. Direct aid in health and medical areas and for personal needs will continue.

CRWRC staff in Jordan:

—Dr. Bert De Vries—Interim Director

—Paul Kok—In language training

## V. DOMESTIC PROGRAMS

The outreach on the domestic front took on a new and expanded role in 1972. Consistent with good diaconal stewardship of providing aid commensurate with need, a reassessment of current programming was undertaken. Through the establishment of the position of Domestic Program Advisor we anticipate the development of increased awareness of local diaconal needs on the part of area deacons' conferences. Simultaneously with this discernment by local groups we trust that local efforts will plan and implement programs at highest possible level of activity.

As a ready and willing partner CRWRC will provide necessary advice, technical assistance and varying degrees of financial aid as conditions may warrant. There will be encouragement to the local groups to grow into full responsibility for all aspects of their program. Through such efforts CRWRC envisions itself as a clearing house of accumulated experience and information. There are no intentions of imposing patterns. Every effort continues to be made to stimulate local groups in maximum involvement.

### A. Cuban Refugee Aid

It was with a real measure of sadness that the Good Samaritan Center in Miami, Florida, was closed at the end of April of last year. During the decade of its service to thousands of arriving Cuban refugees a dedicated service of Christian concern was dispensed with joy and vigor. The termination of the freedom flights and the encouraging degree of integration of the refugees into the Miami community plus the relaxation of welfare requirements by local governmental units made our program virtually unnecessary.

To preclude the possibility of old people, widows and other hardship cases from being deprived of aid because of their unfamiliarity with or inability in contacting conventional sources of aid, CRWRC maintains a referral service at the offices of our Good Samaritan Christian Reformed Church (Spanish speaking) on 4585 W. Flagler Avenue. One of CRWRC's veteran employees of the Medical Center and charter member of the church serves hardship cases. This outreach is carried on with the consultation of the local pastors and diaconates and will be continued as long as needs warrant.

CRWRC staff:

—Ileana Infante—Receptionist-Secretary

—Sara Menchaca—Social Work Aide

## B. Gallup Friendship House

The acute need for treatment of alcoholics was called to CRWRC's attention by the consistory of our Gallup, New Mexico, church. Following endorsement by Rocky Mountain Classis and our Board of Home Missions, CRWRC agreed to assist a local board in the planning and implementation of an alcoholic treatment program.

The program is housed in the former Gallup CRC buildings. This property is made available to the program under favorable terms by the Board of Home Missions. CRWRC underwrote the cost of remodeling the structure into suitable facilities for offices, overnight lodging and food preparation and service.

The outreach is aimed at providing both "walk in" counseling services as well as overnight lodging for those who require more extended care. Efforts to minister to the broken soul as well as shattered body are provided by the local pastor, volunteer members of the local church as well as by the project director who himself once benefitted from Christian concern. Other national Christian staff will be added as the Lord prospers the efforts.

CRWRC Staff: John Jacobs—Program Director

## C. Appalachia Program Study and Development

Few areas in the United States have suffered prolonged economic hardship as the coal mining regions in Kentucky and West Virginia. Lacking proximity to any of our Christian Reformed congregations such an area easily escapes our attention. Several Protestant denominations have addressed themselves to this acute need. The presence of one of our denominational pastors in a chaplaincy role in the area provided an opportunity for first hand reliable and pertinent information. An on-the-scene inspection with Chaplain *Kenneth Wezeman* and representatives of CRWRC and our Board of Home Missions disclosed possibilities of meaningful programming.

Such possibilities will likely be further pursued through the services of a limited service assignment by qualified personnel to advise on continued long term aid efforts. Such conclusions will depend on our ability to implement a distinctive Christian work within the context of a satisfactory Christian preaching-teaching mission.

## D. Grant Projects

### 1. *Grands Rapids Deacons' Conference*

Last year saw the beginning of a significant outreach by the Grand Rapids Deacons Conference as they sponsored a "Deacon at Large." The purpose was to assist the area congregational diaconates in more fully reaching out to a complex and growing number of community needs. CRWRC provided a beginning grant to be followed by a lesser amount of support for 1973. It is anticipated that the program will be completely funded by the area diaconates at an early date.

### 2. *Eastern Canada Deacons' Conference*

Welcome Hall Program in Montreal, Quebec—Like all large cities large numbers of indigents and derelicts require that "cup of cold water"

and to be taken in as strangers in the name of Christ. The heart and hand of befrienders are manifested by Welcome Hall in the congested Montreal harbor district by a band of dedicated Christian workers supported on a multi-denominational outreach of Protestant churches. Our Montreal church through its diaconate felt the need to make a contribution to this program in the person of a "deacon-evangelist." At the request of the consistory and Eastern Canada Diaconal Conference, CRWRC is providing annual grants in decreasing amounts. Here also we look forward to eventual full programming and funding by local effort.

### 3. *Eastern Deacons' Conference*

Northside Addicts' Rehabilitation Center—NARC—of Paterson, New Jersey—CRWRC has provided periodic assistance to a comprehensive drug addict center carried on in the area of our Northside Church. Here also the spiritual and social dimensions are kept in proper focus and provide a genuine expression of Christian care for the delinquent's needs. Funds are provided by CRWRC commensurate with evidence of need and sound programing.

## VI: ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCES

The development and implementing of a world wide outreach of mercy requires constant planning, attention and direction of financial and material aid matters.

### A. Chicago Clothing Center

The gathering, processing and shipment of large quantities of clothing, medicines, food and other material items requires adequate space and attention. During 1972, 146,279 pounds of material goods were processed by and shipped from our Chicago Clothing Center to points around the world. Many ladies and young people's groups from the Chicago area churches contribute significant hours of work. Our continued thanks goes out to those often forgotten ambassadors of mercy.

CRWRC staff: Cornelius Klemp—Part-time Aide  
Art. B. Schaap—Center Manager

### B. Office Administration

Like many other denominational agencies CRWRC shares office space in our Denominational Building at 2850 Kalamazoo Avenue, S.E., in Grand Rapids.

CRWRC staff: Louis Van Ess—Executive Director  
Richard Baukema—Coordinator of Business and Promotional Affairs  
Debra Groen—Typist-Clerk  
Tillie Geers—Bookkeeper-Typist  
Cornelis Molenaar—Domestic Program Advisor  
Jane Ritsema—Administrative Secretary

### C. Finances

The audited report for the year ending December 31, 1972 follows:

Christian Reformed World Relief Committee,  
Grand Rapids, Michigan.

We have examined the statements of fund balance of the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee, Grand Rapids, Michigan as of December 31, 1972 and the related statement of changes in fund equity for the year then ended. Our examination was made in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards, and accordingly such tests of the accounting records and such other auditing procedures as we considered necessary in the circumstances.

The information in the detail of disbursements related to the office in Seoul, Korea was obtained from reports from the field, and we are unable to express an opinion on the financial information with respect to that office.

In our opinion, the accompanying statements of fund balance and statement of changes in fund equity present fairly the financial position of the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee at December 31, 1972, and the results of its operations for the year then ended, in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles applied on a basis consistent with that of the preceding year.

Den Braber, Helmholtz & Lyzenga  
Certified Public Accountants.

CHRISTIAN REFORMED WORLD RELIEF COMMITTEE

STATEMENTS OF FUND BALANCE

December 31, 1972

GENERAL FUND

ASSETS

Cash:			
Korean imprest fund		\$ 25,000.00	
Demand deposits		16,525.83	
Savings accounts		<u>274,575.89</u>	\$316,101.72
Marketable securities (Market value \$638.00)			<u>1,655.50</u>
			<u>\$317,757.22</u>

FUND EQUITY

Balance at December 31, 1972:			
General Fund		\$267,757.22	
Disaster Fund		<u>50,000.00</u>	
			<u>\$317,757.22</u>

FURNITURE AND EQUIPMENT FUND

ASSETS

Furniture and equipment - at cost		\$ 20,497.32	
Less allowance for depreciation		<u>10,369.90</u>	
			<u>\$ 10,127.42</u>

FUND EQUITY

Balance at December 31, 1972			<u>\$ 10,127.42</u>
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STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN FUND EQUITY

Year ended December 31, 1972

Balance, January 1, 1972:			
General Fund		\$ 130,663.79	
Disaster Fund		<u>55,000.00</u>	\$185,663.79
Receipts:			
Cash contributions:			
General	\$ 515,619.81		
Clothing centers	3,795.10		
Korean relief	85,040.55		
Domestic programs	3,370.22		
Nigeria	13,137.10		
Mexico	23,307.89		
Philippines	24,381.71		
Other countries	902.26		
Disasters	<u>164,300.39</u>	\$ 833,855.03	
Freight refunds		1,861.26	
Insurance refunds and miscellaneous		4,544.47	
Interest and dividends		10,388.89	
Gain on disposal of equipment		<u>2,837.68</u>	
TOTAL CASH RECEIPTS		<u>\$ 854,487.33</u>	
Material aid - at fair market value:			
Clothing (134,460 pounds)	\$ 201,691.00		
Drugs and medicines	465,343.00		
Transportation and miscellaneous	<u>10,816.00</u>	677,850.00	1,532,337.33
TOTAL AVAILABLE			<u>\$1,718,001.12</u>
Disbursements:			
Program services:			
Korean relief - Seoul office		\$ 151,538.80	
Korean relief - Grand Rapids office		61,066.61	
Domestic programs		73,022.20	
Clothing processing		25,433.67	
Nigeria		59,840.08	
Mexico		70,020.40	
Philippines		43,538.97	
Other aid program:			
Unusual benevolent aid	\$ 161.15		
India	2,000.00		
Japan	9,390.60		
Refugee programs	44,405.35		
Disasters	<u>111,002.28</u>	166,959.38	
		<u>\$ 851,420.11</u>	
Supporting services:			
Program	\$ 11,322.35		
Administration	39,673.54		
Fund raising	<u>19,977.90</u>	70,973.79	
TOTAL CASH DISBURSEMENTS		<u>\$ 722,393.90</u>	
Material aid		677,850.00	1,400,243.90
Balance, December 31, 1972:			
General Fund		\$ 267,757.22	
Disaster Fund		<u>50,000.00</u>	<u>\$ 317,757.22</u>

The Board and our staff deeply appreciate the generous response of our people to requests for funds. Diaconal offerings continue to provide the major share of our income. Generous giving by individuals has been much in evidence. The number of churches holding regularly scheduled offerings has shown further improvement last year. More than half of our diaconates held three or more offerings during the year. CRWRC deeply appreciates this generous support and covets the denomination's prayers and continued endorsement.

## VII. PLANNED PROGRAMMING FOR 1973

A. *Foreign Programs*

Korea	\$176,745
Mexico	105,600
Nigeria	42,405
Philippines	46,400
Jordan	94,390
Other—Japan, India, etc.	6,500

B. *Domestic Work*1. *Programs*

Cuban Refugees	13,760
Gallup Friendship House	39,000
Appalachia	20,000
Program Administration	20,390

2. *Grants*

Grand Rapids Deacons' Conference	3,000
Eastern Canada Deacons' Conference	4,628
Mt. Baker Deacons' Conference	2,500
Cascade Deacons' Conference	4,000

3. *Anticipated Programs and Projects* 34,500

C. *Clothing Center Operations* 24,500

D. *General Administration* 84,250

E. *Promotion* 55,750

Total \$778,328

A comparison of 1973 projections with actual expenditures in 1972 shows increases in some areas and decreases in others. Reductions in programming have been explained in program survey sections IV and V above. Increases are anticipated where additional personnel are serving in such outreaches as Jordan. Philippines shows moderate increases. An increase in meeting domestic needs is also planned for 1973.

CRWRC makes every effort to be alert and sensitive to reducing or phasing out of programs that demonstrate lessening needs and to outreaches that can be taken over by local effort. At the same time new and expanded needs called to our attention by our mission boards, diac-  
onal conferences and other agencies that permit a scripturally imple-  
mented outreach continue to be studied carefully and thoroughly.

*CRWRC requests:*

1. Synod's approval of projected plans for 1973.
2. Synod's commending the work of mercy to our churches and urging them to take offerings on a regular and sustained basis to provide the necessary funds for this ministry.
3. Synod to continue CRWRC as the denominational benevolent cause for one or more offerings.

## VIII. APPOINTMENTS

The Board of CRWRC requests synod's action in the following appointments:

A. *Executive Director*—be reappointed for a term of four years.

B. *Boardmember at Large Positions:*

Businessman—Mr. T. Prins (Delegate)

—Mr. P. Kool (Alternate)

Sociologist—Dr. D. Hoekstra (Delegate)

—Mr. J. Tuinstra (Alternate)

All of the above are eligible for reappointment. CRWRC will provide synod with nominations from which appointments can be made for the above positions.

## IX. MATTERS REQUIRING SYNOD'S ATTENTION:

A. *Representation at Synod*

CRWRC requests that its President, Mr. T. Prins; Minister Boardmember, the Rev. W. M. Van Dyk and its Executive Director, Louis Van Ess be granted the floor when matters pertaining to our work are discussed.

B. *Program Approval*—Section VII

C. *Approval of Offerings*—Section VII

D. *Appointments*—Executive Director—Section VIII

—Board Positions—Section VIII

Christian Reformed World Relief Committee  
Louis Van Ess, Executive Director

## REPORT 6-A

## CHRISTIAN REFORMED WORLD RELIEF COMMITTEE

(Art. 26)

DEAR BROTHERS:

*Disaster and Emergency Outreach*

Our main report makes reference to early efforts in meeting the needs of victims of the disastrous December 23, 1972 earthquake in Nicaragua.

The proximity of our denominational missionary outreaches in Mexico and Honduras underscored the relevant urgency of our outreach. The Board of Foreign Missions' report also refers to the early cooperative and consultative planning work of our two boards.

A field trip to Honduras and Nicaragua in late March by CRWRC representatives afforded an excellent opportunity to reassess current and longer term needs. A representative of our BFM Honduran staff joined the survey trip.

To date our outreach consists of financial aid in the amount of \$21,745. Another \$750,000 in donated food, drugs and medical supplies has been provided. Three medical doctors have been recruited through the Luke Society. Each has served three to four weeks on a volunteer basis. We gratefully acknowledge the generous services of Drs. Henry Evenhouse, Benjamin Fieldhouse and Jose Bollanoes. They are affiliated with our Park Lane CRC of Chicago. Two social workers, Misses Cheryl Fondse of Modesto, California, and Linda Koops of Holland, Michigan, served in CRWRC's initial disaster outreach. A nurse, Miss Peggy MacLeod, continues to serve as Coordinator of several rural clinics.

They served primarily in the rural medical work, food assistance programs and in the neighboring city of Masaya to which several thousand refugees fled following the quake. In the meantime the government with aid from many outside sources constructed a series of "row houses" for temporary shelter on an available site immediately adjoining the city of Managua. Presently some 10,000 people are occupying 2,006 small living quarters of approximately 200 square feet each under subsidized rental arrangements. The Board of Foreign Missions has assigned two students from the John Calvin Seminary of Mexico City for a six-month term. Indications are that either one or both may continue for a longer period of time.

At this time the need for both the ministry of the Word and the work are urgent and will likely continue for an indefinite period of time. The government has decided to rebuild Managua in the same general area. Work will soon begin in clearing the rubble from a 900 square block area

in the city. How long this will take is difficult to predict. Planning and actual reconstruction will also require their share of time.

In our involvement in Nicaragua, we were repeatedly reminded of two significant factors. First, that even where things were normal or “going well” for the country, Nicaragua had a seriously low level of economic and living conditions. Secondly, Nicaragua’s needs were further compounded by a series of sub-standard crop yields occasioned by serious drought. In-country food supplies were at an extremely low level.

Our missionaries in neighboring Honduras have also called CRWRC’s attention to critical social and economic needs and have requested CRWRC for emergency financial aid and longer term aid through a social worker to “enhance the growth and development of the church of Honduras as people would see a Word/Deed program” (HGC Min. No. 34).

In view of this, CRWRC is preparing for a more continuing type work in the area by phasing out short term volunteer work except in cases of medical-dental and certain nursing specialties. CRWRC continues its close contact with both the neighboring Honduras General Conference and Board of Foreign Missions in development of such plans. Accordingly CRWRC has extended Miss Peggy MacLeod’s term of service for one year as a result of a formal request of Provadenic, the cooperative medical clinic program by some twenty national Protestant churches.

*CRWRC requests synod* for its approval in the development and implementation of a long term outreach in Nicaragua and Honduras consistent with needs and practices prevailing in CRWRC’s other outreaches.

*Grounds:*

1. There is ample demonstration of needs that will need long term attention.
2. There are specific needs to which CRWRC can address itself with identifiable programs that will allow for a positive Christian witness.

Christian Reformed World Relief Committee

Louis Van Ess, Executive Director

# REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

## REPORT 7

### BACK TO GOD TRACT COMMITTEE

(Art. 16)

DEAR BROTHERS:

Following is a short review of the past year's activities of the Back to God Tract Committee.

#### I. PERSONNEL

A. The committee is composed of the following members: Rev. Eugene Los, chairman, Mr. Willis Timmer, vice-chairman, Mr. Bruce Cheadle, treasurer, Mr. Marvin De Boer, secretary, Rev. W. Masselink, Rev. John Wieggers, Messrs. Peter Brink, Stuart Ellens, Willard Willink, and Vern De Weerd. All these men have served the committee for more than one year. Mr. Bruce Cheadle has completed six years on the committee and we especially thank him for those years of service.

The personnel of the committee are dedicated to the idea of providing a variety of tract materials for our own church people as well as for members of the communities in which our churches are located.

B. Monthly meetings of our committee are held in the denominational building. Our tracts are printed, stored, and mailed from this office. The staff at the denominational building provides the manpower to get the work of the committee done. They do the leg work and this is very necessary to the proper functioning of the committee and the tract distribution. The committee is divided into three sub-committees which also meet once a month prior to the meeting of the whole committee.

#### II. ACTIVITIES

##### A. Tract Distribution

A total of 794,004 tracts were distributed during the 1972 calendar year. Many of these were given free to missionaries and individuals working to spread the gospel of Jesus Christ around the world. The number of free tracts distributed were 107,536. The committee feels that as many free tracts as economically possible should be distributed by our committee. For this reason the committee relies heavily on church contributions and individual gifts to keep this work going.

The following groups used these free tracts:

SWIM .....	36,840
Tract Teams .....	5,472
Chaplains .....	4,992
Wayside Chapels .....	33,600
Miscellaneous .....	26,632

A total of 686,468 tracts were sold to individuals and groups.

#### B. New Tracts

Following is a list of the new tracts published this past year. Besides these tracts all the tracts of the committee are continually reviewed for possible updating and revision.

No.	Title
353	My Vodka and My God
354	Why Don't We Get a Divorce?
355	Are You All Strung Out?
356	What Are Monkey's Eyes Made of?
357	So You Dig Rock Eh?
358	At the Open Window
359	Drink Much?
360	Prayer—A Talk With God
361	Loneliness of Grief

Two of these new tracts need special note: *My Vodka and My God* is being used by the Calvary Rehabilitation Center in Arizona; they plan to use 15,000 of these tracts. Tract number 358, *At the Open Window*, is a 36 page tract of "Meditations of God's great outdoors as viewed through an open window."

The committee also worked with the Evangelism Thrust Committee in the publishing of the bulletin covers for this program.

#### C. Promotion

The main method of promotion used during this past calendar year was a variety of advertisements in *The Banner*. The committee is currently concerned with the problem of making our churches and people aware of the tracts we have plus the new tracts which are published each year. Several other Christian magazines are also used to advertise our materials.

### III. FINANCES

As was mentioned above our tract work relies heavily on gifts. A charge is made to those wanting tracts and are able to pay. However, many orders are received from individuals who are unable to pay but in the view of the committee are effectively using the tracts. Our committee needs the continued financial support of our churches.

### IV. MATTERS REQUIRING SYNODICAL ACTION

A. The committee requests synod to recommend the Back to God Tract Committee program to the churches for one or more offerings.

B. Nominations: Three members are to be elected, one from each group.

Group 1—Mr. Marvin De Boer (eligible for re-election). Mr. De Boer is a member of the West Leonard CRC and he is superintendent of the West Side Christian School.

Mr. Ken Navis—Mr. Navis is a lay missionary at the West 44th Street Chapel. He formerly served the Ionia Avenue Chapel also in Grand Rapids.

Group 2—Mr. Peter Brink (eligible for re-election). Mr. Brink is a businessman from Grant, Michigan. He is a member of the Grant CRC, where he has served on the council.

Mr. Edwin Visscher—Mr. Visscher is currently a lay missionary in Saugatuck, Michigan. He formerly served the Sunshine Chapel in Grand Rapids and the Beacon Light Chapel in Racine, Wisconsin.

Group 3—Mr. John Tibbe—Mr. Tibbe is a promotion salesman for Lamb, Incorporated, in Holland, Michigan. He is vice president of the council at Faith CRC and serves as treasurer for the Classical Home Missions Committee.

Mr. Len Vanden Bosch—Mr. Vanden Bosch is vice president of the First National Bank of Zeeland. He is an elder in the Third CRC of Zeeland, Michigan.

Back to God Hour Tract Committee  
Marvin De Boer, Secretary

**REPORT 8**  
**BIBLE TRANSLATION COMMITTEE**  
(Art. 18)

DEAR BROTHERS:

In accord with the procedure approved by synod (Acts, 1971, p. 39), our review of *The Living Bible: Paraphrased* was published in *De Wachter* (Sept. 12, 1972) and in *The Banner* (Nov. 24, Dec. 1, 1972).

In our report to synod last year, we indicated that our next project would be the *New English Bible*. We have now begun a review of that version. The New Testament portion of the New English Bible has been in print for some years and has been widely acclaimed. The Old Testament has been published only recently and has received some criticism. Since our review includes both the Old and the New Testaments, it will take us another year to complete the review. We expect to report to the Synod of 1974 concerning this project.

Bible Translation Committee  
Andrew Bandstra, Chairman  
David Holwerda, Secretary  
Stanley Bultman  
David Engelhard  
Clarence Vos  
Louis Vos  
Marten Woudstra

**REPORT 9**  
**CHAPLAIN COMMITTEE**

(Arts. 53, 60, 83)

**DEAR BROTHERS:**

We herewith present the annual report of your Chaplain Committee, with gratitude to God for the services we were able to render the denomination in the areas of both the military and institutional chaplaincy. The monthly reports of our chaplains, in the United States, abroad, and at sea, bring a heartening message of fruits upon their labors. Their efforts are being blessed of the Lord. Men and women have been led to the Savior, others have been strengthened, but the bulk of the harvest record must await the final return of the Lord. We have had no chaplains in Vietnam or Korea this year, and we are very thankful that the combat period seems to have come to an end.

Since the military program of our country has been drastically curtailed, and recruitment has ceased in that area, most of our time and effort has been spent in the field of the institutional chaplaincy. This is an ever growing field, and a very promising one. However, in spite of the many openings that could and should be filled, though there are many of our clergymen who are interested in giving their lives to this sphere of the gospel ministry, we find ourselves more and more handicapped in properly caring for and supplying this field.

Men with particular aptitude and qualifications for this type of ministry must be sought, encouraged, and trained. However, those in the parish ministry are financially unable to discontinue their labors to take up the required and necessary training, and we are not in position to supplement their salaries to such an extent as to make this possible for them, even though they manifest the desired qualifications. Moreover, our mandate is too limited to carry out the necessary program properly. More about this later in this report.

Meanwhile, we are putting forth every effort to serve our men in the military and institutional chaplaincy to the best of our ability, and we keep as close contact with them as possible. When feasible, a member of our committee pays a visit to them on their posts of duty to counsel them and to meet with their superiors and supervisors. We are also rendering such aid for preparatory clinical study as we are able and as is in keeping with our limited mandate.

In these efforts we work closely with the Home Mission Board through its representative, the Rev. Duane Vanderbrug, who usually meets with

us monthly, and with the Young Calvinist Federation through the Rev. James Lont, who is also present whenever possible. This also holds for the Rev. Harold Dekker, member of the General Commission on Chaplains and Armed Forces Personnel, who, together with the Rev. Mr. Lont, represents our denomination on the commission. Through them we are in close touch with the national chaplaincy program and activities. The Rev. Carl D. Tuyl is our Canadian representative member through whom we keep touch with the chaplaincy movements and activities in Canada.

Three of our members have served one term of three years. All three, the Rev. Galen Meyer, the Rev. Carl D. Tuyl and Mr. Nicholas Van Andel, are eligible for another term of service and will be nominated by our committee in view of their valued services. Alternates for each will also be nominated and presented to synod. One of our members, the Rev. Warren Boer, resigned in view of his move to California for graduate study. The committee nominated the Rev. Melvin D. Hugen as his successor and presented this nomination to the Synodical Interim Committee where it was approved.

#### I. MILITARY CHAPLAINCY

Christian Reformed ministers on active duty as United States military chaplains as of March, 1973, were as follows: (Parentheses give the year of entering upon active duty.)

##### Air Force

Chaplain Harold Bode, Major, USAFR (1962) Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio.

Chaplain Ralph W. Bronkema, Major, USAFR (1966) Hamilton, AFB, Calif.

Chaplain Henry Guikema, Major, USAF (1962) On Study Leave, Grand Rapids, Mich.

Chaplain Louis E. Kok, Major, USAF (1962) Luke AFB, Ariz.

Chaplain Arlan D. Menninga, Capt., USAFR (1968) USAF Academy, Colo.

##### Army

Chaplain William Brander, Capt., USAR (1968) Frankfurt, Germany.

Chaplain Jan Friend, Major, USAR (1959) Herbornseelbach, Germany.

Chaplain Bruce C. Hemple, LTC, USAR (1959) Stuttgart-Ludwigsburg, Germany.

Chaplain John Hoogland, LTC, USA (1959) Ft. Meade, Md.

Chaplain Herman Keizer, Jr., Capt., USAR (1968) Wurzburg, Germany.

Chaplain Marvin Konynenbelt, Major, USAR (1965) Ft. Ord, Calif.

Chaplain Paul H. Vruwink, Major, USAR (1958-60; 1964) Ft. Lewis, Wash.

### Navy

Chaplain Herbert L. Bergsma, LCDR, USN (1966) USS BRYCE CANYON, FPO San Francisco, Calif.

Chaplain Robert Brummel, LCDR, USNR (1966) National Naval Medical Center, Washington, D.C.

Chaplain Albert J. Roon, LCDR, USNR (1966) DESRON 32, FPO New York, N.Y.

Chaplain Raymond C. Swierenga, LCDR, USN (1960) Camp Lejeune, N.C.

You will note that this totals sixteen active duty chaplains, one less than last year. Chaplain Jerry Zandstra felt himself bound to leave active duty and to return to the parish ministry after a year of graduate study. He gave five years of intensive service to our country in the U.S. Navy, including quite some time in the combat zone of Vietnam, with much blessing to the men he served. We were very reluctant to have him leave the active duty status, but are assured he will continue to be a great blessing as he serves in the Reserve capacity with some naval unit near his new parish.

Four of our chaplains are serving in Germany at present: Brander, Friend, Hemple and Keizer. Chaplain Guikema has been granted a year of study at Calvin College and Seminary by the U.S. Air Force. We appreciate this special consideration and honor. Chaplains Bergsma and Roon have been on extensive sea duty with the U.S. Navy. We are justly proud of our men and the esteem in which they are held by our leaders in Washington.

The annual Reformed Retreat for our servicemen in Europe is being planned for this year in Berchtesgaden, Germany. We appreciate the measure of cooperation on the part of our consistories to assist our (their) men in attending this retreat, and we trust it will be a blessed one. We are now holding these retreats in cooperation with the Reformed Church in America, alternating in the matter of speakers and chaplain coordinators in the field, and in the expenses involved on a pro-rata basis. Our first such has proved more beneficial than the Presbyterian-Reformed retreats of former years. This year Chaplain Thomas Groome, Jr. (Col.) is the coordinator and Dr. Arthur Van Eck is the speaker, both of the RCA.

The annual Chaplains Retreat for state-side active duty chaplains is also being planned, to meet directly after synod, thus to enable them to attend the Ministers' Institute and synod as well, if they are able to obtain leave from their posts of duty. Reserve chaplains are also invited but at their own travel expense. This retreat has proven to be a great boon to the chaplains who were able to attend.

In addition to the active duty military chaplains, twenty of our ministers are serving in military service reserve chaplain assignments. They serve their units at monthly meetings and go on active duty for a short period each year, on land or sea. These are:

### Air Force

Rev. A. Rienstra, Major—Homestead AFB, Fla.

Rev. J. Vander Ark, Major—Ent AFB, Colo.

Rev. D. Wisse, Major—McGuire AFB, N.J.

### Army

Rev. J. H. Ellens, Major—323rd General Hospital, Inkster, Mich.

Rev. R. J. Lobbezoo, 2nd Lt.—Passaic, N.J.

Rev. D. Oostenink, Colonel—322nd General Hospital, Newark, N.J.

Rev. H. Ouwinga, Major—Washington National Guard

Rev. J. R. Pruijm, 1st Lt.—Michigan National Guard

Rev. H. Smit, Major—USARJ, Japan

Rev. D. Van Halsema, LTC—U.S. Army Chaplain School

Rev. T. Verseput, Major—Michigan National Guard

### Navy

Mr. Donald Belanus, Ensign—Seabee Unit, Grand Rapids, Mich.

Rev. D. P. Bergsma, CDR—USNRTC, Chicago, Ill.

Rev. P. Boertje, LCDR—23rd Marines, Seal Beach, Calif.

Rev. D. Den Dulk, Lt.—Naval Reserves, Point Mugu, Calif.

Rev. P. Mans, Lt.—South Windsor, Conn.

Rev. G. Meyer, LCDR—USNRTC, Grand Rapids, Mich.

Rev. E. Shuart, LCDR—USNRTC, Chicago, Ill.

Rev. A. Van Anandel, LCDR—NROS, Muncie, Ind.

Rev. J. Zandstra, LCDR—Naval Unit, Cadillac, Mich.

Two of our ministers are serving in Veterans Administration Hospitals. These are:

Chaplain Thomas Vanden Bosch—V.A. Hospital, Sioux Falls, S.D.

Chaplain Adrian Van Anandel—V.A. Hospital, Marion, Ind.

Also two ministers are serving our country as part-time chaplains in the vicinity of their parishes in the Civil Air Patrol. These are:

Rev. K. Slager, Major—CAP, Vancouver, Wash.

Rev. S. Vander Jagt, Major—CAP, Davenport, Iowa.

Three chaplains, Harvey Ouwinga, Jay Pruijm and Theodore Verseput, are serving with the National Guard units of their state.

We are indeed thankful to God for affording our church and our men these opportunities for serving God and country, and to the consistories

who permit their busy pastors to serve as reserve chaplains. All perform a very valuable spiritual ministry with the military personnel of our country and reach so many who likely would not be reached otherwise. Moreover, many of our own servicemen are also privileged to benefit from their "own" minister chaplains and appreciate it.

## II. INSTITUTIONAL CHAPLAINCY

The following Christian Reformed ministers are on active duty as chaplains in various institutions:

Rev. A. Dirk Evans, People Community Hospital Authority, Detroit, Mich.

Rev. Theodore Jansma, Christian Sanatorium, Wyckoff, N.J.

Rev. Frank Kaemingk, Bethesda Hospital, Denver, Colo.

Rev. Gordon Kieft, Bethesda Hospital, Denver, Colo.

Rev. Jim Kok, Pine Rest Christian Hospital, Grand Rapids, Mich.

Rev. William Lenters, Calvary Rehabilitation Center, Phoenix, Ariz.

Rev. William Swierenga, Michigan Veterans Facility, Grand Rapids, Mich.

Rev. Adrian Van Andel, Veterans Administration Hospital, Marion, Ind.

Rev. Larry Vande Creek, Indiana University Medical Center, Indianapolis, Ind.

Rev. Thomas Vanden Bosch, Veterans Administration Hospital, Sioux Falls, S.D.

Rev. Duane Visser, Pine Rest Christian Hospital, Grand Rapids, Mich.

You will note that this totals eleven full time chaplains, one more than in 1972. We have lost one through the retirement of the Rev. Ralph Heynen and gained two, the Rev. Mr. Evans and the Rev. Mr. Lenters. Three of these are in military-related institutions, one is in the University Medical Center, and the other seven are in Christian Reformed church-related institutions.

In this connection we would call synod's attention to the retirement of the Rev. Ralph Heynen, Dean of Christian Reformed Institutional chaplains, which took effect Dec. 31, 1972 after twenty-nine years at Pine Rest. The Rev. Mr. Heynen has been an outstanding representative of hospital chaplaincy. He has single handedly raised the chaplain image to a very high level by his creative work. His books, radio broadcasts, pastors' workshops and consultation with scores of ministers have displayed boldly what a chaplain can be. As a result, the Rev. Mr. Heynen has been one of the very significant influences in the Christian Reformed Church. May the Lord bless him in his active retirement.

Our institutional sub-committee has continued its work during the past year. The committee has supported and guided several men in their study and preparation for the chaplaincy. With gratitude we take note of the fact that again in the past year the Spirit has directed ministers of our denomination into this area of service.

The Institutional Chaplaincy is a ministry which presents the church with a challenge of vast potential. There is among us a growing awareness of the need to be of service with the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ in the crisis-situations of life.

With the appearance of physical or emotional disorder, man is often led into a period of precious humility in which he becomes more receptive than ever to the redeeming and healing Word of the Lord. It is in those moments that the Institutional Chaplain becomes an instrument in the hands of God to bring about salvation and/or building in the faith.

However, the growth of this phase of our work, which has occupied the bulk of our time and effort this past year, and the problem of properly fulfilling our mandate has brought us to a situation that we must now present to synod for a solution. Permit us to present the Historical Background, the Opportunities, the Problems and our Recommendations in that order.

#### *A. Historical Background:*

Although the Chaplain Committee originated from the need for the endorsement and coordination of activities in regard to military chaplains, gradually its scope grew and was broadened to include an ever greater involvement in the growing field of institutional chaplaincies. Already in 1955, synod authorized this committee to study the whole field, its possibilities and problems (Acts, 1955, Art. 92, p. 55), "that the Chaplain Committee be authorized to make a study of the various types of institutional chaplaincy so that the denomination may have the benefit of adequate information and advice regarding what may be an important contemporary challenge. Adopted."

Such a report was presented to synod in 1956 (p. 332) and a still more specific one was given in 1957 (pp. 394, 395). Our prisons and our state mental and medical hospitals were given special mention, as well as the homes for the aged.

Thereupon, the Synod of 1957 approved the recommendation of the Chaplain Committee namely, "that synod authorize the Chaplain Committee to enlarge the scope of its responsibility so as to include institutional chaplaincies; to the extent of investigating openings and opportunities wherever chaplains are appointed or needed and of recruiting qualified men among the ministers and seminarians" (Acts 1957, Art. 49, p. 19).

At the Synod of 1959, the Chaplain Committee reported its findings and they were of such a challenging nature that they recommended stepping forward. Synod adopted the recommendation, that "the Chaplain Committee be given authority to grant ecclesiastical endorsement to qualified ministerial candidates for chaplaincies in mental and general hospitals—both public and private—and in federal, state, and local prisons, when this is required, and in any way similar to that now in practice for the military chaplaincy" (Art. 57, p. 14).

With the report of 1961 before them, synod that year adopted the recommendation of the Chaplain Committee. "Synod declare as its general policy that a Christian Reformed minister entering the institutional chaplaincy, in addition to the consistorial and classical endorsement, be urged to secure ecclesiastical endorsement from the synodical Chaplain Committee" (Art. 44, p. 13).

To this was added in 1964: "Synod authorize the Chaplain Committee to grant subsidy to Christian Reformed ministers in recognized clinical training and institutional residency programs when proper application is made, recognized standards are met, and actual need exists (Acts 1964; Art. 82, pp. 49, 50). Synod of 1960 had already declared: "Consistories and pastors are reminded to report vacancies and opportunities in the area of Institutional Chaplaincy to the Chaplain Committee" (p. 120).

As for salaries, synod declared in 1970, "That the Chaplain Committee be authorized to supplement salaries of institutional chaplains up to the F.N.C. minimum level on the grounds (given)" (Art. 71, p. 35).

This was all very good for the time being. What really helped the committee was the authorization of a part-time executive secretary on the part of synod in 1970 (Acts of Synod, Art. 40, p. 18). This was a step ahead for us. However, the opportunities in the field are broadening, the number of our men engaged in this work, or interested in it, is growing, and with it our responsibilities, largely the matter of investigation, recruitment, training, endorsement and partial support when necessary.

### *B. Opportunities:*

Thus, in carrying out our mandate progressively for several years, your committee has come to the point where we are convinced that some very definite steps must be taken if we are to move forward in this challenging field, faithful to our high calling in the ministry of the Word, in keeping with the Great Commission, and keeping faith with our men desirous of meeting this challenge, and with our mandate from synod.

Let us briefly picture the situation. The institutional chaplaincy is a growing type of ministry. The availability of positions range from coast to coast in both the United States and Canada. They can be found in hospitals, prisons, community mental health centers, industry, etc. They are found in both private and public institutions. Furthermore, there are many areas in which such positions can be created.

In the past year we have had a number of definite contacts from both churches and individuals calling to our attention particular possibilities in this area. There is a veritable cry for spiritual ministry of this kind.

As for the training in Clinical Pastoral Education, in most cases this is a requirement, along with parish experience. Preparation and study for the chaplaincy-ministry requires at least one year of specialized training. Various opportunities are available to us in accredited institutions in addition to our "own" Pine Rest Hospital. Some of these are choice spots which even carry with them a sizable stipend, indicating again the recog-

nition of the dire need. And although we are able to offer some support, it still remains practically impossible for most of our ministers to meet the cost of continued study.

### C. *Problems:*

Following are some of the major problems which confront us in fulfilling our mandate with respect to the institutional chaplaincy:

1. *Staff:* The necessary development of the institutional chaplaincy involves far more work than the members of the committee and our present part-time executive secretary on limited hours are able to handle. Some long unmet needs are:

a. There is a need for a "clearing house" of position opportunities. These must be sought out, investigated, evaluated and disseminated to interested ministers. Since chaplains are employed by a multiplicity of local, state and federal institutions, plus a wide range of private agencies, much time and effort are involved in effectively administering job openings in this field. With an ample supply of ministers and an increasing interest in institutional work among them, we are well advised as a denomination to vigorously pursue all opportunities for chaplain appointments which are open to our men, and to work selectively on those which are most compatible with our type of ministerial training and emphasis.

b. There is also an urgent need for an informational file of students and ministers who are interested in the institutional ministry, indicating their training, experience, other qualifications, and availability, so that a constant matching process between chaplaincy openings and qualified candidates may be effectively administered. Such a process would aim at bringing together our best candidates and the best job opportunities in a systematic and discriminating manner. It goes without saying that such a process requires substantial administration by a well qualified person.

c. Our own program administration for the institutional chaplaincy should include careful surveillance of the training undertaken by our ministers for institutional work, in so far as this is funded by the Chaplain Committee. In the past, we have found it very difficult to maintain such surveillance to the degree that denominational interest and maximum benefit of the trainee demand.

*Conclusion:* A full-time, qualified executive secretary is needed to provide required direction and leadership for the work of the Chaplain Committee.

2. *Endorsement:* The handling of ecclesiastical endorsement for institutional chaplaincy is a matter of serious administrative concern. Synod declared in 1961 "as its general policy that a Christian Reformed minister entering the institutional chaplaincy, in addition to consistorial and classical endorsement, be *urged* (italics ours) to secure ecclesiastical endorsement from the synodical Chaplain Committee" (Acts, p. 13). It should be noted that although the Chaplain Committee had recommended this

endorsement be *required*, synod saw fit only to urge it. Partly because of our lack of staff, we feel very limited in handling endorsement properly. Some individuals do not bother to obtain denominational endorsement, and consistories and classes permit them to serve in institutional ministries without it. As a result, some are serving who do not possess the qualifications set by the Chaplain Committee and approved by synod. There is much difficulty and confusion. We are not able to serve all of our chaplains to the best advantage with newsletters, retreats and visits. We are not able to help chaplains with their professional growth and advancement. There is urgent need for tightening up endorsement procedures and for better administering its total applications and benefits, including pension matters.

*Conclusion:* Endorsement by the Chaplain Committee should be *required* for all chaplains.

3. *Placement:* Many opportunities come to our attention which we are presently unable to take advantage of. There are situations where creation of a new position would be very meaningful, but call for full support for the chaplain as to housing and salary. Other situations arise in which office space may be provided in very strategic positions but either a limited or no salary is provided. We have not been authorized the funds nor the authority to fill these positions, and we are limited as to time and ability to seek these funds from classes or individual churches.

*Conclusion:* The Chaplain Committee should be authorized to appoint a limited number of chaplains to strategic positions and to arrange for their calling and support, either in whole or in part.

4. *Finances:* The development of the institutional chaplaincy and the meeting of our opportunities as they arise are presently hampered due to the inadequate funds with which the Chaplain Committee works. These funds come only from offerings in the churches.

The following may be noted:

a. The employment of an executive secretary and the expenses for his office would run considerably beyond the present budget of the Chaplain Committee.

b. Some institutions have chaplaincies which operate on a very small budget and for which the salary is inadequate to support a full-time chaplain. In such cases we would be able to place a chaplain if we were able to provide him with a substantial salary supplement. In other cases there may be no salary provided, but an office and secretarial assistance are offered. These are strategic opportunities which may be more challenging and fruitful than some of the outreach efforts we are now making in conventional home missions.

c. Our training program for institutional ministry is handicapped by insufficient funds for expenses and cost of living stipends, particularly

for ministers who are now serving congregations and have families to support. Neither do we have the administrative resources, as pointed out above, to solicit funds in such cases from local churches and/or classes.

*Conclusion:* A synodical quota is necessary in order to provide a sufficient and stable budget for the entire program of the Chaplain Committee, particularly for its institutional phase.

#### D. Recommendations:

##### 1. Administration:

a. That synod appoint a full-time qualified ordained man to serve as Executive Secretary for the Chaplain Committee.

*Note:* Should synod approve the appointment of the needed Executive Secretary, your Chaplain Committee is prepared to present a nomination to synod for an initial appointment for a two year term. Should synod desire to add to this nomination, we request that such a nomination be presented to the Chaplain Committee for approval before the appointment is made.

b. In general, this Executive Secretary would have the following duties:

1) Seek and investigate opportunities for the services of chaplains in institutions and communities.

2) Challenge our ministers and seminarians with the opportunities afforded in these ministries.

3) Serve as coordinator for the training of men to fulfill various positions and to help them to take advantage of training opportunities.

4) To give personal attention through visits and contacts to our men in both the institutional and military chaplaincy.

2. That the Chaplain Committee be authorized to appoint a limited number of chaplains to strategic positions and to arrange for their calling and support, either in whole or in part, to a maximum expenditure by the Chaplain Committee of \$20,000 in 1974.

3. That the Chaplain Committee be granted a quota of \$1.00 (one dollar) per family, in addition to the 50¢ per family quota for the Chaplain Deposit Fund (Pension) already authorized by the Synod of 1971 for a period of 3 years (Acts 1971, Art. 49 and p. 373). This money to be used for the following purposes:

a. To pay the salary of the needed staff of the Chaplain Committee.

b. To pay for the salaries of a limited number of chaplains to be placed in strategic positions for which funds are not available or cannot be found through churches or classes.

c. To subsidize the funds or stipends that are available for certain positions when those funds are not adequate.

4. That any ordained person working full time in pastoral care or counseling, not serving a local church or a denominational agency, must be endorsed by the Chaplain Committee in order to receive approval by his classis for work in a special ministry. Endorsement shall consist of the following:

a. The approval of the man as a qualified candidate in terms of ministerial skills and training for his specialized position. Such qualifications to be judged on the basis of personal interviews, recommendations and other standards of the Chaplain Committee. (Classis, obviously, retains the task of judging the spiritual nature of the position and granting permission for a man to be called to that position.)

b. The approval of the field as a "worthy field" with a potential great enough to justify the full-time employment of an ordained minister.

5. *Representation at Synod*: We request that the chairman of our committee be permitted to speak at synod in matters pertaining to the Chaplain Committee.

6. *Presentation of Chaplains*: We request that both active duty military and institutional chaplains who may be present during synod's sessions be presented to the synod and that one of each category so designated by the committee be granted the privilege of a brief word to synod.

7. *Offerings*: We request that synod place the Chaplain Committee on the approved list for one or more offerings above the quota, for 1974 for the work of the chaplaincy of the Christian Reformed Church.

*Ground*: Our responsibility continues due to the expansion of the Institutional Chaplaincy Program and the continued services to the men of the Armed Forces.

8. *Personnel*: The Revs. Galen Meyer and Carl D. Tuyl and Mr. Nicholas Van Andel have completed one 3-year term of valued service on the committee. All three are eligible for another term of service. The Chaplain Committee suggests the following nomination to synod:

a. The Rev. Galen Meyer (incumbent), ex-chaplain and Bible teacher at South Christian High School.

The Rev. Jay R. Pruijm, pastor of the Heritage Christian Reformed Church at Byron Center, and Reserve Chaplain.

b. The Rev. Carl D. Tuyl (incumbent), pastor of the Whitby, Ontario Christian Reformed Church.

The Rev. Jerry J. Hoytema, pastor of the Grimsby, Ontario Christian Reformed Church.

c. Mr. Nicholas Van Andel (incumbent) MSW, Social Worker, Director of Child Haven, member of Creston Christian Reformed Church.

Mr. Gerald Vander Tuig, Director of Grand Rapids Child Guidance Clinic, member of Calvin Christian Reformed Church.

## III. FINANCIAL REPORT:

The Treasurer's annual statement and auditor's report are attached to this report of your committee.

## The Chaplain Committee

Theodore Verseput, Chairman  
 Cornelius M. Schoolland, Secretary  
 Jack Holwerda, Treasurer  
 Melvin D. Hugen  
 Jim Kok  
 Galen Meyer  
 Carl D. Tuyl  
 Nicholas Van Andel  
 Floyd Westendorp

## CHAPLAIN COMMITTEE

Financial Report - 1972

Year ended December 31, 1972

## BALANCE, January 1, 1972:

Checking account	\$ 2,629.22	
Savings accounts	<u>5,782.67</u>	\$ 8,411.89

## RECEIPTS:

Contributions and gifts	\$12,160.85	
Air Force offering	300.00	
R.C.A. - Berchtesgaden Retreat	415.32	
Interest on savings accounts	<u>365.34</u>	<u>\$13,241.51</u>

## DISBURSEMENTS:

	Total Available	\$21,653.40
Travel and recruitment	\$ 927.06	
Training allowances	2,600.00	
General Commission dues	1,530.00	
Secretary and Clerical	1,326.11	
Retreats	2,235.18	
Rochester, Minn.	900.00	
Literature	206.04	
Office Furnishings	115.00	
Supplies and postage	221.77	
Pension Fund clerical	150.13	
Miscellaneous administrative	<u>229.70</u>	

Total Disbursements	<u>10,440.99</u>
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## BALANCE, December 31, 1972:

Checking account	\$ 3,136.53	
Savings accounts	<u>8,075.88</u>	<u>\$11,212.41</u>

**REPORT 10**  
**CHURCH HELP FUND**  
(Art. 37)

**DEAR BROTHERS:**

The following is a report of the work of the Church Help Fund Committee for the year 1972. Regular meetings were held throughout the year to consider the applications submitted to our committee. Due to high interest rates, rising construction costs, and with private lenders seeking greater returns on investments in other areas, more and more churches turned to our fund for assistance.

During the year thirty-six applications for aid were received, which is an increase of almost 70% over the previous year. Following a careful review of the information submitted by the churches and the evaluation of the endorsing classes, loans were granted to twenty-eight congregations totaling \$516,765.00. This total is almost three times the amount granted in 1971. Although most of the requests were for renovating, replacing, or refinancing of present facilities, we joyfully take note of the fact that several applications were submitted by newly organized congregations.

We were once again forced to operate with a deficit throughout the year. With the cooperation of the churches in not calling for their approved loans until they were actually needed we were able to supply funds to the various churches upon request. Most of the loans granted were on a ten to fifteen year repayment schedule. The resulting larger repayments enable us to be of assistance to more congregations. Long-term loans were granted only in exceptional cases. We are appreciative of the cooperation received from the churches, and we are especially grateful to those who have made advance payments on their loans. We regret that some churches failed to meet their obligations in full since this jeopardizes the revolving nature of our fund.

The personnel of the committee has undergone only one change during the year. The Rev. E. Blankespoor has filled the vacancy created by the moving of the Rev. W. De Vries to another field of labor. The committee is grateful to the Rev. Mr. De Vries for his faithful service and counsel.

At present 294 churches have received assistance from the Church Help Fund. Once again we would urge the churches that have experienced substantial growth to make more rapid repayment of their loans. We also request that the classes give careful review to all applications they endorse. Since we have no field man we must rely heavily upon their evaluations. It is painfully obvious at times that classes are not al-

ways diligent in this respect and too readily endorse applications from churches that are clearly not weak and needy.

The following figures present a brief account of the financial condition of the Church Help Fund as of December 31, 1972:

Total receipts from repaid loans .....	\$ 303,226.59
New loans paid during 1972 .....	348,765.00
Total loans outstanding .....	2,288,987.45
Balance on hand (cash & savings account) .....	89,229.20
Loans promised but not called for .....	250,000.00
Balance on hand .....	(deficit) (160,770.80)

The financial regulations regarding the safety of the bank accounts are being followed by the Church Help Committee.

Our By-Laws clearly allow us as a committee to seek additional security for a loan if this is considered to be necessary. We were placed at a distinct disadvantage by the action of synod last year when we were instructed to remove a question from our application form designed for this purpose. This action limits the possibility of our assuring repayment of loans which are questionable as to financial soundness without jeopardizing the church's chances of obtaining loans from other sources.

Several churches have made inquiry about the possibility of obtaining aid from our fund. In projecting our needs the committee feels that it will not be necessary to ask for quotas since the yearly repayments, plus the cooperation of the churches, should enable us to meet the requests anticipated.

#### Matters requiring action:

1. The committee requests that the Rev. E. Blankespoor, a member of our committee and a delegate to synod, be given the privilege of the floor on matters pertaining to the Church Help Fund.
2. We recommend that Mr. M. Wiersma and Mr. Garrett Post be reappointed to another term on the Church Help Fund Committee.  
*Ground:* Their experience and knowledge of financial matters make it essential that their services be retained.
3. We recommend that the Rev. J. Engbers be reappointed for another term.  
*Ground:* He has served one full term and is eligible for reappointment.
4. Mr. S. Holtrop has completed 6 years of service on our committee. We are grateful for his services. We present the following nomination for lay-member to our committee for your consideration. Mr. Ted Van Bruggen and Mr. I. Woudstra.
5. We recommend that the nominee listed above not elected as regular lay-member to our committee be designated as alternate.
6. Since our ministerial alternate, the Rev. E. Blankespoor, has now become a member of the committee filling the vacancy created by the leaving of the Rev. W. De Vries, we present the following

nomination for ministerial alternate for your consideration: the Rev. D. Houseman and the Rev. Wm. Dryfhout.

*Ground:* We have no ministerial alternate at the present time.

Church Help Committee

J. H. Rubingh, Pres.  
 J. Engbers, Sec'y  
 M. Wiersma, Treas.  
 E. Blankespoor  
 S. Holtrop  
 Garrett Post

February 27, 1973

**The CHURCH HELP COMMITTEE**  
 Christian Reformed Church

Upon your request, an examination was made of the financial reports of the CHURCH HELP FUND of the CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH, as of December 31, 1972, including

- Schedule A—Cash Receipts and Disbursements, 1972
- Schedule B—Analysis — Loans Outstanding
- Schedule C—Administrative Expenses

The examination was made in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards, and accordingly included tests of the records as were considered necessary in the circumstances, except that notes receivable were not confirmed by direct correspondence (balances are published annually in the *Acts of Synod* for verification by individual churches). The accompanying reports are presented subject to the above limitation.

In our opinion, the accompanying statements present fairly the financial condition of the CHURCH HELP FUND of the CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH as of December 31, 1972, and the results of operations for the year then ended, in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles applied on a basis consistent with that of the preceding year.

Henry J. DeGroot  
 Certified Public Accountant

Schedule "A"

THE CHURCH HELP FUND  
 CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH  
 ORANGE CITY, IOWA

CASH RECEIPTS AND DISBURSEMENTS

Cash on hand December 31, 1971			
General checking account		\$ 4,426.66	
Savings accounts:			
Northwestern State Bank, Orange City	\$65,000.00		
Security Nat'l. Bank, Sioux City, Ia.	30,000.00		
1st Nat'l. Bank, Sioux Center	<u>30,000.00</u>	125,000.00	\$129,426.66
Receipts:			
Repayment of loans, Schedule "B"		\$303,226.59	
Interest on savings account		6,768.28	
U.S. - Canadian Exchange		693.76	
Classis - Gifts and Misc.		298.00	
Total			<u>310,986.63</u>
			\$440,413.29

## Disbursements:

New Loans disbursed, Schedule "B"	\$348,765.00	
Administrative expense - Schedule "C"	2,230.74	
U.S. - Exchange	188.35	
Total		\$351,184.09
		89,229.20

## Cash on hand December 31, 1972

General Checking Account			
Bank balance	\$44,165.85		
Less outstanding checks \$20,000.00			
\$20,000.00			
3,000.00	43,000.00	1,165.85	

## Savings Accounts:

Northwestern State Bank, Orange City	25,000.00	
Security Nat'l. Bank, Sioux City, Iowa	31,392.36	
1st Nat'l. Bank, Sioux Center, Iowa	31,670.99	
Cash on hand		\$ 88,063.35
		\$ 89,229.20

## Outstanding loans to churches

\$2,288,987.45

## Schedule "B"

## ANALYSIS - LOANS OUTSTANDING

No.	Church	Schedule "B"		
		Balance 12-31-72	New Loans	Repay
1	Abbotsford, B.C. - 1st	\$ 2,518.75		\$ 606.25
2	Abbotsford, B.C. - 2nd	30,000.00		3,000.00
3	Ackley, Iowa	18,000.00		2,000.00
4	Acton, Ont.	5,431.25		718.75
5	Ada, Michigan	2,875.00		2,875.00
6	Agassiz, B.C.	28,433.34		5,566.66
7	Albuquerque, New Mexico			
	1st Chelwood Community	14,666.68		1,333.33
8	Alliston, Ont.	8,833.35		833.33
9	Alto, Wisconsin	7,995.00		666.00
10	Anchorage, Alaska-Trinity	28,000.00		2,000.00
11	Ann Arbor, Michigan	6,700.00		1,200.00
12	Arcadia, California	290.00		290.00
13	Athens, Ont.	4,187.50		687.50
14	Aylmer, Ont.	250.00		250.00
15	Barrhead-Westlock, Alta.	4,255.72		700.00
16	Barrie, Ont. - 1st	3,375.00		687.50
17	Bejou, Minnesota	265.00		150.00
18	Belleville, Ont. - Maranatha	6,000.00		750.00
19	Bellevue, Alta.	10,000.00		800.00
20	Bellingham, Wash.-Mountainview		\$30,000.00	
21	Bigelow, Minnesota	1,625.00		325.00
22	Elenheim, Ont.	16,000.00		1,250.00
23	Bloomfield, Ont.-Bethany	5,000.00	10,000.00	500.00
24	Blyth, Ont.	18,250.00		1,250.00
25	Boulder, Colo. - Crestview	5,000.00		1,000.00
26	Bowmanville, Ont.-Maranatha	16,000.00		2,000.00
27	Bowmanville, Ont. - Rehoboth	3,150.00		600.00
28	Brampton, Ont. - Immanuel	1,900.00		700.00
29	Brandon, Man. - 1st	8,138.75		1,206.25
30	Brantford, Ont.	781.15		
31	Britt, Iowa	6,850.00		825.00
32	Brockville, Ont. - Bethel	1,500.00		
33	Brooks, Alta.	11,295.00		1,416.34
34	Erooten, Minnesota	2,800.00		1,000.00
35	Burdett, Alta.	5,250.00		500.00
36	Burlington, Ont.	6,375.00		
37	Burlington, Ont.-Aldershot	10,000.00		2,000.00
38	Burnaby, B.C.	8,425.00		850.00
39	Byron Center, Mich. - 2nd	3,500.00		500.00

NO.	Church	Balance	New Loans	Repay	Balance
		12-31-71			12-31-72
40	Cadillac, Michigan	11,000.00		1,000.00	10,000.00
41	Caledonia, Mich.	19,647.00		1,333.00	18,314.00
42	Calgary, Alta.- 2nd Emmanuel	15,050.00		14,970.80	79.20
43	Calgary, Alta. - 1st	3,000.00		600.00	2,400.00
44	Calgary, Alta. - Maranatha	7,000.00		750.00	6,250.00
45	Cedar, Iowa	2,253.25		1,000.00	1,253.25
46	Cedar Falls, Iowa	16,000.00		1,000.00	15,000.00
47	Cedar Rapids, Iowa		20,000.00		20,000.00
48	Cedar Springs, Mich. - Pioneer	7,650.00		475.00	7,175.00
49	Chatham, Ont. - Grace	14,375.00		1,875.00	12,500.00
50	Chicago, Ill. - Garfield		9,400.00		9,400.00
51	Chicago, Ill. - Korean		30,000.00		30,000.00
52	Chilliwack, B.C.	8,229.30		1,000.00	7,229.30
53	Chula Vista, California	12,000.00			12,000.00
54	Clara City, Minnesota	675.00		675.00	none
55	Clarkson, Ont.	2,831.25		656.25	2,175.00
56	Cleveland, Ohio - Maple Heights	3,500.00		500.00	3,000.00
57	Clinton, Ont.	3,468.75		1,043.75	2,425.00
58	Cobourg, Ont. - Grace	9,500.00		1,100.00	8,400.00
59	Cochrane, Ont.	3,088.55		547.20	2,541.35
60	Collingwood, Ont.	21,950.00		2,402.00	19,548.00
61	Columbus, Ohio - Olentangy	1,710.00			1,710.00
62	Comstock Park, Michigan	8,000.00		500.00	7,500.00
63	Conrad, Montana	8,155.00		500.00	7,655.00
64	Cornwall, Ont. - Immanuel	18,562.50			18,562.50
65	Crown Point, Indiana	8,000.00		1,500.00	6,500.00
66	Cutlerville, Mich. - Cutlerville Hills	8,000.00		1,000.00	7,000.00
67	Cutlerville, Mich. - East	2,000.00		500.00	1,500.00
68	Decatur, Michigan	9,767.16		1,500.00	8,267.16
69	De Motte, Indiana - Bethel	26,000.00		2,000.00	24,000.00
70	Denver, Colo. - Fairview	8,250.00		675.00	7,575.00
71	Denver, Colo. - Hillcrest	1,500.00		1,500.00	none
72	Denver, Colo. - Ridgeview Hills	27,666.67		2,333.33	25,333.34
73	Denver, Colo. - Trinity	24,750.00		5,000.00	19,750.00
74	Des Moines, Iowa	10,500.00		1,500.00	9,000.00
75	Drayton, Ont.	3,000.00			3,000.00
76	Dresden, Ont.	2,750.00		625.00	2,125.00
77	Duncan, B.C.	4,762.50		743.75	4,018.75
78	Dundas, Ont. - Calvin	7,750.00		750.00	7,000.00
79	Dunnville, Ont. - Bethel	10,000.00		750.00	9,250.00
80	East Lansing, Michigan	16,000.01			16,000.01
81	East Martin, Michigan	5,000.00		1,000.00	4,000.00
82	Edmonton, Alta. - Maranatha	2,937.50		625.00	2,312.50
83	Edmonton, Alta. - Ottewell	10,000.00		1,500.00	8,500.00
84	Edmonton, Alta. - 2nd	1,800.00		600.00	1,200.00
85	Edmonton, Alta. - Trinity	6,000.00			6,000.00
86	Edmonton, Alta. - West End	5,700.00		1,000.00	4,700.00
87	Edson, Alta.	7,015.68	10,000.00	750.00	16,265.68
88	Emo, Ont.	11,505.00		1,350.00	10,155.00
89	Escalon, California	4,625.00		1,000.00	3,625.00
90	Essex, Ont.	4,060.00		820.00	3,240.00
91	Everett, Washington - 1st	9,000.00		3,000.00	6,000.00
92	Exeter, Ont.	7,000.00		750.00	6,250.00
93	Ferrisburg, Vermont	6,700.00		1,080.00	5,620.00
94	Forest, Ont.	12,687.50		1,218.75	11,468.75
95	Fort Collins, Colo. - Immanuel	8,000.00		1,000.00	7,000.00
96	Fort Lauderdale, Florida	3,500.00		500.00	3,000.00
97	Framingham, Mass	5,000.00		500.00	4,500.00
98	Freeman, So. Dak.-Bethlehem		10,000.00		10,000.00
99	Fremont, Mich. - Trinity	2,000.00		500.00	1,500.00
100	Fresno, California	7,000.00		1,000.00	6,000.00
101	Fruitland, Ont.	2,306.25		506.25	1,800.00
102	Fruitport, Michigan	20,866.27		1,883.33	18,983.34
103	Fulton, Ill. - Bethel	11,000.00		1,000.00	10,000.00
104	Galt, Ont. - Maranatha	13,750.00		2,250.00	11,500.00
105	Gary, Indiana - Beacon Light	4,600.00		1,500.00	3,100.00

No.	Church	BALANCE			BALANCE
		12-31-71	New Loans	Repay	
106	Georgetown, Ont.	8,250.00		750.00	7,500.00
107	Goshen, Indiana	5,333.38		1,333.32	4,000.06
108	Grand Prairie, Alta. - LaGlace	1,977.07			1,977.07
109	Grand Rapids, Mi. - Arcadia	6,000.06		916.66	5,083.40
110	Grand Rapids, Mi. - Bristolwood	9,166.68		833.33	8,333.35
111	Grand Rapids, Mi. - Cascade	750.00		500.00	250.00
112	Grand Rapids, Mi. - Grace	3,750.00		1,225.00	2,525.00
113	Grand Rapids, Mi. - Ideal Park	12,000.08		1,333.32	10,666.76
114	Grand Rapids, Mi. - Millbrook	600.00		600.00	None
115	Grand Rapids, Mi. - Princeton	6,000.00			6,000.00
116	Grand Rapids, Mi. - Riverside	3,800.00		700.00	3,100.00
117	Grandville, Mi. - Hanley	1,000.00		500.00	500.00
118	Grandville, Mi. - Ivanrest	7,250.00		1,250.00	6,000.00
119	Grandville, Mi. - South	2,000.00		500.00	1,500.00
120	Granum, Alta.	5,000.00		1,000.00	4,000.00
121	Greeley, Colo.		20,000.00		20,000.00
122	Grimsby, Ont. - Mountainview	9,000.00		750.00	8,250.00
123	Guelph, Ont.	6,755.00		750.00	6,005.00
124	Halifax, Nova Scotia	7,583.34		583.33	7,000.01
125	Hamilton, Ont. - Immanuel	9,575.00		775.00	8,800.00
126	Hamilton, Ont. - Mt. Hamilton	3,650.00		600.00	3,050.00
127	Hammond, Indiana	2,750.00		1,250.00	1,500.00
128	Hancock, Minnesota	5,125.00		500.00	4,625.00
129	Haney, B.C.	1,762.50		637.50	1,125.00
130	Hartley, Iowa	7,000.00		325.00	6,675.00
131	Hawarden, Iowa	2,000.00		500.00	1,500.00
132	Hayward, California	5,250.00		1,500.00	3,750.00
133	High River, Alta.	800.00		400.00	400.00
134	Holland, Iowa	16,000.01		1,333.33	14,666.68
135	Holland, Mich. - Calvary	13,100.00		3,200.00	9,900.00
136	Holland, Mich. - Park	9,000.00		2,000.00	7,000.00
137	Holland, Minnesota	4,690.00		500.00	4,190.00
138	Hollandale, Minnesota	5,000.00		500.00	4,500.00
139	Holland March, Ont.	3,188.44		500.00	2,688.44
140	Hudsonville, Mich. - Messiah	7,500.00		1,500.00	6,000.00
141	Hull, Iowa - Hope	12,900.00		1,050.00	11,850.00
142	Hull, North Dakota	20,000.00		9,500.00	10,500.00
143	Ingersoll, Ont.	6,605.00		305.00	6,300.00
144	Jackson, Michigan	2,750.00			2,750.00
145	Jamaica, New York - Queens	8,500.00		500.00	8,000.00
146	Jarvis, Ont.	350.00		350.00	None
147	Janison, Mich. - Cottonwood Hgts.		15,000.00		15,000.00
148	Kalamazoo, Mi. - Eastern Hills	19,000.00		1,000.00	18,000.00
149	Kalamazoo, Mi. - Faith	13,500.00		1,500.00	12,000.00
150	Kalamazoo, Mi. - Knollwood	10,300.00		1,700.00	8,600.00
151	Kalamazoo, Mi. - Northern Hgts.	13,500.00		1,500.00	12,000.00
152	Kalamazoo, Mi. - Parchment	4,000.00		500.00	3,500.00
153	Kalamazoo, Mi. - Prairie Edge	5,500.00		750.00	4,750.00
154	Kalamazoo, Mi. - Southern Hgts.	9,000.00		1,000.00	8,000.00
155	Kalamazoo, Mi. - Westwood	1,000.00		500.00	500.00
156	Kansas City, Mo. - Lane Ave.		20,000.00		20,000.00
157	Kelowna, B.C.		20,000.00		20,000.00
158	Kentville, Nova Scotia	9,750.00		750.00	9,000.00
159	Kingston, Ont.	1,750.00		625.00	1,125.00
160	Kitchener, Ont. - 1st	2,656.25			2,656.25
161	Lacombe, Alta. - Bethel	6,250.00		750.00	5,500.00
162	Ladner, B.C.	4,550.00		625.00	3,925.00
163	Lake City, Michigan	14,250.00		1,125.00	13,125.00
164	Langeley, B.C.	3,485.00		1,037.50	2,447.50
165	Le Mars, Iowa - Calvin	3,500.00		1,700.00	1,800.00
166	Lindsay, Ont.	7,700.50		650.50	7,050.00
167	Listowel, Ont.	8,250.00		750.00	7,500.00
168	Los Angeles, Cal. - Crenshaw	3,000.00		500.00	2,500.00
169	Lowell, Mich. - Calvary	8,000.00		1,000.00	7,000.00
170	Lucas, Michigan	4,000.00		2,000.00	2,000.00
171	Lucknow, Ont.	22,450.00		1,900.00	20,550.00
172	Lynnwood, Washington	24,000.00		2,000.00	22,000.00

No.	Church	Balance	New Loans	Repay	Balance
		12-31-71			12-31-72
173	Marysville, Wash. - Cascade	17,333.34		1,333.34	16,000.00
174	McBain, Michigan	3,000.00		1,000.00	2,000.00
175	McBain, Michigan - Calvin	2,000.00		2,000.00	None
176	Medicine Hat., Alta.	6,250.00		750.00	5,500.00
177	Miami, Florida	9,500.00		2,000.00	7,500.00
178	Middleville, Michigan	3,666.68		333.33	3,333.35
179	Midland Park, N.J. - Irving Park	2,500.00		500.00	2,000.00
180	Milwaukee, Wisconsin - 1st	950.00		350.00	600.00
181	Minneapolis, Minn. - Calvary	3,000.00		250.00	2,750.00
182	Minneapolis, Minn. - 1st	30,000.00		1,500.00	28,500.00
183	Momence, Ill.	8,000.00		1,000.00	7,000.00
184	Montreal, Quebec	21,000.00		1,500.00	19,500.00
185	Mountain Lake, Minnesota	797.75		336.50	461.25
186	Mount Vernon, Wash. - 1st	1,000.00		1,000.00	None
187	Muskegon, Mich. - Calvin	2,000.00		2,000.00	None
188	Muskegon, Mich. - Grace	7,323.86		879.05	6,444.81
189	New Glasgow, Nova Scotia		20,000.00		20,000.00
190	New Market, Ont.	9,750.00		750.00	9,000.00
191	New Westminster, B.C.	3,337.50			3,337.50
192	Niagara Falls, Ont. - Rehoboth	6,000.00		500.00	5,500.00
193	North Haledon, New Jersey	4,500.00			4,500.00
194	Oak Forest, Ill. - Hope	7,800.00		2,300.00	5,500.00
195	Oak Harbor, Washington	3,666.68		333.33	3,333.35
196	Ogilvie, Minnesota	2,100.00		1,000.00	1,100.00
197	Olympia, Wash. - Evergreen		30,000.00		30,000.00
198	Omaha, Nebr. - Prairie Lane	15,000.00			15,000.00
199	Orangeville, Ont.	19,305.00		2,220.00	17,085.00
200	Orillia, Ont.	8,750.00		750.00	8,000.00
201	Oskawa, Ont. - Zion	5,500.00		1,500.00	4,000.00
202	Oskaloosa, Iowa - Bethel	1,750.00		250.00	1,500.00
203	Ottawa, Ont. - Calvary	16,525.00		1,861.00	14,664.00
204	Ottawa, Ont. - Calvin	5,125.00			5,125.00
205	Palo Alto, California		20,000.00		20,000.00
206	Palos Heights, Ill.	3,000.00		700.00	2,300.00
207	Paramus, New Jersey	20,083.34		1,583.33	18,500.01
208	Peers, Alta.	3,908.26		1,063.00	2,845.26
209	Pembroke, Ont. - Zion	4,375.00		1,748.20	2,626.80
210	Penticton, B.C.	12,383.97			12,383.97
211	Peterborough, Ont. - Cephas	7,668.52		800.00	6,868.52
212	Phoenix, Ariz. - Orangewood	9,000.00		1,000.00	8,000.00
213	Pipestone, Minnesota	1,500.00		1,500.00	None
214	Plainfield, Michigan	20,375.01		2,008.33	18,366.68
215	Port Alberni, B.C. - 1st	11,775.00		1,051.84	10,723.16
216	Portland, Michigan	500.00		250.00	250.00
217	Red Deer, Alta. - 1st	3,000.00		562.50	2,437.50
218	Redlands, Cal. - Highland Ave.	2,675.00		425.00	2,250.00
219	Regina, Sask.	9,000.00		750.00	8,250.00
220	Renfrew, Ont.	6,750.00		750.00	6,000.00
221	Renville, Minn. - Emden	1,000.00		1,000.00	None
222	Richmond, B.C.	6,000.00		1,050.00	4,950.00
223	Riverside, California		10,000.00		10,000.00
224	Rock Valley, Iowa - Trinity	10,000.00		2,000.00	8,000.00
225	Rocky Mountain House, Alta.	2,025.00		637.50	1,387.50
226	Roseville, Mich. - Immanuel	2,750.00	15,000.00	250.00	17,500.00
227	Rudyard, Michigan	9,333.34		666.66	8,666.68
228	Sacramento, California	17,000.00		1,500.00	15,500.00
229	Saginaw, Mich. - Community	10,000.00		1,000.00	9,000.00
230	San Diego, California	2,000.00		1,000.00	1,000.00
231	San Jose, Cal. - Moorpark	20,000.00		2,000.00	18,000.00
232	Sarnia, Ont. - 2nd	2,800.00		650.00	2,150.00
233	Saskatoon, Sask. - Bethel	22,700.00		2,000.00	20,700.00
234	Seattle, Wash. - Calvary	5,000.00		750.00	4,250.00
235	Seattle, Wash. - 1st	1,825.00		775.00	1,050.00
236	Sheboygan, Wis. - Calvin	8,583.34		1,083.33	7,500.01
237	Simcoe, Ont. - Immanuel	23,300.00		900.00	22,400.00
238	Sioux City, Iowa	14,600.00		900.00	13,700.00
239	Smithers, B.C.	5,930.00		630.00	5,300.00

NO.	Church	Balance		Repay	Balance	
		12-31-71	New Loans		12-31-72	
240	South Bend, Indiana	301.75		175.00		126.75
241	South Holland, Ill. - Peace	15,000.00		2,500.00		12,500.00
242	Springdale, Ont.	3,000.00		1,000.00		2,000.00
243	St. Catharines, Ont.-Maranatha	2,362.50				2,362.50
244	St. Thomas, Ont. - 1st	4,975.00		762.50		4,212.50
245	Stony Plain, Alta. - Hope	9,000.00		500.00		8,500.00
246	Stratford, Ont.	6,750.00				6,750.00
247	Strathroy, Ont. - East	2,325.00				2,325.00
248	Strathroy, Ont. - Westmount	6,000.00		1,000.00		5,000.00
249	Sun Valley, Cal. - Bethel	3,500.00		1,500.00		2,000.00
250	Surrey, B.C.	9,250.00		750.00		8,500.00
251	Tsber, Alta.	13,870.80		1,615.63		12,255.17
252	Telkwa, B.C.	5,541.67		957.37		4,584.30
253	Terrace, B.C.	5,500.00				4,875.00
254	Terra Ceia, North Carolina	635.00	19,365.00	1,586.00		18,414.00
255	Thunderbay, Ont.- Bethelhem	10,500.00		750.00		9,750.00
256	Thunderbay, Ont. - 1st	1,337.50		1,337.50		None
257	Toronto, Ont. - 1st	1,100.00		450.00		650.00
258	Toronto, Ont. - Grace, Scarborough	5,000.00		1,000.00		4,000.00
259	Toronto, Ont. - Rehoboth	2,125.00		430.00		1,695.00
260	Toronto, Ont. - 2nd - Weston	9,750.00				9,750.00
261	Toronto, Ont. - Willowdale	2,400.00		800.00		1,600.00
262	Tracy, Iowa	513.00		295.50		217.50
263	Trenton, Ont. - Ebenezer	2,175.00		600.00		1,575.00
264	Troy, Mich. - North Hills	25,666.69		3,000.00		22,666.69
265	Truro, Nova Scotia	4,600.00		600.00		4,000.00
266	Tucson, Arizona - Bethel	17,750.00		7,750.00		10,000.00
267	Tucson, Arizona - Elim	10,000.00	3,000.00	1,000.00		12,000.00
268	Vancouver, Wash. - Trinity	28,000.00		2,000.00		26,000.00
269	Vauxhall, Alta.	1,700.00				1,700.00
270	Bernon, B.C.	15,936.53	7,000.00	1,333.33		21,603.10
271	Vesper, Wisconsin	3,500.00		500.00		3,000.00
272	Victoria, B.C.	6,175.00		625.00		5,550.00
273	Vogel Center, Michigan	10,000.00		1,000.00		9,000.00
274	Wallaceburg, Ont.	9,450.00		900.00		8,550.00
275	Washington, D.C.		30,000.00			30,000.00
276	Washington, D.C. - Silver Springs	38,666.68				38,666.68
277	Waupun, Wisconsin - Bethel	10,000.00		1,000.00		9,000.00
278	Wayland, Michigan	24,000.00		2,500.00		21,500.00
279	Welland Junction, Ont.	8,500.00		750.00		7,750.00
280	Wellandport, Ont. - Riverside	2,500.00		625.00		1,875.00
281	Wellsburg, Iowa - 2nd	10,000.00				10,000.00
283	Whitby, Ont. - Hebron	7,312.50		750.00		6,562.50
284	Willmar, Minnesota	5,000.00		500.00		4,500.00
285	Winfield, Illinois	12,000.00				12,000.00
286	Winnipeg, Man. - College Ave.	484.25		484.25		None
287	Winnipeg, Man. - Kildonan	9,000.00		2,000.00		7,000.00
288	Winnipeg, Man. - Transcona	7,000.00		5,250.00		1,750.00
289	Wyoming, Mich. - Roger Heights	4,250.00		750.00		3,500.00
290	Wyoming, Mich. - 36th St.	1,500.00		500.00		1,000.00
291	Wyoming, Ont.	2,750.00		662.50		2,087.50
292	York, Ont. - Maranatha	20,733.34		2,016.66		18,716.68
293	Zeeland, Michigan - Haven	9,000.00		1,500.00		7,500.00
294	Zillah, Washington	5,000.00		1,000.00		4,000.00

\$2,243,449.04 \$348,765.00 \$303,226.59 \$2,288,987.45

ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES

Meeting and mileage	\$ 343.47
Rev. John Engbers, Secy.	450.00
Marion Wiersma, Treas.	1,100.00
Henry De Groot, Auditor	45.00
Postage and supplies	104.27
Fidelity Bond	188.00

Total \$2,230.74

**REPORT 11**  
**EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE TO CHURCHES ABROAD**  
(Art. 25)

DEAR BROTHERS:

As your committee looks back on another year of operation, it would express its gratitude to God and its appreciation to the denomination for continued loyal support of its assistance programs.

This has been a year of further implementation of the committee's synodical mandate. First of all, the committee has continued its support of the Rev. L. C. DeKretser of Ceylon and Mr. John Lin of Taiwan. The Rev. Mr. DeKretser is nearing the completion of his work at Calvin Seminary toward the B.D. and Th.M. degrees, and plans to return this summer to Ceylon with his wife and child. With restrictions on missionary involvement in that country, the Rev. L. C. DeKretser's ministry is particularly crucial to the life of his church. Mr. John Lin is completing his second year of seminary work.

We have also assisted in the support of Mr. John Gberkon of Nigeria who is working towards his master degree in the department of education at Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, Michigan. Mr. Gberkon occupies a significant position in Nigeria as principal of our Mkar Teachers' College, where he supervises the work of 16 fellow teachers, both Nigerian and missionary, in the preparation of Christian teachers. The support of Mr. Gberkon and the Rev. L. C. DeKretser will terminate this summer, as they return to their homelands.

During 1972 a grant was also given to Dr. Waldyr Luz, professor at Campinas Theological Seminary in Brazil, for study at Calvin Seminary during 1973. Dr. Luz represents a staunch Reformed bulwark within the National Presbyterian Church of Brazil and is currently translating Calvin's *Institutes* into Portuguese. Since our mission in Brazil works in cooperation with this denomination, we have been provided with a significant avenue of assistance to the emerging churches there to encourage them in receiving the Reformed heritage. We are hopeful that we will have the funds to continue this service to churches abroad at critical points of opportunity.

In the area of book collection and distribution this has been a year of expansion and experimentation. Mr. Peter De Klerk, theological librarian, has served the committee well in listing the books which have been so generously donated for this cause, and collecting the books requested by various institutions around the world. Baker Book House has served the committee in regard to the shipment of such used books. A large number of volumes has been shipped to institutions in Japan, the Philippines, Ceylon, Indonesia and Mexico City. New books or funds for books

have been sent to Japan, the Philippines, Mexico City, Argentina and Korea. Approximately \$4,000 worth of books have been sent out. It has become apparent that this is an area of need, and the committee is already committed to give some of this aid to some other regions of the world.

Our book distribution program indicates that 1,522 books (782 used, 740 new) were sent out. The distribution was as follows:

Seoul, Korea (Presbyterian General Assembly Seminary): 143 books

Bacolod City and Manila, Philippines: 621 books

Kobe, Japan (Kobe Theological Seminary): 489 books

Jakarta, Indonesia, Bible School: 186 books

Mexico City Bible Institute and John Calvin Seminary, Mexico City,

Mexico: 65 books and \$700 grant

Colombo, Ceylon (Colombo Seminary): 18 books

Buenos Aires, Argentina (Central Lending Library and libraries for national pastors and evangelists): \$500 grant

Brazil (Lending library for national pastors): \$150 grant.

We are thankful for the valuable used books which have been donated, and we would issue the reminder that we can continue to use English books, such as commentaries, Bible dictionaries, books on doctrine, Bible histories, and the like.

During the summer of 1972 the Rev. L. C. DeKretser served in an internship with the Young Calvinist Federation, and the committee is hopeful that this aspect of its mandate may be further broadened during the coming year.

The committee continues to be grateful for sizable gifts from certain families of the church. We are hopeful that the church at large will increase its support of this operation, as it appears that we are moving into an era when aid to churches abroad will have to take specific forms, such as that in which our committee is engaged, in order to be acceptable and effective.

Valuable used books should be sent to:

Mr. Peter De Klerk, CEACA, Calvin Theological Seminary,  
3233 Burton Street S.E., Grand Rapids, Michigan 49506.

Since the terms of service on our committee of Prof. Edward Vander Weele and of Prof. Robert Recker expire at this synod, the committee recommends that they be reappointed for a further term of service, since they have given valuable service to the committee and are eligible for reappointment.

#### State of Cash Receipts and Disbursements

March 1, 1972—February 28, 1973

Cash balance, March 1, 1972 .....		\$ 5,340.12
Receipts from:		
Christian Reformed Churches .....	\$ 7,265.49	
Foreign churches sharing in support of students .....	250.00	
Other Christian Reformed agencies		
sharing in student support .....	1,200.00	
Personal gifts .....	1,026.00	
Total receipts .....		9,741.49
		<u>\$15,081.61</u>

## Disbursements for:

Support of students	
Tuition and books .....	2,237.30
Living expense .....	8,484.00
Travel .....	1,144.86
	<u>\$11,866.16</u>
Library assistance program .....	2,549.21
Postage and supplies .....	108.60
Meeting expense (travel) .....	57.60
	<u>\$14,581.57</u>
Total disbursements .....	\$14,581.57
Cash balance, February 28, 1973 .....	\$ 500.04

*Recommendations:*

1. That synod approve the work done by this committee.
2. That Prof. Edward Vander Weele and Prof. Robert Recker be re-appointed for a three-year term.  
*Ground:* They have served for three years and are eligible for re-appointment.
3. That the work of this committee again be recommended to the churches for one or more offerings.

Educational Assistance  
to Churches Abroad Committee

E. Rubingh, Chairman  
R. Heynen  
J. Lont  
P. Vande Guchte, Treasurer  
D. Vander Brug  
E. Vander Weele  
R. Recker, Secretary

**REPORT 12**  
**FUND FOR NEEDY CHURCHES**  
 (Arts. 37, 83)

**DEAR BROTHERS:**

The Fund for Needy Churches Committee respectfully submits its report for the year of 1972 to the Synod of 1973.

**I. MEMBERSHIP AND ORGANIZATION**

A. The committee is composed of three laymen and two ministers. This composition is in keeping with the decision of the Synod of 1958.

President—Mr. George Vande Werken of Westchester, Illinois (1975)

Vice-President—Mr. John Swierenga of Elmhurst, Illinois (1974)

Secretary—Rev. Henry De Mots of Orland Park, Illinois (1975)

Treasurer—Mr. Henry Wierenga of Oak Lawn, Illinois (1974)

Vicar—Rev. Harry Arnold of Lansing Illinois (1974)

**B. Committee for the coming year**

The terms of the present members of the committee have one or two more years to run before expiring. All have consented to continue this service and for this reason no recommendations concerning personnel are necessary at this time.

**II. THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE****F.N.C. 1972 Statistics**

Applicants processed .....	143
Assistance granted .....	143
Children allowances .....	305
Total families in these churches .....	5,142
Average size of these churches .....	36 families
New churches .....	8
Disbanded .....	1

**III. MATTERS REQUIRING SYNODICAL ATTENTION**

A. We request that our secretary and treasurer be consulted on matters pertaining to the FNC when considered either by synod or its advisory committee and that they be given the privilege of the floor. In the absence of either we request that the same privilege be given to other members of the committee.

**B. Recommendations**

1. We recommend that the minimum salary for ministers serving churches which receive assistance from FNC be set at \$8,000 for 1974.

2. We recommend that the per family contribution toward the minister's salary in congregations receiving aid from the FNC in 1974 be not less (and if possible more) than \*\$124.00 in the United States and \*\$119.00 in Canada.
3. We recommend that the per family quota for 1974 be set at \*\$12.00, an increase of \*\$.75 per family.
4. We recommend that a child allowance of \$250.00 be granted for every child up to nineteen years of age, but excluding those who have completed high school.
5. We recommend that a \$350.00 car allowance be given to each minister serving a church which receives assistance from the FNC. Each church is required to pay a minimum of \$500.00 mileage to the minister over and above the salary paid.

\*Note: The FNC Committee calls the attention of synod to the following:

- a. In recommending a raise of \$500.00 for 1974, the committee also recommends that a larger share of responsibility be placed upon the local churches. In past years the increase recommended was \$5.00 per family and \$1.00 quota increase. This year we recommend \$10.00 per family increase and .75 cents quota increase. We believe that this is in keeping with synod's expressed desire that local churches face up to their responsibility as much as possible. This is a move in the direction of decentralization of responsibility.
  - b. The devaluation of the dollar also makes this advisable, particularly when we consider the large number of Canadian churches involved.
  - c. The fact that many Canadian classes have failed to pay their full quota to FNC underscores the reasonableness of this recommendation.
  - d. Any increase in local church contribution will necessitate an increase in the quota request. Thus a reduction to \$5.00 per family contribution will necessitate the raising of the quota to \$12.25.
- C. The FNC notes with gratitude, and so informs synod that the Clara City, Minnesota, congregation upon disbanding contributed \$15,000.00 to the FNC as evidence of their appreciation for past support from this fund throughout the years.

Fund For Needy Churches Committee  
Henry De Mots, Secretary

To the Board of Directors  
Fund for Needy Churches, Inc.

I have examined the accompanying statements of cash receipts and disbursements of the Fund for Needy Churches, Inc. for the year ended January 31, 1973. My examination was made in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards and accordingly included such tests of the accounting records and such other auditing procedures as I considered necessary in the circumstances.

I have also examined Schedule Bond Number BND 187 35 96, executed by The National Ben Franklin Insurance Company of Illinois, providing fidelity bond coverage in the amount of \$25,000 on the Treasurer of The Fund For Needy

Churches, Inc. The premium for this policy has been paid in advance to provide coverage to February 6, 1973.

In my opinion, the accompanying statements present fairly the fund balance of the Fund for Needy Churches, Inc. on January 31, 1973, and the cash receipts and disbursements for the year then ended, in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles applied on a basis consistent with that of the preceding year.

John H. Evenhouse  
Certified Public Accountant

FUND FOR NEEDY CHURCHES, INC.

UNITED STATES ACCOUNTS

Statement of Cash Receipts and Disbursements

February 1, 1972 to January 31, 1973

(In U.S. Dollars)

UNITED STATES FUND BALANCE, February 1, 1972		\$ 39,108.18
RECEIPTS:		
Quota payments from classical treasurers	\$438,824.25	
Interest on savings accounts	825.04	
Refunds	707.75	
Gifts	15,015.00	
Total receipts		<u>\$455,374.04</u>
Total funds to be accounted for		\$494,480.22
DISBURSEMENTS:		
Salary subsidy payments	\$269,896.82	
Child allowance payments	49,006.18	
Automobile allowance payments	31,944.26	
Moving expense	4,389.11	
Insurance	156.00	
Stationery & Supplies	102.07	
Honorariums	1,200.00	
Audit expense	110.00	
Postage	122.96	
Committee expense	210.01	
Transfers to Canadian Account	75,000.00	
Refund to Church Help Fund	333.33	
Total Disbursements		<u>432,470.74</u>
UNITED STATES FUND BALANCE, January 31, 1973		<u>\$ 62,009.48</u>
CASH ACCOUNTS:		
First National Bank of Evergreen Park - Checking Account		\$ 22,009.48
First National Bank of Evergreen Park - Certificate of Deposit		40,000.00
		<u>\$ 62,009.48</u>

CANADIAN ACCOUNTStatement of Cash Receipts & DisbursementsFebruary 1, 1972 to January 31, 1973(In Canadian Dollars)

CANADIAN FUND BALANCE, February 1, 1972		\$ 14,834.81
<u>RECEIPTS:</u>		
Quota payments from classical treasurers	\$ 77,779.84	
Transfer from U.S. Account (Net of Canadian exchange Loss of \$1,123.75)	73,876.25	
Refund	862.50	
Total receipts		<u>152,518.59</u>
Total funds to be accounted for:		\$167,353.40
<u>DISBURSEMENTS:</u>		
Salary subsidy payments	\$102,621.60	
Child allowance payments	27,290.47	
Car allowance	12,884.50	
Moving expense	1,000.79	
Refund to Church Help Fund	750.00	
Total Disbursements		<u>144,547.36</u>
CANADIAN FUND BALANCE, January 31, 1973		<u>\$ 22,806.04</u>
CASH ACCOUNT - Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce		<u>\$ 22,806.04</u>

## UNITED STATES ACCOUNT

## Statement of Cash Receipts and Disbursements

for the year ending January 31, 1973

United States Fund Balance February 1, 1972		\$ 39,108.18
<u>Receipts</u>		
Quota payments from classical treasurers	\$438,824.25	
Interest on Savings Accounts	825.04	
Refunds	707.75	
Gifts	15,015.00	
Total Receipts		<u>\$455,372.04</u>
Total Funds to be accounted for		\$494,480.22

Disbursements

Salary subsidy payments	\$269,896.82
Child Allowance payments	49,006.18
Automobile Allowance payments	31,944.26
Moving expense	4,389.11
Insurance	156.00
Stationery and supplies	102.07
Auditing expense	110.00
Honorariums	1,200.00
Committee expense	210.01
Postage	122.96
Transfers to Canadian account	75,000.00
Refund to Church Help Fund	333.33
Total Disbursements	<u>\$432,470.74</u>

United States Fund Balance January 31, 1973 \$ 62,009.48

Cash Accounts

First National Bank of Evergreen Park checking account	\$ 22,009.48
First National Bank of Evergreen Park Certificate of deposit	<u>40,000.00</u>
	\$ 62,009.48

## CANADIAN ACCOUNT

Statement of Cash Receipts and Disbursements  
for the year ending January 31, 1973  
(In Canadian Dollars)

Canadian Fund Balance February 1, 1972 \$14,834.81

Receipts

Quota payments from classical treasurers	\$ 77,779.84
Transfer from United States account	75,000.00
Refund	<u>862.50</u>
Total Receipts	<u>153,642.34</u>
Total funds to be accounted for	\$168,477.15

Disbursements

Salary subsidy payments	\$102,621.60
Child allowance payments	27,290.47
Car allowance payments	12,884.50
Moving	1,000.79
Exchange discount	1,123.75
Refund	<u>750.00</u>
Total Disbursements	\$145,671.11

Canadian Fund balance January 31, 1973 \$ 22,806.04

Cash Account - Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce \$ 22,806.04

FUND FOR NEEDY CHURCHES, INC.  
SCHEDULE B

Subsidy payments for year ending January 31, 1973

<u>Classis</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Salary Subsidy</u>	<u>Child Allowance</u>	<u>Car Allowance</u>	<u>Moving</u>
<u>Alberta North</u>					
Barrhead Westlock	\$3521.99	\$3222.00	\$ 124.99	\$175.00	
Edson	5740.00	4140.00	1250.00	350.00	
Grand Prairie Le Glace	4331.00	3256.00	375.00	700.00	
Peers	5549.00	4449.50	749.50	350.00	
Stony Plain	2358.00	2008.00		350.00	
<u>Alberta South</u>					
Bethel, Saskatoon	2858.00	2008.00	500.00	350.00	
Brooks	5100.00	4000.00	750.00	350.00	
Burdett	5225.00	4000.00	875.00	350.00	
High River	5612.83	4605.33	687.50	320.00	
Medicine Hat	1800.00	1200.00	250.00	350.00	
Regina	5249.83	4504.00	395.83	350.00	
Faber-Vauxhall	842.00	492.00		350.00	
<u>British Columbia</u>					
Houston	1827.80	1250.00	187.50	87.50	\$302.80
Agassiz	4750.00	3150.00	1250.00	350.00	
Burnaby	2387.25	1637.25	750.00		
Chilliwack	693.48		458.48	235.00	
Port Alberni	3338.00	1488.00	1500.00	350.00	
Telkawa	6250.00	4400.00	1500.00	350.00	
Vernon	3034.00	2434.00	250.00	350.00	
<u>Cadillac</u>					
Rudyard	850.00		500.00	350.00	
Lake City	1087.50	1000.00		87.50	
<u>California South</u>					
Chula Vista	3237.50	1950.00	937.50	350.00	
Grace, Bellflower	4800.00	3450.00	1000.00	350.00	
<u>California, Central</u>					
Palo Alto	3770.00	2420.00	1000.00	350.00	
Sacramento	4225.00	3000.00	875.00	350.00	
<u>Chatham</u>					
Blenheim	3732.00	2632.00	750.00	350.00	
Dresden	2074.00	1524.00	375.00	175.00	
Forest	1100.00	1100.00			
Ingersoll	1089.35	862.35	125.00	102.00	
Wallaceburg	2162.50	500.00	1312.50	350.00	
<u>Chicago North</u>					
Garfield	7891.75	7000.00	541.75	350.00	
Winfield	4600.00	3750.00	500.00	350.00	
Korean	5700.00	4600.00	750.00	350.00	
<u>Chicago South</u>					
Richton Park	5048.00	3448.00	1250.00	350.00	
<u>Columbia</u>					
Conrad	3750.00	1900.00	500.00	350.00	\$1000.00
Gallatin	3350.00	2500.00	500.00	350.00	
Calvin, Portland	2950.00	2350.00	250.00	350.00	
Calvin, Spokane	4605.00	3130.00	1125.00	350.00	
Trinity, Vancouver	5609.00	4384.00	875.00	350.00	
	142099.78	103744.43	25020.55	12032.00	1302.80

<u>Classis</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Salary Subsidy</u>	<u>Child Allowance</u>	<u>Car Allowance</u>	<u>Moving</u>
<u>Eastern Canada</u>					
Charlottetown	3316.50	2754.00	562.50		
Cornwall	2675.99	1916.67	291.67	175.00	292.65
Halifax	7168.00	5816.00	1000.00	350.00	
Kemptville	4309.25	3404.25	645.00	260.00	
Pembroke	3200.00	2100.00	750.00	350.00	
Ottawa East	701.00	79.33	416.67	205.00	
Renfrew	5292.00	4192.00	750.00	350.00	
Truro	3300.00	2200.00	750.00	350.00	
<u>Florida</u>					
Miami	1342.00	242.00	750.00	350.00	
Pinellas Park	2112.00	1637.00	125.00	350.00	
<u>Grand Rapids, East</u>					
Lowell	3490.00	2640.00	500.00	350.00	
Middleville	2810.75	1898.25	562.50	350.00	
Portland	5170.00	4820.00		350.00	
Grace	2759.00	1659.00	750.00	350.00	
<u>Grand Rapids, North</u>					
Bristolwood	4003.00	3403.00	250.00	350.00	
Cedar Springs	5221.00	3621.00	1250.00	350.00	
Comstock Park	2600.00	2000.00	250.00	350.00	
<u>Grand Rapids, South</u>					
Wayland	2958.75	1571.25	1125.00	262.50	
<u>Hackensack</u>					
Bronx	3900.00	2800.00	750.00	350.00	
Franklin Lakes	750.00	400.00		350.00	
Lodi	4350.00	3000.00	1000.00	350.00	
Madison Ave., Paterson	4050.00	3200.00	500.00	350.00	
Monsey	5450.00	4600.00	500.00	350.00	
Terra Ceia	4287.50	3500.00	437.50	350.00	
<u>Hamilton</u>					
York	967.75	21.92	645.83	300.00	
Simcoe	2568.00	968.00	1250.00	350.00	
	<u>132254.24</u>	<u>97505.67</u>	<u>22103.12</u>	<u>11352.50</u>	<u>1292.65</u>
<u>Holland</u>					
	2459.60	1479.00	500.00	480.60	
<u>Hudson</u>					
Ferrisburg, Vt.	2987.00	2270.00	417.00	300.00	
Framingham	4317.00	2967.00	1000.00	350.00	
North Haledon	2712.50	1550.00	812.50	350.00	
Paramus	6093.00	4493.00	1250.00	350.00	
Silver Springs, MD	3144.00	2859.00		285.00	
<u>Huron</u>					
Blyth	1526.00	1176.00		350.00	
Collingwood	3273.00	2988.00			285.00
Exeter	2832.34	2112.00	250.00	350.00	120.34
Lucknow	2693.00	968.00	1375.00	350.00	
Orangeville	3358.00	2008.00	1000.00	350.00	
Stratford	4128.00	2528.00	1250.00	350.00	
<u>Illiana</u>					
Beacon Light, Gary	1762.50	1575.00	187.50		
Bethel, De Motte	1375.50	574.00	451.50	350.00	
Crown Point	4257.83	3512.00	395.83	350.00	
Indianapolis	4027.08	3500.00	177.08	350.00	
	<u>139696.84</u>	<u>101002.67</u>	<u>24878.08</u>	<u>13118.10</u>	<u>697.99</u>

<u>Classis</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Salary Subsidy</u>	<u>Child Allowance</u>	<u>Car Allowance</u>	<u>Moving</u>
<u>Kalamazoo</u>					
Decatur	4650.00	3800.00	500.00	350.00	
Faith	4317.00	2967.00	1000.00	350.00	
Northern Heights	3179.00	2204.00	625.00	350.00	
South Bend	5093.00	4493.00	250.00	350.00	
Eastern Hills	4570.00	3720.00	500.00	350.00	
<u>Lake Erie</u>					
Cherry Hill, Inkster	4580.00	3730.00	500.00	350.00	
Columbus	3115.00	2640.00	125.00	350.00	
Flint	4689.00	3839.00	500.00	350.00	
Jackson	4503.00	3403.00	750.00	350.00	
Lambertville	1436.00	1096.00		105.00	235.00
Maple Heights	4225.00	3375.00	500.00	350.00	
Roseville	4350.00	3500.00	500.00	350.00	
Saginaw	4035.00	3185.00	500.00	350.00	
Troy	4250.00	2900.00	1000.00	350.00	
<u>Minnesota North</u>					
Bloomington	1403.00	678.00	375.00	350.00	
Brandon	3287.50	2500.00	437.50	350.00	
Brooten	3740.00	2640.00	750.00	350.00	
Crookston	5375.50	4275.50	750.00	350.00	
Emo	3690.00	2840.00	500.00	350.00	
Hancock	4439.00	3839.00	250.00	350.00	
Thunder Bay	2445.00	1595.00	500.00	350.00	
Bejou	1250.00	750.00		500.00	
Ogilvie	2580.00	2230.00		350.00	
New Brighton	905.00	730.00		175.00	
<u>Minnesota South</u>					
Bigelow	4200.00	3350.00	500.00	350.00	
Holland Center S.D.	4300.00	3700.00	250.00	350.00	
Mt. Lake	4350.00	4000.00		350.00	
Hull, N.D.	2098.17	1133.75	277.17	150.00	\$537.25
Holland	4498.60	3850.00		350.00	298.60
<u>Muskegon</u>					
Fruitport	2671.75	1667.25	312.50	205.00	487.00
Grace, Muskegon	4644.00	3294.00	1000.00	350.00	
Green Ridge	2204.25	1929.25	187.50	87.50	
<u>North Central Iowa</u>					
Ackley	3850.00	3000.00	500.00	350.00	
Britt	4730.83	4360.00	20.83	350.00	
Cedar Falls	5157.00	4057.00	750.00	350.00	
Iowa Falls	4350.00	3500.00	500.00	350.00	
<u>Orange City</u>					
Hartley	5370.00	5020.00		350.00	
Hope, Hull	2915.00	2095.00	500.00	350.00	
Le Mars	2624.16	1905.32	145.52	286.66	286.66
Omaha	4717.25	3480.25	375.00	300.00	562.00
Sioux City	4907.00	4057.00	500.00	350.00	
<u>Pacific Northwest</u>					
Bellingham	1705.00	730.00	625.00	350.00	
Lynwood	4798.00	3948.00	500.00	350.00	
Marysville	2230.00	880.00	1000.00	350.00	
Seattle, Calvary	4080.00	3730.00		350.00	
Bellingham, Mt. View	5492.85	4537.00	48.25	350.00	557.60
<u>Pella</u>					
Cedar	756.25		406.25	350.00	
Troy	5250.00	4000.00	1250.00		
	178037.11	139153.32	20460.62	15459.16	2964.11

<u>Classis</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Salary Subsidy</u>	<u>Child Allowance</u>	<u>Car Allowance</u>	<u>Moving</u>
<b>Rocky Mountain</b>					
Alamosa	\$1075.00	\$ 750.00	\$ 62.50	\$262.50	
Albuquerque	4210.00	3360.00	500.00	350.00	
Colorado Springs	2041.00	1441.00	250.00	350.00	
Denver, Trinity	2652.50	1220.00	1062.50	350.00	
Salt Lake City, First	3544.00	2444.00	750.00	350.00	
Phoenix, Orangewood	2041.00	1441.00	250.00	350.00	
Bethel, Tucson	1632.00	1100.00		107.00	\$425.00
<b>Sioux Center</b>					
Valentine	6375.00	5150.00	875.00	350.00	
Rock Valley	1970.00	1120.00	500.00	350.00	
Harrison	2100.00	1500.00	250.00	350.00	
Freeman	4787.50	4000.00	437.50	350.00	
<b>Toronto</b>					
Allison	2442.00	1592.00	500.00	350.00	
<b>Wisconsin</b>					
Vesper	4350.00	3500.00	500.00	350.00	
1972 Totals	\$4,990,337.73	\$3,725,184.42	\$762,966.65	\$448,288.76	\$5389.90

Schedule C				
1972 Quota Payments				
<u>Families</u>	<u>Classis</u>	<u>1972 Quota</u>	<u>Payment as of January 31, 1973</u>	<u>Percentage of Quota</u>
1561	Alberta N.	\$14,829.50	\$12,105.23	81
953	Alberta S.	9,053.00	6,619.12	73
1896	Brit. Col.	18,012.00	4,237.78	24
624	Cadillac	5,928.00	5,526.63	93
2336	Calif. S.	22,192.00	20,982.09	95
1080	Cent. Calif.	10,260.00	12,060.23	118
2044	Chatham	19,448.00	10,785.05	56
1363	Chicago N.	12,948.50	12,962.03	100
1394	Chicago S.	13,243.00	13,169.03	99
739	Columbia	7,020.50	1,918.37	27
979	E. Canada	9,300.50	6,274.98	67
465	Florida	4,417.50	4,261.62	96
3898	G. R. East	37,021.00	35,756.35	97
2048	G.R. North	19,456.00	18,504.59	95
2585	G. R. South	24,557.50	24,069.73	98
3189	Grandville	30,295.50	27,935.26	92
1137	Hackensack	10,801.50	10,287.40	95
2416	Hamilton	22,952.00	12,477.79	54
3037	Holland	28,851.50	28,459.42	99
1903	Hudson	18,078.50	17,595.09	97
1178	Huron	11,191.00	5,616.73	50
2279	Illiana	21,650.50	21,594.92	100
1757	Kalamazoo	16,691.50	16,423.01	98
1171	Lake Erie	11,124.50	10,143.12	91
1681	Minn. North	15,969.50	20,311.04	127
1094	Minn. South	10,393.00	9,957.01	96
1910	Muskegon	18,145.00	17,583.49	97
765	N. C. Iowa	7,267.50	6,590.59	91
1443	Orange City	13,708.50	13,551.33	99
1689	Pacific N.W.	16,045.50	16,047.47	100
1557	Pella	14,791.50	14,460.16	98
1283	Quinte	12,188.50	6,152.40	50
1578	Rocky Mt.	14,991.00	13,436.96	90
1541	Sioux Center	14,639.50	13,563.75	93
1896	Toronto	18,012.00	8,123.29	45
1245	Wisconsin	11,827.50	11,686.50	99
2663	Zeeland	25,299.00	25,374.53	100
		\$592,581.50	\$516,604.09	

REPORT 13  
HISTORICAL COMMITTEE  
(Art. 52)

DEAR BROTHERS:

The Historical Committee of the Christian Reformed Church is pleased with the progress made this past year in the cataloguing of official church records and the microfilming of the minutes of consistories and classes. Well over five hundred consistories, approximately 80% of the churches, have responded favorably to our invitation to have their official records permanently preserved and safeguarded. Your committee still cherishes the hope that those consistories which have not yet had their minutes microfilmed, may soon come to appreciate the value of this service for themselves and the denomination of which they are a part.

The progress which we are happy to report is largely due to the enthusiasm and dedicated service of the Field Agent for Heritage Hall, Mr. E. R. Post. During this past year Mr. Post visited fifteen sessions of classes and supervised the microfilming of the minutes of forty-seven churches. The committee gratefully notes that many of our churches, recognizing the continuing advantage of the service which has been made available, have submitted second installments to be added to records previously filmed. Mr. Post has already scheduled trips to meetings of classes this spring and fall in order to acquaint the churches with Heritage Hall and the denominational archives. Although our committee is primarily concerned with the supervision and preservation of the official records of the Christian Reformed Church and its agencies, we urge all our churches and members to make available to the Heritage Hall Collections of the Calvin Library any valuable historical material and memorabilia which will contribute to the preservation of our heritage.

To date \$4,095.00 has been spent and it is estimated that approximately \$5,900.00 will yet be spent before the end of the present fiscal year. For the coming year we anticipate that \$5,000.00 will be needed to cover administration and preservation costs, and another \$5,000.00 to cover expenses incurred in acquiring and cataloguing new materials.

*Recommendation:* That synod allocate \$10,000 to defray costs incurred in the administration, acquisition, cataloguing and preservation of the denominational archives and to help subsidize the acquisition and preservation of historical materials which contribute to our Christian Reformed heritage.

Historical Committee  
L. Oostendorp, Chairman  
H. Ippel  
J. Leugs  
H. Zwaanstra, Secretary

**REPORT 14**  
**INTER-CHURCH RELATIONS COMMITTEE**  
(Art. 45)

**DEAR BROTHERS:**

Your committee has met regularly to carry out the mandate of synod in matters of inter-church and ecumenical relationships, and in view of the increased responsibility given to the committee, our meetings are now held on a monthly basis. The following are matters which we would report to synod.

*A. Fraternal Delegation*

The Rev. Edwin Walhout served as our fraternal delegate to the Synod of the Reformed Church in America which met in Louderville, N.Y. in June 1972 and his report is on file, along with a copy of his address to the synod.

The Rev. Harlan Vanden Einde served as our fraternal delegate to the General Assembly of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church which met in Oostburg, Wisconsin, and his report is likewise on file, along with his address to the assembly.

An invitation was received from the Reformed Churches of South Africa to send a fraternal delegate to their synod. The Rev. Larry Van Essen was delegated by the committee in cooperation with the Board of Foreign Missions, but his plans to attend were not fulfilled due to illness. The Stated Clerk sent a letter to the synod on our behalf. Its meeting was in January 1973.

An invitation was received from the Reformed Church of Australia to send a fraternal delegate to its synod beginning on May 8. Dr. Sierd Woudstra was delegated, and the Reformed Church of Australia was invited to send a delegate to our synod if that were possible.

The Particular Synod of Michigan of the RCA invited a fraternal delegate for its meeting in Muskegon on May 1. The Rev. Clarence Boomsma was named as our delegate with the Rev. William Haverkamp as alternate.

Your committee also invited the Gereformeerde Kerken of the Netherlands, the Orthodox Presbyterian Church and the Reformed Church in America to send fraternal delegates to the Synod of 1973.

*B. Reformed Ecumenical Synod*

Your committee requested and received reports from two of our delegates to the meeting of the RES in Australia 1972. Dr. Joel Nederhood reported in written form while Dr. Gordon Spykman reported orally on those aspects which revealed something of the general character and

direction of the RES meeting as well as the problems involved in making the RES an effective organization. Our delegates indicated whatever specific criticisms they had of the procedures and program of the RES. While both of the reports were positive in their assessment of our membership in the RES, both indicated certain areas for special attention if our membership is to be most effective and the RES is to attain its purposes. Your committee is considering a consultation of all of our former delegates to the RES meetings with a view to a general discussion of its function and our involvement.

It should be noted that the RES saw fit to maintain the membership of the Reformed Churches of the Netherlands in spite of several overtures that urged consideration of termination of membership. Delegates to synod are urged to consult the Acts of the RES 1972 for the specific decision in this matter as well as for such insight into the work of the synod as will ensure a knowledgeable appreciation of this aspect of our ecumenical activities.

### *C. Reformed Church in America*

Your committee carried out its plans, reported to the Synod of 1972, for a jointly-sponsored conference of RCA and CRC delegates and observers in Holland, Michigan, on October 31-November 2, 1972, for the purpose of discussing our ecumenical relationship and for initiating such ecumenical activity as would promote the unity of our denominations as part of the church of Jesus Christ. The delegates were invited and the program was planned by a joint committee of two members of our respective inter-church relations committees and with approval as required by each such committee. The Rev. Arnold Brink and the Rev. Jacob Eppinga served on our behalf. Participants were chosen on the basis of their official relationship to denominational boards, committees and agencies and as officially connected with denominationally-related agencies with a direct concern for our inter-denominational unity. A roster of participants is available for synod if such should be of interest to any delegate. Opportunity was given to interested persons to attend as observers. Twenty-six participants from the CRC and thirty-two from the RCA formed the conference with forty-four persons registered as official observers from both denominations. It should be noted that in the actual workings of the conference there was very little distinction between participants and observers so that all who were present were participants in a real sense and were given the freedom to express themselves fully even though in an "observer" category.

The general consensus of those who attended the meetings is that this was a very fruitful conference in every way. The spirit of the fellowship and the discussions was genuinely Christian, forthright, appreciative of the abounding evidence of God's grace in both churches, and concerned to do such things as would promote our unity in the truth of the gospel and of the Reformed faith. The approach of the conference was that of attempting to discover as fully as possible the dimensions of our real unity, seeking to understand each other in areas of difference, so that we might prepare the way for a faithful dealing with those matters on which we differ. It can be said that an atmosphere of mutual trust and confi-

dence was developed during the meetings; several participants openly voiced this positive development in their own attitudes and relationships.

The more tangible fruit of the meeting is found in the Conference Statement on CRC-RCA relationships which is appended to our report. This statement was taken over and endorsed by your committee and sent to each consistory and was published in *The Banner* on December 29, 1972.

The actual deliberations and the Conference Statement must be seen in the light of previous synodical decisions with respect to our relations with the RCA. The Synod of 1966 decided, among other things, that "synod encourages closer fellowship between our Church and the Reformed Church in America by commending such fellowship to our congregations and urging our classes to exchange fraternal delegates at classical meetings" (Acts of Synod, 1966, p. 59).

The recommendations contained in the Conference Statement are all fully compatible with the action of synod encouraging closer fellowship on the denominational, classical and congregational level. It should be pointed out that the goal of inter-denominational unity was specifically set forth while the ultimate goal of church union was purposely placed outside of consideration.

Until instructed otherwise, your committee will "continue discussions with the Reformed Church in America" as mandated in 1966 (Acts of Synod, 1966, p. 59).

#### D. *The Orthodox Presbyterian Church*

The Synod of 1972 discharged its Committee on Closer Relationships with the OPC and placed "all matters re ecumenical contacts with the OPC under the jurisdiction of the Committee on Inter-Church Relations" (Acts of Synod, 1972, p. 37). If there are significant developments from a meeting of the respective committees scheduled for March 15, such will be reported supplementally.

#### E. *The Gereformeerde Kerken and the Problem of Sister Church Relationship*

The Synod of 1970 mandated the Committee on Inter-Church Relations to advise synod whether our relationship with the Gereformeerde Kerken should be altered because of recent trends in that church, which mandate was substantially reiterated and enlarged in 1971 to consider the official declarations of the Gereformeerde Kerken.

Having considered this matter for the past three years, your committee has come to question, with ever more serious reservations, whether the relationship of sister church as defined by the Synod of 1944 should be applied to any church with which we are in correspondence. That relationship was defined as a unity in which, if it were not for the barriers of geography or language, the churches would be united. This concept of sister church is, undoubtedly, the rationale of the Church Order in declaring ministers of sister churches eligible for call in the Christian Reformed Church (see Art. 8, a), and in accepting freely the transfers of membership from sister churches (see Art. 59, b).

However, the full implication of being sister churches has not been accepted by the CRC since 1944. Though requested by the Gereformeerde Kerken to waive the *colloquium doctum* for its ministers entering the CRC, and though advised to do so by a study committee in 1956, synod rejected the advice and the request and decided "to encourage the classes to continue the colloquium doctum for ministers entering our denomination from full sister denominations" (Acts of Synod, 1956, Art. 68, p. 39). This indicates that for many years we have had an official position which in application we were not ready to accept fully nor to reject.

The question then arises, Is there any denomination with which we are so united in doctrine and practice that we could in good conscience consider its ministers "eligible for call" as described above? This leads us to recommend that the committee be mandated to study Articles 8 and 59 of the Church Order to determine the validity of the references to "sister churches."

Further, if the concept of sister church as presently defined should be maintained, it is possible that we would be duty bound to break our sister church relationship with several churches in the future. Some churches might also be constrained to break their sister church relationship with us. This could be necessary to protect the church's integrity in its relationships over against deviation in doctrine and practice in related churches. But the question we face is whether the breaking of relationships between the churches is the way to work for the preservation of the faith and life of the church of Jesus Christ. Your committee would much prefer a redefinition of our system of correspondence which would take into consideration the realities of our present ecclesiastical situation, world-wide, would insure adequate safe-guards for our doctrinal integrity and would enable us as a church to work fully and freely for the unity of the church of Jesus Christ in the truth of Scripture and creedal statement. We recommend, therefore, that the committee be mandated to study our system of correspondence with other churches with a view to such redefinition as will promote most fully the fellowship of the true church of Jesus Christ and will work most effectively to maintain and to restore the true unity of the churches.

In summary, we recommend:

1. that the committee be mandated to study Articles 8 and 59 of the Church Order to determine the validity of the reference to "sister churches" and "other denominations with which the Christian Reformed Church maintains full ecclesiastical fellowship,"

2. that the committee be mandated to study our system of correspondence with other churches with a view to such redefinition as will promote most fully the fellowship of the true church of Jesus Christ and will work most effectively to maintain and to restore the true unity of the churches.

#### F. Other Reformed Churches

There has been no further contact of any consequence with the Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerken, the Gereformeerde Kerken (Vrijgemaakt) or the Canadian Reformed Churches with whom we have had

some previous correspondence. In each case we have sent some form of friendly communication and are awaiting response.

#### *G. The National Presbyterian and Reformed Fellowship*

Your committee wishes to report that it received an invitation to attend a meeting of the National Presbyterian and Reformed Fellowship which was held in Atlanta, Georgia, which would, to some extent, involve the CRC in that movement. The Fellowship is made up of orthodox elements (members and associations) out of allegedly liberal Presbyterian and Reformed churches along with official representatives of some denominations of orthodox persuasion, whose mutual concern is the preservation of the historic faith and the solution of the problems of ecclesiastical life in heterodox denominations.

Your committee did not accept this invitation since our mandate empowers us to represent our church only in relations with other ecclesiastical bodies or associations of ecclesiastical bodies, and that with synodical approval. The NPRF was so informed.

In a subsequent letter, the Board of Directors of the National Presbyterian and Reformed Fellowship formally requested "that your General Synod be petitioned to permit your committee 'to join with other brethren of like mind and purpose to consider whatever possibilities may exist for a closer relationship among Christians of those Presbyterian and Reformed churches, existing and emerging, that seek to maintain a pure witness to the Word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ.'" What is specifically envisioned is "the possibility of a meeting of correspondence or fraternal relations committees of several denominations." The letter points out "that no specific aims or goals are mentioned in the action taken by the NPRF other than an exploration of God's will for us all in these critical times." Synod is hereby informed of this request.

#### *H. World Alliance of Reformed Churches*

The Synod of 1972 mandated the committee "to investigate further the desirability and feasibility of membership in this world organization," the World Alliance of Reformed Churches. The Rev. Harold De Groot attended its last world-wide meeting in Kenya as our observer; Dr. John H. Kromminga is a member of the Theological Committee of the North American Council of the WARC and reports regularly; this is the extent of our previous contact. The Rev. Arnold Brink attended the January 9-11 meeting of the North American Council of the WARC in Atlantic City, New Jersey, as an observer by invitation and reported his experiences to the committee. The North American Council is made up of 16 churches. In addition to reports of official commissions the council heard presentations on "The Eldership in Reformed and Presbyterian Churches," "Women in the Church," "The Unity We Seek" (by Dr. Eugene Carson Blake), and discussed intensively the book, *Why Conservative Churches Are Growing* by Dean M. Melley. Our observer reported that his person and his point of view were very much welcomed in the discussions, and that the Alliance is very desirous of receiving the kind of contribution that our church is able to bring, considering the nature of our theological and creedal commitment.

Your committee is not able to give advice concerning membership in the WARC at this point but will continue to investigate according to the mandate of synod.

### I. *Committee Membership*

With the additional responsibilities that have been given to your committee (OPC, Canadian Reformed Church and the more active relationship with the RCA) and with a view to pursuing other aspects of its mandate more fully, the committee has come to the conclusion that its ranks should be augmented. We believe that a total of three members should be added to the committee. In view of a need for diversity of insight we believe that one of these members should be a non-ordained person. We also inform synod of the retirement from the committee of its president, the Rev. Arnold Brink, who has served two full terms.

Therefore we recommend:

1. that the work of the Rev. Arnold Brink be acknowledged with appreciation and thanks;
2. that the membership of the committee be expanded to seven regular members, with the Stated Clerk serving ex-officio;
3. that Dr. Dick L. Van Halsema be appointed to the committee in view of having been the alternate member for several years;
4. that synod choose two members from the nomination of the Rev. Gerard Bouma, Dr. John H. Kromminga, the Rev. John Morren and the Rev. Nelson Vanderzee; with an alternate member to be chosen from the nominees not elected as members.
5. that synod choose one member from the nomination of Mr. Albert Bel and Mr. Alfred Bulthuis.

### J. *Representation at Synod*

The president and secretary of the committee will both be available for the meeting of synod and we respectfully request they be given the privilege of the floor when matters pertaining to this committee are being considered.

Inter-Church Relations Committee  
 Arnold Brink, President  
 Tymen E. Hofman, Secretary  
 John H. Bratt  
 Jacob Eppinga  
 William P. Brink, ex officio

APPENDIX: Conference Statement — CRC-RCA Consultation  
 Conference Statement of the CRC-RCA meeting held in Holland, Michigan, October 31—November 2, 1972.

We the delegates of the Christian Reformed Church and the Reformed Church in America who met in the Ninth Street Christian Reformed Church of Holland, October 31—November 2, 1972, thank God for the unity he gave us during our deliberations. Our prayer is that all the members of our two denominations may experience a like unity and to that end we heartily endorse the following recommendations and covenant together to implement them.

1. That we recognize, reaffirm and publish the positions taken by our respective Inter-Church Relations Committees in 1966 and 1967, the substance of which is herewith submitted:

- a. Joint work on liturgy to explore common concerns, suggest and foster similar patterns of worship and liturgy in our two churches.
- b. Joint planning be used in church extension to avoid overlapping so that kingdom resources and witness be used most effectively.
- c. The encouragement of local exchanges between churches including pulpit fellowship.
- d. Overseas mission efforts done in a cooperative manner wherever possible.

(The full text of the recommendations may be found in the *Minutes* of the respective churches for the Synods of 1966 and 1967.)

#### *Denominational level*

2. That the efforts toward unity between our denominations shall recognize the freedom of each denomination to enter into or maintain its relationships with other churches and ecumenical bodies.

3. We recommend to our respective Inter-Church Relations Committees that they devise a uniform set of proposals to be submitted to our respective General Synods by which joint study and action can be undertaken by our denominations in approved areas.

We suggest that they consider the formation of a joint committee, consisting of five members from each of the Inter-Church Relations Committees, whose function shall be to receive and transmit to the synods proposals for joint study, assign to appropriate agencies matters on which the synods desire joint action; and serve as liaison for exchange of pertinent materials, such as study reports, between committees working on similar tasks in our two denominations.

4. That consideration be given to the planning of one or more joint Festivals to promote understanding and the accomplishment of our common task.

5. That it is our hope and desire that the churches will enter into fuller fraternal relationships and that the Inter-Church Relations Committee work to this end, including a study and clarification of the matter of transfer of members with a view to proper recognition of each other's ecclesiastical being.

6. That each denomination give serious attention to the study of each other's position on ecumenicity, in particular the statement "The Unity We Seek to Manifest" of the RCA and the synodical statement of the CRC by the Synod of 1944.

7. That we exchange observer-participants at each other's major planning meetings for youth work and efforts be encouraged where cooperation might be possible in such areas as magazine production, servicemen's ministry, camping, conference programs, production of resource materials and leadership training materials.

8. That efforts for cooperation be made in the production of Sunday school curriculum materials.

*Classis level*

9. That every classis explore joint training events or seminars for laity and church consistories in the area of evangelistic outreach.

10. That there be joint meetings of classical Missions Committees and Church Planning and Development Committees for the purpose of exploring common areas of ministry.

11. That teacher training workshops be held jointly for the purpose of developing teacher proficiency in our Sunday schools.

12. That the concept of classical fraternal delegates be encouraged and further forms of interchange be developed.

*Publications*

13. That the offices of Evangelism bring together a committee to discuss and prepare articles for the respective denominational periodicals on the concepts of conversion, covenant, and evangelism.

14. That there be interchange of articles in our denominational publications.

*Local level*

15. That local congregations discuss together before December 31, 1972, if possible, means for implementing the Key '73 Bible distribution goal.

16. That consistory fellowships be developed in order that we may "get to know each other" on a local level and that further understanding and cooperation be developed.

17. We rejoice in the many joint ministries and relationships on local, regional and denominational levels. We recommend that full information on these programs be gathered and be given visibility, thus serving as models for other communities with similar opportunities.

18. That all the churches of our denominations hold special services on or about April 8, 1973, whether jointly or otherwise, for the promotion of closer fellowship, cooperation and denominational unity. Further, that a committee of two be appointed to draw up a proclamation calling the churches to participate in such a program for unity in their Christian faith and service.

*Call to Action*

The conference generated a number of workable ideas and suggestions, all of which rose out of the spirit of enthusiasm and planning present at the conference. The list is impressive if for no other reason than its length. But it could be just so many words on paper, "full of sound and fury" unless ministers, laymen, and official bodies throughout our churches take them seriously and carry them into fulfillment. To such significant work we call the churches of our denominations so that the efforts here just begun will reach maturity and fulfillment in the life and work of our two churches.

To that end we pray the blessing of God's Spirit upon our efforts so that we labor not in vain. Rather, we plead the mercies of God that what we have envisioned we, together with many others, may now bring into being so that his name may be glorified, his church may be made victorious, and his people may rejoice in the blessings that flow from the unity they seek.

**REPORT 15**  
**MINISTERIAL INFORMATION SERVICE**  
(Art. 23)

**DEAR MEMBERS OF SYNOD:**

Our committee was appointed by last year's synod and commenced its work on August 8, 1972. Our mandate is to serve the churches and ministers with information and advice in matters pertaining to calling. As stated in the guidelines prescribed by synod to be followed by our committee, we do not have authority to act upon our own initiative but only when requested by a particular consistory or individual minister.

Since the service our committee is to render, as intended and mandated by synod, is new in our denomination, we have spent considerable time determining how we can best be helpful to the churches and ministers. We have found it necessary, initially, to consider and attempt to evaluate various policies that could conceivably be followed in assembling, systematizing, and furnishing data concerning ministers and churches. Our committee fully realizes and understands that the best means of service and the implementation of effective policies depend, to a great extent, upon what experience will teach us.

Since our first meeting on August 8, 1972, we have had monthly meetings and special meetings as needed.

In order to obtain information about ministers and churches, our committee formulated a Ministers' Questionnaire and a Churches' Profile.

The Ministers' Questionnaire, together with an explanatory letter, was sent to all ministers in our denomination. It was designed to obtain both factual information and data concerning preferences, attitudes, and viewpoints from individual ministers. The purpose of the questionnaire was to accumulate data pertaining to ministers which will be available to vacant churches, upon request. A copy of the Ministers' Questionnaire and the related transmittal letter are attached to this report as Appendix "A."

The Churches' Profile Form prepared by the committee, with a letter of explanation, was sent to all the churches. It was intended to obtain pertinent data about churches useful to a minister considering a call from a particular church and helpful to the committee in suggesting names of ministers to a church. The committee advised the churches that the Church Profile was to be used when a vacancy occurs in order that the committee would have information available at that time. A copy of the Church Profile, together with the accompanying letter, are attached hereto as Appendix "B."

The committee received completed questionnaires from four hundred ministers. It should be pointed out that use of the questionnaire by an

individual minister is entirely voluntary. In view of this fact, the number of questionnaires returned by ministers appears to indicate a strong sentiment to use the committee's services.

We received completed profiles from twenty-two churches. The number of Church Profiles returned is small compared to completed Ministers' Questionnaires returned because the Church Profile is to be used only when a church becomes vacant and desires to use the services of the committee.

The committee also intends to obtain, and have available for the churches, information relating to the students in their senior year at Calvin Seminary. Recently, the Ministers' Questionnaire was furnished to each senior seminarian to be completed and returned to the committee. At the time of preparation of this report, replies have not yet been received from the seminarians. In contacting the seminary students, the committee is working in cooperation with the Praetor of the seminary student body.

Both the Ministers' Questionnaire and the Churches' Profile will be revised periodically. It is the intention of the committee to have the completed questionnaires received from ministers, in particular, updated next year inasmuch as it is necessary to have current information available.

The committee has had data on hand to furnish to churches and ministers for only approximately four months. During this period of time we received twenty-three requests from churches for information concerning ministers. Some of these requests were for names of ministers desiring a call; some requests were for data concerning particular ministers; and some were for suggestions from the committee for names of ministers to consider. The committee has replied to each request and has endeavored to furnish the type of data desired by the churches.

In addition to the completed questionnaires received from ministers, the committee has received three requests or inquiries from ministers. In the questionnaires returned by ministers, fifty-four ministers indicate a desire for a call and sixty-nine state they would seriously consider a call.

The response which the committee has received to the Ministers' Questionnaire and the Churches' Profile and the number of requests from churches make it clear, in the opinion of the committee, that there is very much of a desire within the denomination for the type of service synod intended our committee to provide.

The expenses of the committee to date have been approximately \$600. The expenses incurred were for secretarial assistance, postage, telephone, and a minimal amount of travel expense.

#### Ministerial Information Service

William Van Peurseem, President

Alan D. Pauw, Secretary

Anthony De Jager

Louis J. Dykstra

Eugene Koning

Harm Te Velde

APPENDIX "A"  
**MINISTERIAL INFORMATION SERVICE**  
of the  
**CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH**

October, 1972  
 Box 1194  
 Redlands, California

Dear Brother:

The Synod of 1972 appointed the undersigned to function as the Ministerial Information Service of the Christian Reformed Church (Cf. Acts 1972, Art. 58). We humbly request your cooperation in making this a meaningful service to the churches. It was very apparent from the questionnaire sent out (Cf. Acts 1972, p. 596) that the churches desire more information about the ministers of our church in order to call in a more intelligent way.

Will you please fill out the questionnaire which accompanies this letter? If there are certain questions which you find objectionable, feel free to leave them unanswered. If there is additional information which you feel we should have, please add it in the space provided, or in an accompanying letter. We will serve as a clearinghouse for the churches who are seeking data about ministers. No information will be included in your file except that which you yourself have given us. If at any time you wish something deleted, or wish to remove your file from our records, this will be done.

Our questionnaire is obviously a maiden venture. No doubt it will be revised, particularly with additional questions which will make it more valuable to vacant churches. Perhaps you have suggestions for further questions which would be helpful. We will carefully consider all ideas which are submitted to our committee.

It is evident that the value of this service to the churches will be directly related to the number of ministers who participate. While this is purely voluntary, and many of our ministers do not feel the need for such a service personally, we ask that you participate in this as a service to the churches. The consistories have made this request. We trust that the ministers will honor their desire, and help them in this matter which is of real concern to them.

Thank you for your consideration and cooperation. We are willing to assist you in any way within our mandate, and welcome all suggestions of how to make this service more valuable.

Fraternally yours,  
 William Van Peurseem, President  
 Alan Pauw, Secretary  
 Anthony De Jager  
 Louis Dykstra  
 Eugene Koning  
 Herm Te Velde

**MINISTERIAL INFORMATION SERVICE**  
of the  
**CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH**  
 Minister's Information Form

Date.....

Part I — Biographical

1. Name .....  
 Address ..... Phone .....

2. Date of Birth ..... Place of Birth .....  
In what area of the country did you spend most of your life prior to college? .....
3. Were you engaged in other occupations prior to the ministry? .....  
If so, specify. ....  
Have you any special hobbies or activities? Specify. ....
4. Give the number of your children and ages.  
Specify whether or not each lives with you.  
Are any married, in service, at college, etc.
5. Are there any health factors affecting yourself or family that would place limitation on your activities or prevent you from moving to any geographical areas? (Use back of form for details.)

### Part II — Education

6. Indicate the high school or schools you have attended.  
Indicate the college or colleges you have attended.  
Indicate the seminary or seminaries you have attended.
7. If you have had graduate work, please indicate the subjects, name of institutions and dates.
8. Are you at present engaged in any formal program of studies? .....  
If so, indicate the nature of the program.
9. Have you any ability in other languages than English? ..... If so, indicate the extent of your ability as to reading, conversations, and preaching.
10. Have you published any articles, pamphlets, or books? ..... If so, specify.

### Part III — Preferences

11. Do you prefer a rural ..... or city church .....? No preference .....
- 11a. Which size church do you prefer to serve?..... No preference.....
12. Would you serve with another minister in a congregation? .....
13. Indicate order of your preference:  
Regular parish ..... Bible Teacher .....  
Home Missions ..... Institutional Chaplaincy .....  
Foreign Missions ..... Military Chaplaincy .....  
Campus Ministry ..... Other .....
14. Assuming interest and capability in all the areas listed below, select four in which you have most interest and capability.  
Administration ..... Teaching Youth .....  
Preaching ..... Teaching Adults .....  
Pastoral Calling ..... Evangelism .....  
Pastoral Counseling ..... Work with committees .....  
Teaching Children ..... Others .....
15. Would you be willing to serve two churches? Yes ..... No .....
16. In what geographical area of the church do you prefer to serve?  
First Choice ..... Second Choice ..... No Preference .....
17. Do you now desire a new call? .....  
Would you consider a new call? .....  
Could you accept a new call at this time? ..... If not, is there an approximate time after which you could accept a new call? .....
18. Will you serve in areas where there is no Christian Grammar School? .....  
No Christian High School? .....

### Part IV — Viewpoints

19. Briefly characterize your own personal approach and style as pastor of a congregation.
20. Briefly describe the kind of witness you would like the church to make in our society.
21. Briefly state what is your understanding of the purpose and nature of preaching.
22. Briefly indicate what is your conception of Christian Education.

**Part V — Activities**

23. Are you serving on any classical or synodical boards or committees? .....  
If so, specify.
24. Are you engaged in any community projects or activities? ..... If so,  
specify.
25. Are you active in any special kingdom activities such as serving on Christian  
school boards, etc. .... If so, specify.
26. Do you enjoy and accept special speaking engagements? ..... If so, specify.

**Part IV — Additional Comments**


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 Signature

## APPENDIX "B"

**MINISTERIAL INFORMATION SERVICE**  
of the  
**CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH**

October, 1972  
Box 1194  
Redlands, California

To all Consistories  
Christian Reformed Churches

Dear Brethren:

The Synod of 1972 appointed the undersigned to function as the Ministerial Information Service of the Christian Reformed Church (Cf. Acts 1972, Art. 58). This committee has been established by synod in light of the fact that many consistories requested some method by which information might be obtained concerning the availability of ministers for vacant churches.

We request your cooperation in making the service of this committee meaningful and worthwhile. A questionnaire has been sent out to all Christian Reformed ministers. The information which we obtain from them will be made available to vacant churches upon request. Included with this letter is a copy of the questionnaire sent to them. It is our request that you study this questionnaire, and if there are items which you feel should be added which would be helpful to vacant churches, please correspond with us. We recognize that this first questionnaire will need revision after an appropriate trial period.

Enclosed with this letter is also a "Church Profile" form. This has been sent to you only for information. It is to be used when a vacancy occurs, and you desire to use the services of this committee. At that time the form should be filled out and sent to the secretary of this committee. Information will then be made available to you concerning any ministers in whom you are interested.

Use of the services of this committee is purely optional. We recognize that this is a new venture, and we trust that you will bear with us as we seek to develop this service into something worthwhile to both churches and ministers. We are open to your suggestions, and welcome constructive criticism.

Sincerely yours,  
William Van Peurse, President  
Alan Pauw, Secretary  
Anthony De Jager  
Louis Dykstra  
Eugene Koning  
Harm Te Velde

**MINISTERIAL INFORMATION SERVICE**  
of the  
**CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH**

**Church Profile Form**

Date.....

**Part I — General**

1. Name of Church .....
- Mailing Address .....
- Name and Address of Counselor .....
2. Present Membership ..... Membership five years ago .....
- Age of members: Percentage under 20 .....; 20-34 .....; 35-49 .....; 50-64 .....; 65+ .....
- What is the average church attendance? A.M. .... P.M. ....
3. Give the geographical extent and nature of the church area.  
Are there different ethnic and racial groups in your membership? .....  
In the area?  
Are the people chiefly engaged in business, industry, farming, institutions, or otherwise? .....
- Is it essential that the pastor has linguistic abilities in languages other than English? ..... Specify .....
4. Does your church cooperate with other churches in your community? If so, how?
5. Is there a church secretary? ..... Full time ..... Part time .....
- Are there other paid workers? ..... Specify .....

**Part II — Activities**

6. How many catechism classes? ..... How many catechumens? .....
- How many of these do you expect the pastor to teach? .....
7. How much "Family Visiting" do you expect the minister to do?.....
8. What is being done in local evangelism?  
What are some of your goals?  
What missionaries or missionary projects do you support?
9. What children's organization exists? What is the average attendance?
10. How are you trying to serve the needs of your young people?
11. What adult groups do you have that meet regularly? What is the average attendance?
12. Is there a church choir? ..... How large? .....
13. Are your facilities adequate for these programs? .....
- If not, have you plans for improvement?
14. Are there good Christian schools in your vicinity? ..... List  
How many of your children are attending such schools? .....
- What is the church doing for the promotion and support of these institutions?

**Part III — Needs**

15. Assuming the importance of all the activities in the Christian ministry listed below, which do you feel need special emphasis in your congregation at the present time?  

.....Administration	.....Community action projects
.....Pastoral Calling	.....Conducting Worship
.....Teaching Childen	.....Pastoral Counseling
.....Teaching Youth	.....Work with committees
.....Teaching Adults	.....Personal Evangelism
.....Preaching	.....Small Groups
16. Indicate what you believe to be important concerning the pastor's preaching ability.
17. Is there unity in the congregation? ..... If not, what are the causes of division?

18. Are there any special problems perplexing your church? ..... If so, indicate the nature.
19. Is there a healthy spiritual condition in the congregation? ..... If not, describe the abnormalities?

**Part IV — Financial**

20. What is the pastor's salary? .....
- Parsonage provided? Yes ..... No ..... Housing allowance in lieu of parsonage? \$.....
- Length of vacation .....
- Benefits provided:
- |         |                     |
|---------|---------------------|
| \$..... | Health Insurance    |
| .....   | Auto Allowance      |
| .....   | Social Security     |
| .....   | Book Allowance      |
| .....   | Education Allowance |
| .....   | Child Allowance     |
| .....   | Utilities           |
| .....   | Others (Specify)    |
21. Total annual giving last year ..... Five years ago .....
- Total spent for congregational purposes ..... Last year ..... Five years ago.
- Total contributed to benevolences ..... Last year ..... Five years ago.
- Total contributed to missions ..... Last year ..... Five years ago.
22. Total indebtedness ..... Annual debt payment ..... (principal and interest)
- Are debt payments being met on schedule? .....
23. Please attach a copy of your latest annual financial statement to this form.

**Part V — Additional Comments**

\_\_\_\_\_ Vice President

\_\_\_\_\_ Clerk

**REPORT 16**  
**MINISTERS' PENSION FUND**  
(Arts. 42, 83)

DEAR BROTHERS:

The Ministers' Pension Fund Committee is concerned with (a.) the financial support of our emeriti after age 65 and of totally disabled emeriti at any age, (b.) the financial support of the widows and orphans of our ministers, and (c.) providing group insurance for our ministers. The Pension Fund provides regularly scheduled benefits to these individuals. The Supplemental Fund is intended to provide emergency assistance to emeriti and their dependents where assistance from our other sources, including local deaconates, is not adequate. The Pension Fund is funded through quotas and assessments. The Supplemental Fund is entirely dependent on gifts and offerings. Group insurance costs are paid for by the ministers.

*Administration*

The Ministers' Pension Fund Committee and Pension Fund Administrator have concentrated their major efforts this past year in strengthening and consolidating its administrative structure and service. Since the inception of the new plan on January 1, 1970, the committee has devoted considerable time and effort in dealing with the usual problems associated with the transition from one plan to another. As was pointed out in our 1971 report to synod, a conscious effort has been made to develop policy on a case-by-case basis and then to follow such policies in similar situations arising thereafter. We believe that this process of developing policies has now been largely completed.

The committee has also concentrated in 1972 on communicating the plan to participants, churches and classes. Several informative letters were sent to all classical stated clerks for the guidance and information of ministers and consistories. Eleven classes were personally visited in 1972 by the Administrator, including Chicago North, Chicago South, Eastern Canada, Grand Rapids East, Grand Rapids South, Grand Rapids North, Grandville, Holland, Illiana, Kalamazoo, and Wisconsin. A "Newsletter," compiled and edited by the Pension Administrator, now periodically accompanies the checks to our beneficiaries.

The benefit provision to cover orphans under the pension plan, approved by synod in 1972, went into effect as of September 1, 1972. Currently, three orphans are receiving benefits under this expanded coverage. Several others are receiving assistance from the Supplemental Fund.

A strenuous effort was made to implement the 1972 synodically approved voluntary life insurance proposal. As of January 2, 1973, the

minimum number of applications was received (representing 75% of active ministers) and the plan became effective as of January 1, 1973. A strong need for this type of coverage was expressed; there was also a spirit of excellent cooperation by many who subscribed not out of need but because of a strong desire to get the plan into effect for their ministerial colleagues.

During 1972 the Ministers' Pension Fund, as directed by the Synod of 1971, became the administrative agency for the Chaplains' Deposit Fund.

### *Financial Report*

The financial report for the year ended January 31, 1973, together with the auditor's report of examination, are presented in Appendix A and B. It is noted that Pension Fund quotas and assessments for the year totaled \$1,268,000 which is \$132,000 below the amount budgeted. This short-fall reflects primarily an actual, over-all quota payment of 90%, as contrasted with a projected quota average of 98%. While we are grateful for the steady increase in 100% quota-paying congregations, quota payment remains a deep concern of the committee. Pensions to both our active and presently retired ministers can best be assured to them if quotas are met. If this is not done, future benefit payments could be jeopardized.

Prior to the inception of the new plan on January 1, 1971, the committee's actuarial consultants had determined the accrued liability to be in excess of \$16,000,000, compared to assets on hand of approximately \$350,000. Accrued liability means the amount required to pay benefits already earned by the participants under the plan. It was further demonstrated that this accrued liability would continue to grow rapidly, while fund assets under the old plan would remain level. As a result, in future years the denomination would have to pay astronomical quotas because it had failed to pay for pensions as they were earned. The Synod of 1969 wisely decided to adopt a policy of paying for pensions during the working lives of the participants. This involves setting up a fund, and the earnings of the fund, as in the case of insurance, help to reduce the amounts to be paid in.

At January 31, 1973, the Pension Fund had a balance of \$1,667,000, compared with an accrued liability of \$18,502,392 as determined by our actuarial consultants. This means that there has been some improvement in the financial picture since January 1, 1971 but the progress has been slow and points up the need for full quota payments.

For the first time in many years, the committee is exercising its privilege of soliciting funds from our congregations for the rapidly depleting Supplemental Fund. We are currently paying out assistance amounts of close to \$2,000 per month. At the time of the letter appeal, in December, 1972, our cash balance was equivalent to only eight months of disbursements.

In January, 1973, twenty-one persons were receiving regular assistance from the Supplemental Fund.

*Proposed Budget for 1974-5*

The committee is proposing a total budget for the Pension Plan of \$1,622,000 for the year ending January 31, 1975. This amount represents the sum of:

Amount required for payment into Pension Fund, per the consulting actuaries	\$1,589,500
Amount required for Administration and other costs	32,500
Total	\$1,622,000

To cover this budget, the committee is presenting a quota need of \$23.50 per family and an assessment of \$950 for each participant not covered by quotas. It is assumed in the budget that 98% of the quotas will be received, which is considerably above the experience of the past year. The proposed increase in quota from \$22.00 for 1973 to \$23.50 for 1974 results largely from the fact that Pension Fund receipts for the past 3 years have fallen short of the amount actuarially required. The details of the budget are presented in Schedule C.

*Pension Plan Participation Data*

At January 31, 1973, participation in the Pension Plan was as follows:

	<i>Number</i>
Active Participants	811
Beneficiaries	
Retired Ministers	139
Disabled Ministers	7
Widows and orphans	89
Total	235

Since the last synod, the following active participants and beneficiaries have died:

Mrs. Y. P. De Jong, 2-23-72; Rev. Edward Joling, 3-19-72; Mrs. Henry Dekker, 3-23-72; Rev. Peter Holwerda, 4-26-72; Mrs. Tena Bel, 5-6-72; Mrs. Gertrude Koning, 5-21-72; Mrs. Herman Goodyke, 6-30-72; Mrs. Swaney (Mulder) Bratt, 8-10-72; Rev. Francois Guillaume, 10-17-72; Mrs. Susan Gruessing, 10-24-72; and Rev. Samuel J. Fopma, 11-15-72. (To be continued in Supplemental Report, if necessary.)

Persons emeritated since the last synod were:

Rev. J. Herbert Brink, Classis Lake Erie, effective 7-1-72—age  
 Rev. Dewey J. Hointenga, Sr., Classis Holland, effective 9-1-72—age  
 Rev. Fred M. Huizenga, Classis Pella, effective 9-13-72—age  
 Rev. Henry Radius, Classis California South, effective 11-1-72—age  
 Rev. Christian Vanden Heuvel, Classis Grand Rapids North, effective 9-1-72—age  
 Rev. Bernard E. Visscher, Classis Rocky Mountain, effective 7-1-72—age

- Rev. Simon Viss, Jr., Classis Minnesota North, effective 1-1-73—age  
 Rev. John T. Holwerda, Classis Zeeland, effective 10-1-72—age  
 Rev. William Haverkamp, Classis Grand Rapids North, effective 3-1-73—age  
 Rev. Ralph Heynen, Classis Grand Rapids South, effective 1-1-73—age  
 Rev. Thomas Van Eerden, Classis Muskegon, effective 2-1-73—age  
 Rev. Robert Evenhuis, Classis California South, effective 9-21-72—disability  
 Rev. Peter De Boer, Classis Grandville, effective 6-1-73—age  
 Rev. Charles Greenfield, Classis Kalamazoo, effective 4-1-73—age  
 Rev. Garret D. Pars, Classis Pacific Northwest, effective 6-1-73—age  
 Rev. Abel Poel, Classis Cadillac, effective 6-1-73—age  
 Rev. Tenis Van Kooten, Classis Holland, effective 3-1-73—age  
 (To be continued in Supplemental Report, if necessary.)

### *Role of Classical Treasurers*

The committee wishes to recognize the important role of classical treasurers in the effective administration of pension receipts and commends them for the fine cooperation the committee has received. It also desires to take this opportunity to urge that quotas be remitted on a regular basis, at least quarterly.

### *Recommendations*

1. That Mr. J. F. Mellema (Committee Chairman) and Mr. A. Walters (Committee Treasurer) be accorded the privilege of the floor, with Mr. Jack Stoepker (Committee Administrator) as alternate for either.
2. That two appointments for a full three-year term be made from the following nominations:
  - a) Nominee Rev. J. Van Harmelen  
 Nominee Rev. J. Nutma
  - b) Nominee J. Jansma  
 Nominee R. Helder  
 (See Appendix D for brief biography)
3. That synod approve a quota of \$23.50 per family.
4. That synod approve a participant payment of \$950.
5. That synod approve the Supplemental Fund of the Ministers' Pension Committee for one or more benevolent offerings.

### Ministers' Pension Fund Committee

J. F. Mellema, Chairman  
 J. Harkema, Secretary  
 A. Walters, Treasurer  
 P. Brouwers  
 D. Oosterhouse  
 J. Van Harmelen  
 J. Van Ryn  
 J. W. Stoepker, Administrator

Appendix A

Ministers' Pension Fund  
Comparison of Actual and Budgeted  
Income and Disbursements  
Year Ended January 31, 1973

<u>Income</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>(Under) Over/ Budget</u>
Quotas	\$ 1,091,351	\$ 1,215,200	\$(123,849)
Participant Payments	177,142	185,000	( 7,858)
Total budgeted income	<u>\$ 1,268,493</u>	<u>\$ 1,400,200</u>	<u>\$(131,707)</u>
 <u>Disbursements</u>			
Actuarial Contribution:			
Payments to Beneficiaries	\$ 758,873	\$ 775,000	\$( 16,127)
Termination payments	2,248	2,000	248
Increase in reserve	541,366	624,200	( 82,834)
	<u>\$ 1,302,487</u>	<u>\$ 1,401,200</u>	<u>\$( 98,713)</u>
Less-interest earned	63,559	30,000	33,559
Total contributions	<u>\$ 1,238,928</u>	<u>\$ 1,371,200</u>	<u>\$(132,272)</u>
 Other Costs:			
Emeriti moving	5,714	5,000	714
Canadian exchange	83	5,000	( 4,917)
Administration -			
Salaries	10,716		
Office Expense	4,140		
Travel - Mainly classical			
visits	1,847	2,000	
Audit, trust fee, and			
fiduciary bond	4,983		
Committee expense	1,082		
Group Insurance Deposit	1,000		
Total Other Costs	<u>\$ 29,565</u>	<u>\$ 29,000</u>	<u>\$ 565</u>
Total Disbursements	<u>\$ 1,268,493</u>	<u>\$ 1,400,200</u>	<u>\$(131,707)</u>

## APPENDIX B

March 29, 1973

To the Ministers' Pension Fund Committee,  
The Ministers' Pension Fund of the Christian Reformed Church,  
Grand Rapids, Michigan.

We have examined the statements of fund balances of the Ministers' Pension Fund of the Christian Reformed Church, Grand Rapids, Michigan as of January 31, 1973 and the related statements of changes in fund equity for the year then ended. Our examination was made in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards and accordingly included such tests of the accounting records and such other auditing procedures as we considered necessary in the circumstances.

In our opinion, the accompanying statements of fund balances and statements of changes in fund equity present fairly the financial position of the Ministers' Pension Fund of the Christian Reformed Church at January 31, 1973, and the results of its operations for the year then ended, in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles applied on a basis consistent with that of the preceding year.

Den Braber, Helmholtz & Lyzenga  
Certified Public Accountants.

THE MINISTERS' PENSION FUND OF THE CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH

STATEMENTS OF FUND BALANCES

January 31, 1973

PENSION FUND

ASSETS

Cash in bank	\$ 284,943.31
Trust account - see Note	<u>1,381,861.61</u>
	<u>\$1,666,804.92</u>

FUND EQUITY

Termination - payment reserve	\$ 693.14
General fund	<u>1,666,111.78</u>
	<u>\$1,666,804.92</u>

SUPPLEMENTAL FUND

ASSET

Cash in bank	\$ 17,308.84
--------------	--------------

FUND EQUITY

Balance, January 31, 1973	<u>\$ 17,308.84</u>
---------------------------	---------------------

CHAPLAIN DEPOSIT FUND

ASSETS

Cash in bank	\$ 6,470.36
Trust account - see Note	<u>17,264.59</u>
	<u>\$ 23,734.95</u>

FUND EQUITY

Balance, January 31, 1973	<u>\$ 23,734.95</u>
---------------------------	---------------------

Note - The trust account at January 31, 1973 consisted of:

Cash	\$ 13,793.32
Marketable securities at cost (market value \$1,393,540.00)	
Short term commercial paper	\$ 522,937.50
U.S. Government securities	360,090.63
Canadian province bonds	49,781.25
Corporate bonds	<u>452,523.50</u>
	<u>1,385,332.88</u>
	<u>\$1,399,126.20</u>

Participating funds were:

Pension	\$1,381,861.61
Chaplain deposit	<u>17,264.59</u>
	<u>\$1,399,126.20</u>

## THE MINISTERS' PENSION FUND OF THE CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH

STATEMENTS OF CHANGES IN FUND EQUITY

Year ended January 31, 1973

PENSION FUND

Balance, February 1, 1972		\$1,124,745.53
ADDITIONS		
Quota receipts	\$1,091,351.17	
Assessments	177,142.00	
Interest	63,559.48	
	<u>TOTAL ADDITIONS</u>	<u>1,332,052.65</u>
	TOTAL AVAILABLE	\$2,456,798.18
DEDUCTIONS		
Pensions and disability payments	\$ 758,872.54	
Moving expenses	5,713.77	
Current exchange charge	83.22	
Termination payments	2,248.32	
Administration	21,921.17	
Church relations	1,847.38	
	<u>TOTAL DEDUCTIONS</u>	<u>790,686.40</u>
Balance, January 31, 1973		<u>\$1,666,111.78</u>

SUPPLEMENTAL FUND

Balance, February 1, 1972		\$ 34,109.72
ADDITIONS		
Donations and above quota contributions	\$ 3,534.71	
Interest	1,396.01	
	<u>TOTAL ADDITIONS</u>	<u>4,930.72</u>
	TOTAL AVAILABLE	\$ 39,040.44
DEDUCTION		
Supplemental assistance payments		<u>21,731.60</u>
Balance, January 31, 1973		<u>\$ 17,308.84</u>

CHAPLAIN DEPOSIT FUND

Balance, February 1, 1972		\$ -0-
ADDITION		
Quota receipts		<u>23,734.95</u>
Balance, January 31, 1973		<u>\$ 23,734.95</u>

## Appendix C

## Ministers' Pension Fund

## Proposed Budget

Year Ending January 31, 1975Income:

Quotas (98% of 62,400 families @ \$23.50)		\$1,437,000
Participant Payments (195 @ \$950)		<u>185,000</u>
Total Budget Income		<u><u>\$1,622,000</u></u>

## Disbursements:

## Actuarial Contribution for Year:

For payments to beneficiaries	\$777,000	
For required increase in reserve	<u>902,500</u>	
	\$1,679,500	
Less - interest earned	<u>90,000</u>	\$1,589,500.

## Other Costs:

Emeriti moving		7,500
Canadian exchange		2,500
Administration -		
Salary of administrator		
and secretary	\$ 13,500	
Office expenses	3,500	
Travel - classical visits	2,000	
Audit, Trust Fee & Fiduciary Bond	2,500	
Committee expense	<u>1,000</u>	<u>22,500</u>
Total budgeted disbursements		<u><u>\$1,622,000</u></u>

## APPENDIX D

## I. MINISTERIAL NOMINEE, CANADA

*Rev. Jelle Nutma* Pastor of Wyoming, Ontario congregation, ordained in 1959, and served: Acton, Ontario; Dundas, Ontario; Bowmanville, Ontario. Served on classical and denominational boards and committees as well as local grade and high school boards. Graduate of Calvin College and Seminary.

*Rev. John Van Harmelen* Present incumbent, pastor of the Bethel congregation of London, Ontario. Serves also as Stated Clerk and Treasurer of the Council of Christian Reformed Churches in Canada, and as Secretary-Treasurer of the Salem Mental Health Association. Ordained in 1936, having graduated from the Free University of Amsterdam. Emigrated to Canada in 1953. Has served: Brampton, Ontario; Oshawa, Ontario; and now in London. Served on synodical and classical committees, especially finances.

## II. LAY MEMBER NOMINEE, DETROIT AREA

*Roger Helder* Vice-President and Comptroller of Chrysler Corporation; member of Dearborn Chr. Ref. Church. Attended Grand Rapids Christian High School, A.B. from Calvin College, and M.B.A. from University of Michigan. C.P.A. in the State of Michigan; member of Michigan Association of C.P.A.'s and Financial Executives Institute. Married, three children, pre and post college age; past deacon, church treasurer and elder; past member Dearborn Christian School Board and Treasurer.

*John Jansma* Senior Vice-President of Ford Motor Co., Truck and Car Leasing Division, offices in Loan Division; member of Dearborn Chr. Ref. Church. Attended Grand Rapids Christian High School, A.B. from Calvin College, and M.B.A. from University of Michigan. Married, four children of college and post college age, past deacon and elder, past member Dearborn Christian School Board.

REPORT 16-A  
MINISTERS' PENSION FUND  
(Art. 42)

DEAR BROTHERS:

I. DEATHS, in addition to those reported in Report 16.

Rev. Carlos Cortina 4-9-73

Rev. Ralph Bronkema 5-4-73

II. EMERITATIONS, in addition to those reported in Report 16.

Rev. H. Allan Dykstra, Classis Orange City, effective 6-1-73—disability

Rev. Andrew Cammenga, Sr., Classis Florida, effective 9-15-73—age

III. THE ACTS OF SYNOD 1969 call for periodic reviews by the Ministers' Pension Committee as to the adequacy of pension benefit payments. Such a review has been made at the May 11, 1973 committee meeting.

While it is a fact that inflation has definitely been the case in both the United States and Canada the last few years; and while it is a fact that such inflationary experiences have exceeded our projected 2% annual inflationary growth—it nevertheless is the decision of the committee to recommend no pension benefit adjustments at this time.

*Grounds:*

(1) When the new plan was developed and approved, the former pension benefit formula of 50% of current salaries was discontinued and the present benefit formula was adopted. This change resulted from consideration of two factors: (a) the change in United States Social Security and Canadian Social Insurance legislation making it mandatory for ministers to participate, and (b) the growing realization that the 50% benefit formula was extremely expensive and would eventually require totally unrealistic quota support. With compulsory federal coverage, it was concluded that ministers' pensions should be viewed as a total package—namely, the combined amounts received from the Ministers' Pension Fund and from the social security and social insurance programs. We believe that the base church pension amount of \$3,620 per year plus a 2% annual increment after ten years from inception of the new plan, when added to social security and social insurance payments, still constitutes a reasonable overall retirement benefit structure.

(2) Any increase in the current benefit base and/or annual increments would necessitate increased quotas—at the very time the church is struggling to keep quotas under control and at a time when pension quotas are still below actuarial requirements.

(3) To liberalize the Pension Plan prior to providing adequately for the funding of past service costs will create serious problems if Congress

enacts proposed pension legislation now under consideration (political observers are confident that such legislation will be passed).

(4) Retired ministers receiving less than \$1,000 annually from social security or social insurance receive a subsidy from the Supplemental Assistance Fund for the difference between the amount of their government pension and \$1,000.

Ministers' Pension Fund Committee

S. W. Stoepker, Administrator

**REPORT 17**  
**SERMONS FOR READING SERVICES**  
 (Art. 16)

DEAR BROTHERS:

For the seventeenth consecutive year the *Living Word* sermons have again been published and distributed to churches and individuals. We are grateful for the cooperation from ministers of both sides of the border and that of the Credo Publishing Company of Toronto.

The following statistical information is submitted for the past year:

American churches.....	71	English only subscriptions
		1 English and Dutch
	—	
	72	
Canadian churches.....	73	English only subscriptions
		81 English and Dutch
	—	
	154	
Australian churches.....	1	English only subscription
New Zealand churches.....	4	English only subscriptions
Individuals.....	6	English only subscriptions
		2 English and Dutch
	—	
	13	

The above statistics show a total of 239 subscriptions (155 English only and 84 English and Dutch). This is a modest rise of 8 subscriptions over last year. Cost of a subscription for the English only or the English and Dutch is \$16.00 and \$18.00, respectively. The former consists of forty English sermons, the latter of forty English sermons and five Dutch sermons. Sermons for special occasions such as preparatory Sunday are included.

During the past year the committee suffered the loss of our valued co-laborer, the Rev. F. Guillaume, whom God called home after a long and fruitful ministry. The Rev. W. Van Dyk resigned from the committee due to distance from Toronto. In their place the committee requested the assistance of the Rev. A. Venema and the Rev. K. Hart which was approved by the Synodical Interim Committee.

Recommendations:

1. That synod approve the publication of the *Living Word* sermons series from June 1, 1974 through May 31, 1975.

2. That synod appoint the Rev. A. Venema and the Rev. K. Hart to the committee.
3. That synod recommend the use of the *Living Word* sermons to the churches.
4. That synod continue the Committee on Sermons for Reading Services.

Sermons for Reading  
Services Committee

C. Fennema  
S. Greidanus  
A. Venema  
K. Hart, Reporter

## REPORT 18

## SYNODICAL COMMITTEE ON RACE RELATIONS (SCORR)

(Arts. 37, 52, 83)

DEAR BROTHERS:

## I. INTRODUCTION:

Opportunities for ministry in the area of race relations continue to challenge the Christian Reformed Church. Congregations and Christian schools in multi-racial settings represent commitments made as well as responsibilities for the future. These churches and schools are often thought of as the recipients of the resources of our denomination, or at best as channels for these resources. It is important to remember that these churches and schools are themselves a part of our denomination's resources. They are crucial components in the Christian Reformed Church's ministry in the area of race relations and on the urban scene. It is in this perspective that SCORR carries out its mandate, not carrying out programs instead of or on behalf of denominational agencies, churches and schools but working with them as our denomination carries out the multi-racial dimensions of its ministry.

## II. PERSONNEL:

A. Executive Secretary: Karl J. Westerhof.

B. Committee Officers: Rev. James White, President; Dr. Remkes Kooistra, Vice-President; Mr. Wilfred Bowman, Treasurer; Rev. Vernon Geurkink, Secretary.

*Members*

Mr. Wilfred Bowman, Gallup, N.M.  
 Dr. Anthony Diekema, Wheaton, Ill.  
 Dr. Milton Geerdes, Chicago, Ill.  
 Rev. Vernon Geurkink, Grand Rapids, Mich.  
 Mr. Benito Infante, Miami, Fla.  
 Mr. Stephen Jung, Los Angeles, Cal.  
 Dr. Remkes Kooistra, Toronto, Ont., Canada  
 Mr. Donald Minor, Washington, D.C.  
 Rev. Donald Postema, Ann Arbor, Mich.  
 Ms. Brenda Robinson, Grand Rapids, Mich.  
 Mr. Leon Van Rees, Muskegon, Mich.  
 Rev. Stanley Vander Klay, Paterson, N.J.  
 Rev. James White, New York, N.Y.

*Alternates*

Mr. Jack DeGroat, Ft. Defiance, Ariz.  
 Mr. William Ipema, Oak Park, Ill.  
 Mr. Donald Holtrop, E. Lansing, Mich.  
 Rev. Alfred Mulder, Gallup, N.M.  
 Mr. Jorge Fernandez, Hialeah, Fla.  
 Mr. Abraham Cho, Chicago, Ill.  
 Rev. Joe Vugteveen, Strathroy, Ont., Canada  
 Mr. Luther Ward, Grand Rapids, Mich.  
 Rev. Clarence Nyenhuis, La Palma, Cal.  
 Mr. Paul Higa, Los Angeles, Cal.  
 Mr. Hannes Meyers, Jr., Zeeland, Mich.  
 Rev. Raymond Opperwall, Glen Rock, N.J.  
 Ms. Carol George, New York, N.Y.

### III. SCHOLARSHIPS:

During this past school year a total of twenty students received grants from the Synodical Minority Student Scholarship Fund. Most of these students are enrolled at Calvin, with some at Trinity. The states from which the students come are New York, New Jersey, Michigan, Illinois, Colorado and New Mexico.

Assistance provided during the school year totaled approximately \$14,000, of which \$4,794.99 was raised through gifts and offerings. SCORR believes this to be a vitally important program and so we are making some of our program money available to make up the difference.

In order to generate support for this program, SCORR is encouraging the efforts of women's groups at the local and congregational level who are working together to raise money for this fund. This building of initiative at the local level is a significant development. It is in generating this kind of initiative in groups and congregations, rather than sponsoring new programs ourselves, that SCORR can provide an important service to the denomination.

### IV. TRAINING:

A high priority for SCORR is to provide a training context in which people have the opportunity to accomplish changes in terms of personal goals such as feelings, attitudes and behavior and in terms of institutional and professional goals. SCORR takes seriously the fact that there is no fast or easy way to undo the effects of a long history of racial tensions, fears and problems, either in the majority or in the minority community.

Much racial training that has been in vogue has been some kind of "sensitizing" or "confronting" process, with the result that participants are reinforced in feelings of guilt or anger or hurt. What is needed is training that provides the tools for change, so that participants can return to the realities of family, neighborhood, church and job not just sensitized but able to get on with being more effective and creative kingdom-builders in every part of life.

SCORR has been making this kind of training available. By the time synod meets, SCORR will have provided approximately eighty people with such an intensive training experience. This figures out to about twenty-three training days and 272 man-days of training, including training sessions for Calvin College and Seminary.

### V. NEWSLETTER:

SCORR is putting out a monthly newsletter which is specifically by and for denominational ministries in multi-racial situations. In this way, SCORR is raising and discussing issues, disseminating information, sharing models, acting as a clearing house, reporting to churches, etc. Present circulation is approximately 3,300, including the personnel and membership of churches and schools in multi-racial settings.

### VI. RESEARCH:

The major research study now underway is that dealing with the Christian Reformed Church and the Indians of North America. This is

the study which had just been approved prior to Synod 1972. Phase I of this study covers the reservation ministry. This phase is scheduled for completion prior to Synod 1973. SCORR is working closely with the Board of Home Missions in this study of Indian ministries and we will continue to work together as we work out the program implications of the research.

#### VII. INDEPENDENT AGENCY:

The concern to mobilize non-ecclesiastical organizations to address funding and program needs in the area of race relations is an important one. SCORR believes that such efforts must be built on local initiative, local resources, specific program needs and direct involvement. In light of these considerations, SCORR is exploring the possibility of encouraging and enabling such organizations to be formed in various situations, as needs and resources indicate. This direction in which we are now working also seems more in keeping with the trend of regionalization and foresees SCORR's role as increasingly that of facilitator.

#### VIII. PROPOSAL REGARDING FNC RULES:

Two denominational ministries conferences have passed resolutions calling for changes in FNC rules which would regularize the use of the fund by young churches growing out of mission work in population centers. Under present rules these strategically located churches must be considered as exceptional cases.

At Synod 1972, SCORR addressed a recommendation to synod on this matter. This recommendation for FNC rule changes came to the same synod which dealt with the question of FNC funds for the Garfield Church. Both Synod 1971 and 1972, have directed the FNC Committee to provide funds to Garfield "by way of exception to the present rules."

Synod rejected SCORR's proposal to revise the FNC rules and the ground given was: "SCORR presents no specific recommendations by which synod can be guided" (*Acts*, 1972, p. 55).

SCORR is aware of the difficulty involved in attempting to revise FNC rules regarding the considerations raised at Synod 1972. Yet we take seriously the fact that both the Inner-City Ministries Conference and the Inter-Racial Ministries Conference have stated clearly their conviction that this matter is of concern to them. SCORR certainly does not contend that FNC rules belong primarily in the area of racial concerns; yet it is clear that these rules have direct implication for the multi-racial ministries of our denomination.

SCORR does not contend that it is either our right or our duty to revise FNC rules. We do believe that it is consistent with our mandate to assist in the study of the matter.

#### *SCORR Recommends:*

A. That synod appoint a committee to study FNC rules and to report back to the Synod of 1974.

#### *Grounds:*

1. Two ministries conferences have pointed out the need for study of this matter.

2. Young churches growing out of mission work in population centers are strategic in terms of ministry. Under present FNC rules, these churches must be considered exceptions.

3. Two synods have found it necessary to make an exception to the rules in a specific case.

B. That this study committee be composed of:

- an FNC committee member;
- a SCORR representative;
- a representative from CRWRC;
- a representative from the minority membership of the denomination

*Ground:*

A committee with this make up would provide:

- the expertise concerning the urban and racial dimensions;
- the racial representation which is our mutual concern as we seek to be sensitive to each other's resources and needs;
- the increased access to denominational resources which takes seriously the great potential for ministry that these young churches located in population centers have.

#### IX. FINANCIAL REPORT — 1972:

<i>Balance</i> , January 1, 1972			\$ 6,657.66
<i>Receipts</i>			
Quota	\$42,683.98		
Scholarship Fund	4,794.99		
Registration and Materials	2,379.16		
	<u>\$49,858.13</u>		\$56,515.79
<i>Disbursements</i>			
Administrative Costs	\$24,394.22		
Training	4,704.50		
Publicity	398.00		
Materials	815.25		
Research	11,183.00		
	<u>\$41,494.97</u>		
<i>Scholarships</i>	6,820.00	Total	<u>\$48,314.97</u>
<i>Balance</i> , December 31, 1972			<u>8,200.82</u>

#### X. PROPOSED BUDGET—1974:

Administrative Costs	34,500.00
Program	28,000.00
Materials	3,000.00
Research	10,000.00
Total	<u>\$75,500.00</u>

Race Relations Committee

Karl J. Westerhof, Executive Secretary

**REPORT 19**  
**SYNODICAL INTERIM COMMITTEE**  
 (Arts. 22, 83)

DEAR BROTHERS:

During the past year the Synodical Interim Committee has carried out all matters committed to it by definite instruction of synod, and has executed all synodical matters which could not be postponed until the next synod.

The following report presents some of the highlights of the work of the committee since the last synod.

**I. ORGANIZATION**

Synod appointed the following members and alternates of the committee:

Regular	Alternate	Expiration Date
Rev. F. De Jong .....	Rev. W. Ackerman .....	1973
Mr. E. Z. Blankers .....	Mr. J. N. Snapper .....	1975
Dr. P. Y. De Jong .....	Rev. S. Kramer .....	1974
Mr. H. Vermeer .....	Dr. S. Kanis .....	1975
Dr. M. De Vries .....	Mr. J. Jonker .....	1974
Mr. L. Vander Ploeg .....	Mr. W. Van Lopik .....	1973
Mr. F. Hollebeek .....	Mr. H. Petersen .....	1975
Mr. B. Sevensma .....	Mr. A. Van Tuinen .....	1974
Rev. O. Breen .....	Rev. J. Verbrugge .....	1974
Rev. A. Hoogstrate .....	Rev. C. Greenfield .....	1973
Dr. G. Stob .....	Dr. R. De Ridder .....	1975
Rev. L. Slofstra .....	Rev. J. W. Postman .....	1973
Rev. J. Van Harmelen .....	Rev. L. Tamminga .....	1975
Mr. M. Van Wijk .....	Mr. P. Feddema .....	1974
Stated Clerk and Synodical Treasurer, ex officio		

From its membership, the committee elected the following officers: the Rev. Oliver Breen, President; the Rev. Arthur Hoogstrate, Vice-president; Mr. Lawrence Vander Ploeg, Recording Secretary; the Stated Clerk functions as general secretary of the Synodical Interim Committee. The committee appointed the officers above along with Mr. Fred Hollebeek and the Rev. John Van Harmelen to serve as members of the Church Polity and Program subcommittee.

The Finance Committee for the current year consists of Mr. Fred Hollebeek, Mr. Lawrence Vander Ploeg, Dr. Marvin De Vries, Mr. Jerry Jonker, Mr. Herman Petersen, Mr. William Van Lopik, Mr. Arthur Van Tuinen, and the Stated Clerk, ex officio.

In accord with the action of the Synod of 1972 (See Acts of Synod, 1972, Article 11, pages 13, 14), the Synodical Interim Committee took legal steps to make the necessary alterations and legal changes so that the entire Synodical Interim Committee could be legally designated as the Christian Reformed Church Synod Trustees. This legal action has now been completed.

The attention of synod is called to the fact that the following terms of Synodical Interim Committee members expire at this time:

Regular	Alternate
Rev. F. De Jong	Rev. W. Ackerman
Mr. L. Vander Ploeg	Mr. W. Van Lopik
Rev. A. Hoogstrate	Rev. C. Greenfield
Rev. L. Slofstra	Rev. J. W. Postman

The committee will present nominations to synod in its supplementary report.

## II. PLANNING AND COORDINATION

The Synodical Interim Committee is charged with the planning, coordination, and application of the work of synod. A great deal of time has been spent on this phase of our responsibility.

The Church Polity and Program subcommittee has studied the purposes, programs, and projected activities of all denominational boards and the agencies we support. This has involved extensive correspondence and meetings with representatives of our boards and agencies.

The committee is engaged in charting the purposes, programs, future plans, and overlapping or conflicting areas of operation. Through the work of our committee and advisory services of the Stated Clerk some areas of tension have been eliminated and greater coordination has been achieved.

Our Finance Committee takes its part in coordination studies by its thorough analyses of all financial reports and budgets of our boards and agencies. This subcommittee also interviews representatives of the boards and agencies, and seeks to coordinate our financial efforts.

The Synodical Interim Committee is increasingly aware of the need of coordination and programming surveys. In many cases our boards and agencies have requested advice and in all cases they have been very cooperative with the Synodical Interim Committee.

Future work of the committee in planning and coordination demands a great deal of study. We look forward to great assistance in this work through the office of our Denominational Financial Coordinator.

## III. PUBLICATIONS

The Synodical Interim Committee and the staff completed several publications during the course of the year. In accord with our mandate the *Acts of Synod, 1972* were published. At this writing the *Agenda for Synod, 1973* is being completed. These increasingly large volumes demand a great deal of editorial work and demand considerable time of the Stated Clerk and his staff as well as of our Publishing House.

Through the offices of the Finance Committee, each of our consistories received the *Reference Guide for Councils of the Christian Reformed*

*Churches 1973*, a booklet giving complete information to all of our churches with respect to the boards and agencies receiving quotas and recommended offerings. Every year a large number of inquiries are received by the Stated Clerk from consistories requesting information or appraisal of appeals from causes not on the list approved by synod. Our consistories ought to study the *Reference Guide* carefully. The causes presented here have been carefully screened and recommended by synod and statistics are available. All causes seeking financial support from our churches must seek proper official recommendation prior to consideration by our consistories.

In accord with the decision of the Synod of 1972, a booklet was prepared on the *Nature and Extent of Biblical Authority*. In addition to its use by our churches this book has been received with appreciation in other denominations.

The Stated Clerk and his staff prepared and published the *Index of Synodical Decisions 1857-1972*. This booklet should be very helpful to our consistories and to all who wish to do research or study on the decisions of previous synods. Two copies of this volume were sent to each consistory and the book was also advertised for public sale. The staff also prepared for publication a new *Guide for Church Visiting* and a pamphlet containing the *Church Order* and notation of revisions through 1972.

The Stated Clerk and his staff have also spent considerable time along with the staff of the publishing house in editing and publishing the *Year-book, 1973*.

#### IV. THE STATED CLERK

The Synodical Interim Committee, through the Stated Clerk, has served our classes, consistories, and individuals with advice and information regarding the Church Order and the decisions of synod.

The Stated Clerk has maintained close liaison with the boards and agencies of our denomination. Conferences have been held and visits have been paid to observe the work that is being carried on. Consultations have served an advisory purpose for our boards and committees and will be helpful to the Synodical Interim Committee in alerting synod regarding coordination of effort and procedures being undertaken for mutual cooperation.

The Stated Clerk has also maintained contact with and received progress reports from all study committees and *ad hoc* committees appointed by synod. In many cases advice has been requested and given.

The Stated Clerk has edited all publications of synod mentioned in Section III of this report, and he has carried on all the general correspondence of synod.

The Stated Clerk has also responded to invitations to speak, to preach, and to meet with various groups for consultation and inspiration. He has represented our denomination in meetings with governmental leaders, in civic and religious gatherings, in contact with the news media, in meetings with leaders of other denominations, and attendance at interdenominational gatherings. Many opportunities have been provided to witness

for the Lord and also to provide information and extend the witness of our denomination.

#### V. REPORT OF THE REFORMED ECUMENICAL SYNOD

A report was received from Dr. Paul G. Schrottenboer, General Secretary of the Reformed Ecumenical Synod, in which various decisions taken by the Reformed Ecumenical Synod held in Australia, 1972, were called to our attention. Dr. Schrottenboer requested that the Stated Clerk refer various matters of his report to the appropriate assembly and/or agency of our denomination.

In accord with the request of the General Secretary of the Reformed Ecumenical Synod, the Stated Clerk has sent several items of his report to various boards of our denomination.

The following items are of interest to our synod:

1. The Reformed Ecumenical Synod adopted a new constitution, the text of which may be found in the Acts of the Reformed Ecumenical Synod, 1972, pages 62-72. The constitution will be made available later in pamphlet form.

2. The Reformed Ecumenical Synod considered at length the question of the sabbath but was not able to reach a conclusion and therefore, decided to continue the study.

3. The Reformed Ecumenical Synod received from its study committee an extensive report on eschatology (Acts of RES, pages 128-145). The assembly decided to commend it to the member churches as a statement giving guidance to their preaching and teaching ministry.

4. The synod spent an entire day in conference on the authority of Scripture. The synod adopted several recommendations. Appreciation was expressed to the churches who had submitted documents to the synod, including our own denomination. Other churches were urged to send contributions to the discussion on the authority of Scripture, and the churches were urged to remain fully aware of the need of a personal as well as a communal living by Scripture and a promoting the use of Scripture.

5. The synod considered at length the entire question of office in the New Testament. The synod reaffirmed that it is the teaching of Scripture that women are excluded from the office of ruling and preaching elders. Nevertheless, recognizing that there are member churches who at present hold a position and practice contrary to the above affirmation, synod requests the member churches to study the question on the basis of Scripture and in the light of the reports of the study committee and advisory committee, send copies of their studies to all member churches not later than January 1975. The matter will once again be placed on the agenda of the Reformed Ecumenical Synod in 1976. Member churches are requested to send their studies and decisions on this matter to one another and to the General Secretary of the Reformed Ecumenical Synod.

6. The Reformed Ecumenical Synod decided to appoint a committee to study the matter of the baptism of the Holy Spirit as a special experience in addition to regeneration and conversion in the light of the Scripture and the Reformed confessions. All member churches are re-

quested to send study material which they have on this matter to the study committee. The convener of the committee is Dr. Klaas Runia, Wortmanstraat 500, Kampen, the Netherlands.

**VI. FINANCIAL MATTERS**

A. The Finance Committee has received applications for the office of Denominational Financial Coordinator and has conducted several interviews. The Synodical Interim Committee will present a nominee to the Synod of 1973 for appointment to this position.

B. Responding to bills submitted for baby sitting and loss of work by members of synodical committees, the Synodical Interim Committee has interpreted the position of synod to be that synodical expenses involve traveling, meals, lodging and such expenses as are directly related to the meeting. However, synod does not reimburse committee members for loss of wages or other expenses entailed in a committee member's absence from home.

**VII. APPOINTMENTS**

During the past year the Synodical Interim Committee was asked to approve many appointments to boards and committees where memberships had been vacated.

A. The Synodical Interim Committee approved the following appointments of synodical functionaries:

Board	Classis	Appointment
Synodical Deputy	Chatham .....	Rev. J. Vugteveen, alternate
	Holland .....	Rev. W. Vander Haak
	Lake Erie .....	Rev. J. Malestein, delegate
		Rev. A. Hoksbergen, alternate
	Minnesota North .....	Rev. T. Wevers
	Pacific Northwest .....	Rev. D. Tinklenberg
Calvin College and Seminary	Cadillac .....	Rev. G. Compaan, alternate
	Chatham .....	Rev. M. Pool, delegate
	Chicago North .....	Rev. J. Ebbers, delegate
		Rev. O. Breen, alternate
	Columbia .....	Mr. H. Advocaat, delegate
		Rev. H. Leestma, alternate
	Eastern Canada .....	Rev. J. De Pater, alternate
	Grand Rapids East .....	Rev. W. De Jong, delegate
		Rev. J. C. Medendorp, alternate
	Holland .....	Rev. R. Vermeer, alternate
	Orange City .....	Rev. A. Dykstra, delegate
		Rev. J. Hellinga, alternate
	Pacific Northwest .....	Rev. J. Wesseling, delegate
		Rev. A. Leegwater, alternate
	Quinte .....	Rev. G. Corvers, delegate
	Rev. D. Los, alternate	
Zeeland .....	Rev. W. Van Rees, delegate	
	Rev. T. Brouwer, alternate	
Foreign Mission Board	Alberta South .....	Rev. C. H. Salomons, alternate
	Eastern Canada .....	Rev. J. Veenstra, alternate
	Florida .....	Rev. R. Tjapkes, alternate
	Pacific Northwest .....	Rev. J. Gray, alternate

Board	Classis	Appointment
Home Mission Board	Alberta South .....	Rev. C. H. Salomons, alternate
	Cadillac .....	Mr. G. Koster, alternate
	California South .....	Rev. S. Dykstra, alternate
	Chatham .....	Rev. S. Vander Meer, alternate
	Chicago North .....	Rev. W. Witte, delegate
		Rev. A. Mulder, alternate
	Florida .....	Mr. R. Boerema, alternate
	Grand Rapids South .....	Rev. J. Hofman, alternate
	Hudson .....	Rev. A. Arkema, alternate
	Kalamazoo .....	Rev. R. Klingenberg, alternate
	Pacific Northwest .....	Rev. G. Pars, alternate
	Pella .....	Rev. R. Venema, delegate
		Rev. L. Vander Zee, alternate
	Quinte .....	Rev. C. D. Tuyl, alternate
Sioux Center .....	Rev. G. Heyboer, alternate	
Toronto .....	Rev. W. Van Dyk, alternate	
Board of Publications	Alberta South .....	Mr. D. Bouwsema, alternate
	Chatham .....	Rev. L. Schalkwyk, delegate
	Grand Rapids East .....	Rev. D. Terpstra, alternate
	Huron .....	Dr. H. Feenstra, alternate
	Minnesota North .....	Mr. H. Pluimer, delegate
		Rev. T. Wevers, alternate
	Minnesota South .....	Rev. W. Green, alternate
Orange City .....	Rev. N. Vogelzang, alternate	
Pacific Northwest .....	Rev. J. Stulp, alternate	
C.R.W.R.C.	Chatham .....	Mr. W. Kuindersma, alternate
	Illiana .....	Mr. G. Kroll, delegate
	Quinte .....	Mr. P. Feddema, delegate
		Mr. W. Piersma, alternate
	Toronto .....	Mr. W. Rekker, delegate
		Mr. A. Vander Molen, alternate
	Sociologist .....	Dr. D. Hoekstra
Alternate minister delegate .....	Rev. J. Bergsma	
Member-at-large alt. sociologist .....	Mr. J. Tuinstra	

B. The committee also made the following appointments:

Board of Publications alternate representative to SCORR — Rev. C. Nyenhuis

CRWRC representative to SCORR — Mr. L. Van Rees

Psalter Hymnal Supplement Committee — Miss Betty De Vries, Rev. J. Schuurmann; Mr. H. Start, alternate

Chaplain Committee — Dr. Melvin Hugen

Sermons for Reading Services Committee — Rev. K. Hart, Rev. A. Venema

Ministerial Information Service Committee — Mr. Carl Vander Brug

C. The Synod of 1972 appointed five ministers from the Iowa area to serve on the committee on the Lodge and Church Membership. It was decided that two elders should be added to this committee by the Synodical Interim Committee (Acts of Synod 1972, page 112).

1. The committee appointed Mr. A. Geurkink of Pease, Minnesota, and Mr. F. De Groot of Orange City, Iowa along with the alternates

Dr. S. Kanis and Mr. D. De Jong to serve on this committee. Since Mr. F. De Groot was unable to serve, Dr. S. Kanis replaced him.

2. While complying with the decision of synod, the Synodical Interim Committee unanimously adopted a motion to request future synods to refrain from assigning appointments of this nature to the Synodical Interim Committee. Synod itself, with its broad representation, should be far better able to appoint men from any given area to a committee. Furthermore, appointments should be the responsibility of the Synodical Interim Committee only when they are interim in character, that is, necessitated by changes that take place between the meetings of synod. It would be helpful for synod itself to approve this policy and give emphasis to its own rules in the Acts of Synod, 1973.

D. To clarify committee appointments, the Synodical Interim Committee requests synod to adopt the following rule:

Synod requests all classes, when nominating members of denominational boards or committees, to designate the term of the alternate to coincide with the term of the delegate. When an alternate replaces a delegate, or when a new delegate is nominated by a classis, the term of office shall begin the year a delegate assumes the office and shall terminate on September 1 three years later.

#### VIII. RECOMMENDATIONS

A. That synod take cognizance of the fact that the entire synodical committee now comprises the Christian Reformed Synod Trustees.

B. That synod approve the interim appointments made by the Synodical Interim Committee (See Section VII, A, and B.).

C. That synod, in accord with the request of the Synodical Interim Committee, adopt the position that all appointments of synod committees shall be made by synod itself with the exception of those which are interim in character and necessitated by resignation, vacancies, or unusual circumstances arising between the time of synodical meetings (See Section VII, C.).

D. That synod request all classes, when nominating members of denominational boards or committees, to designate the term of the alternate to coincide with the term of the delegate. When an alternate replaces a delegate, or when a new delegate is nominated by a classis, the term of office shall begin in the year a delegate assumes the office and shall terminate on September 1 three years later (See Section VII, D.).

Synodical Interim Committee  
Wm. P. Brink, Stated Clerk

**REPORT 19-A**  
**SYNODICAL INTERIM COMMITTEE**  
(Arts. 22, 83)

DEAR BROTHERS:

**I. POLICY MATTERS**

A. The Synodical Interim Committee presents to the Synod of 1973 a request that synod call attention to the impropriety of communications sent by churches or individuals to the consistories of the Christian Reformed Church in criticism of or appeal against reports or proposals, or letters in espousal of any position or course of action with reference to any matters relating to the church's life and ministry.

1. There are proper and fruitful agencies for discussion of church problems and for promotion of proposals available to persons or churches who feel it desirable or necessary—periodicals within the community, discussion groups—and address or appeal to the entire church through the church assemblies, classis and synod.

2. Dissemination of communications to all churches espousing a given position may be annoying, promote tensions, give the appearance of propaganda rather than open conversation, of pressure tactics rather than communion, and is not conducive to the most helpful and fruitful exercise of the communion of the church of Jesus Christ.

B. With respect to agencies seeking the endorsement of synod for financial support, your committee requests synod to clarify the requirements as listed in the Acts of Synod, 1950, page 91, by adding the requirement that new organizations requesting support must first submit to the Synodical Interim Committee (Church Polity and Program Committee) a statement of its aims and purposes, and be approved as to program.

**II. APPOINTMENTS**

Due to vacancies on committees and boards, the Synodical Interim Committee has approved the following appointments:

1. Classis Florida - Board of Home Missions delegate, the Rev. E. Tamminga, alternate - Mr. Jim Hofman.

2. Classis Columbia - Board of Foreign Missions alternate, the Rev. E. Meyer; Board of Publications delegate, the Rev. F. Breisch.

3. Classis Orange City - Board of Trustees delegate, the Rev. J. Hellinga, alternate - the Rev. H. Hiemstra.

4. Classis Pacific Northwest - Synodical Deputy, the Rev. D. Tinklenberg, alternate - the Rev. J. Stulp; Board of Home Missions alternate, the Rev. M. Flikkema.

5. Ministerial Information Service - Mr. Carl Vander Brug.

6. Committee on the Lodge and Church Membership - the Rev. J. Botting.

### III. SYNODICAL INTERIM COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

#### A. Ministerial members

The terms of three ministerial members of the Synodical Interim Committee expire this year.

In view of the fact that they have served only two years instead of the normal three year term, the Synodical Interim Committee requests that synod reappoint the following members:

Far West District—Rev. F. De Jong

Central District—Rev. A. Hoogstrate

Western Canada District—Rev. L. Slofstra

If synod prefers a nomination for election, the committee is prepared to present an additional nominee for each district.

The committee also requests that synod reappoint as alternates the following ministers whose two year terms have expired:

Far West District—Rev. W. Ackerman

Central District—Rev. C. Greenfield

A new alternate is needed for the Western Canada District. Your committee presents as a nomination for election as an alternate the Revs. J. Vriend and H. Wildeboer.

If synod prefers an election for the first two alternates, the committee is prepared to present a nomination.

#### B. Non-Ministerial members

The two-year terms of our non-ministerial member from the Central District, Mr. L. Vander Ploeg, and his alternate, Mr. W. Van Lopik also expire at this time. Because of the press of his responsibility Mr. Vander Ploeg has requested that he not be reappointed. The committee is grateful for his devoted service on the Synodical Interim Committee and the former Standing Advisory Budget Committee.

Because these nominees must serve on the Finance Committee, the persons to be appointed must have special competence in finance and budgeting and a willingness to spend a great deal of time in assignments. The committee requests that synod appoint as member from the Central District, Mr. William Sytsma, Jr., a former member of the Standing Advisory Budget Committee, and as his alternate, Mr. W. Van Lopik. Both have indicated their willingness to serve.

### IV. FINANCIAL MATTERS

#### 1. Quotas

The Finance Committee of the Synodical Interim Committee, as directed by synod, has studied the quota requests from all the quota participating agencies. This committee is instructed to recommend to synod and its advisory committee on budget matters, a per family over-all denominational quota that, if approved by synod, will provide quota support for the increasing needs of the denominational agencies and

yet will be reasonable when judged in the light of our denominational stewardship and family giving.

As an initial step in this process we compared total quota requests from the denominational agencies with total quota recommendations by the Finance Committee (formerly the Standing Advisory Budget Committee) and actual total quotas approved by synod for the years 1965 through 1973. The requested and recommended total quota for 1974 also is included.

Year	Total Requested by Denominational Agencies	Increase as a Percent of Last Year's Actual	Total Recommended by Standing Advisory Budget Committee	Increase as a Percent of Last Year's Actual	Actual Approved by Synod	Increase as a Percent of Last Year's Actual
1974	\$ 168.35	5.94	\$ 161.10	1.74		
1973	157.70	5.84	157.25	5.54	\$ 158.35	6.28
1972	155.00	12.40	147.40	6.89	149.00	8.05
1971	142.65	10.58	137.15	6.32	137.90	6.90
1970	127.90	8.16	122.50	3.47	129.00	9.09
1969	128.50	15.40	117.75	5.75	118.25	6.20
1968	111.10	9.62	109.60	8.14	111.35	9.87
1967	104.80	8.88	100.60	4.52	101.35	5.30
1966	96.00	6.37	94.50	4.71	96.25	6.65
1965	89.25	5.77	89.25	5.77	90.25	7.31
1964					84.10	
Average percent increase						
1965-1973		9.23		5.68		
1969-1973		10.48		5.59		

\* Source: *Acts of Synod*, various issues

The total requested by the denominational agencies, the total recommended by the Finance Committee and the actual total approved by synod each year was expressed as a percent increase of the previous year's actual quota. In this way a direct comparison can be made.

During the nine year period 1965-1973 the average yearly increase in total requests was 9.23 percent. This compares with an average recommended increase of 5.68 percent and an average adopted increase of 7.29 percent. An analysis of more recent history, the last five years (1969-1973), gives results almost identical to the nine year historical experience.

Several points should be acknowledged:

a. The Finance Committee and the former Standing Advisory Budget Committee made recommendations in the past that on the average were in line with increasing incomes.

b. There were times when various agencies' requests were higher than initially anticipated because of unique situations confronting these agencies (such as a unique program opportunity or a sudden dollar devaluation) or because of action taken by synod (such as approving new program requests or approving increases in salary support).

c. Synod should carefully weigh the quota increase implications of any request or recommendation before it takes final action.

Our committee's task was difficult this year as we received quota requests from the various denominational agencies for 1974 totaling \$168.35, or an increase of \$10.00 (5.94 percent increase) over the 1973 quota. Our committee sympathizes with the agencies requesting these quota increases as we all realize what inflation has done to the dollar and to purchasing power. We feel, however, that it is impossible for us to recommend an increase in quota by this amount in one year because the quotas have been increasing at an average of 7.3 percent the last five years and deflated income has been increasing at a considerably lower rate. We feel, therefore, that most of the agencies cannot be given the entire amount of the requested increase since, by doing so, it would have to be at the expense of one or more of some other denominational agencies.

In support of our contention that a 5.94 percent increase in the denominational quota is not practical, we analyzed current statistics of average annual family income (source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports). We found that average annual family income increased 6.8 percent in 1972. Inflation in 1972 cost the average family approximately 3.6 percent. We decided, therefore, that an increase in the quota at a rate of 5.94 percent as requested by the agencies would work a hardship on many small or low-family-income churches. Furthermore, local or regional church, Christian school, or classical programs may have difficulty raising funds when the denominational quotas increase too rapidly. Many states and cities have added and/or increased property and income taxes which further reduce family disposable income.

After careful analysis and review of budgets and financial statements of the denominational agencies, the Finance Committee is recommending a per family quota increase of \$2.75 for 1974 (details below), an

over-all 1.74 percent increase above the 1973 quota. IN THIS REGARD, WE REQUEST, AS IN PRIOR YEARS THAT SYNOD CONSIDER ALL DENOMINATIONAL AGENCY BUDGET REQUESTS BEFORE ACTION ON ANY ONE.

Quota support is one very important source of income for most of the denominational agencies. It is not the only source, however; other sources are offerings and gifts for "above-quota needs." The Finance Committee again commends the agencies for their efforts in presenting their needs to the churches and our people. We feel that even more effort can be put forth to increase the amount of total income derived from gifts and offerings. Our people continue to be bombarded today with very effective literature requesting financial support from many OUTSIDE ORGANIZATIONS. Our people are giving substantial amounts to these organizations, even some which are not doctrinally sound or have no significant financial accountability. Our denominational agencies, by using more effective means, will channel some of these gifts in their direction. The Finance Committee feels that we cannot place the full responsibility to achieve this end on the personnel of these agencies. We strongly urge the ministerial and elder delegates to remind their classes and congregations of the above-quota needs of our agencies, as well as the list of causes which synod approves for financial support. With greater emphasis given by all to the needs of our denominational agencies, these agencies can increase their gift and offering income which will permit them to better meet their program demands, and in turn, reduce their dependence on the denominational quota.

Denominational Quotas

	<u>1972</u>	<u>1973</u>	<u>Requested for 1974</u>	<u>Recommended for 1974</u>
1. Back to God Hour	\$14.00	\$15.00	\$18.50	\$16.00
2. Board of Publications				
a. Spanish Literature	.75	.75	.75	-
b. "De Wachter"	-	.25	.25	-
c. Unified Church-School Curriculum	-	2.00	3.00	2.00
d. Denominational Bldg. Addition	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
3. Calvin College & Seminary	30.00	30.60	32.10*	32.10*
4. Chaplains' Deposit Fund	.50	.50	.50	.50
5. Chaplain Committee	-	-	1.00	-
6. Foreign Missions	26.75	28.75	30.00	29.00
7. Fund for Needy Churches	9.50	11.25	12.00**	12.00*
8. Home Missions	41.10	41.10	41.10	41.10
9. Ministers' Pension Fund	20.00	22.00	23.50	22.75

10. Synodical Expense Fund	3.00	2.75	3.25	3.25
a. SCORR	1.40	1.40	1.40	1.40
11. United Calvinist Youth	1.00	1.00	-	-
Total	<u>\$149.00</u>	<u>\$158.35</u>	<u>\$168.35</u>	<u>\$161.10</u>

\*(Calvin area quota)

\*\*For every \$500 increase in minimum salary, there must be an additional \$.75 quota plus \$10 increase per local congregation (Overture 3).

Should synod accede to Overture 15, an additional \$2 quota will be necessary.

### 2. Causes Recommended for Financial Support

## I. DENOMINATIONAL CAUSES

### Group A

#### *Denominational Causes Recommended For One Or More Offerings*

1. Armed Forces Fund of oard of Home Missions
2. Back to God Hour for above-quota needs
3. Back to God Tract Committee
4. Board of Foreign Missions for above-quota needs
5. Board of Home Missions for above-quota needs
6. Chaplain Fund
7. Committee for Educational Assistance to Churches Abroad
8. Minority Student Scholarship Fund
9. Supplemental Relief Fund of Ministers' Pension Fund Committee

### Group B

#### *Denominational Benevolent Cause For One Of More Ocerings*

Christian Reformed World Relief Committee

### Group C

#### *Denominational Related Youth Causes For One Or More Offerings*

1. Calvinettes (division of United Calvinist Youth)
2. Calvinist Cadet Corps (division of United Calvinist Youth)
3. Young Calvinist Federation (division of United Calvinist Youth)
4. Young Calvinist Servicemen's Ministry

## II. NONDENOMINATIONAL CAUSES

The following nondenominational causes are recommended for financial support, *but not necessarily for one or more offerings*. The number of offerings, or any amount to be given to these causes, is a matter that EACH COUNCIL SHOULD DECIDE.

### Group A

#### *Benevolent Causes*

1. Bethany Christian Home, Inc.
2. Bethesda Hospital
3. Calvary Rehabilitation Center

4. Christian Sanatorium Association
5. Christian School Employees Relief Fund (only when specifically requested)
6. Eastern Christian Children's Retreat
7. Elim Christian School
8. The Luke Society
9. Pine Rest Christian Hospital Association (includes Children's Retreat and Sheltered Workshop)
10. Roseland Christian School

#### *Group B*

##### *Educational Causes*

1. Association for Advancement of Christian Scholarship
2. Christian School Educational Foundation (NUCS)
3. Dordt College, Inc.
4. National Union of Christian Schools (general fund)
5. Reformed Bible College
6. Trinity Christian College
7. Westminster Theological Seminary

#### *Group C*

##### *Miscellaneous Causes*

1. American Bible Society (U.S. churches only)
2. Canadian Bible Society (Canadian churches only)
3. Christian Labour Association of Canada (Canadian churches only)
4. Christian Laymen's League
5. Faith, Prayer, and Tract League
6. Gideons (for Bible distribution)
7. Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship
8. Lord's Day Alliance of the U.S. (U.S. churches only)
9. T.E.L.L. (The Evangelical Literature League)
10. World Home Bible League (includes Canadian Home Bible League)

##### *3. Regional Causes Recommended For Financial Support*

The Synod of 1972 adopted the following recommendation (*Acts of Synod, 1972, Art. 64, IV.2, p. 84*):

"That a study be made to determine if a number of nondenominational causes recommended for financial support are actually local or regional in character. (Refer to Synodical Interim Committee for action)"

The Synodical Interim Committee referred this matter to its Finance Committee. After some investigation and discussion, we make the following recommendation:

*Recommendation*—That synod grant a one year extension for the completion of nondenominational regional causes. *Grounds*: 1.) The determination of the characteristics of regional causes is a complex problem and requires more time. 2.) The new denominational financial coordi-

nator can provide invaluable assistance in the data collection and analysis of this question.

#### 4. *Denominational Financial Coordinator*

The Synod of 1970 declared itself in favor of the establishment of the office of the Denominational Financial Coordinator and in 1971 synod adopted a job description for this position. The Synod of 1972 granted a one-year extension to fulfill the mandate to appoint a person for this position.

The Synodical Interim Committee has reviewed applications and conducted many interviews for this position. The committee now requests the Synod of 1973 to appoint Mr. Anthony Vroon of Miami, Florida, as the Denominational Financial Coordinator for a three-year term. A biographical sketch of Mr. Vroon is available for synod.

### V. RECOMMENDATIONS

A. The Synodical Interim Committee requests that its president, the Rev. Oliver Breen, be granted the floor when matters pertaining to the committee are discussed and that Mr. Fred Hollebeek and Dr. Marvin De Vries, chairman and secretary of the Finance Committee, represent the committee in matters of finance.

B. That synod adopt policy statements 1. re improper communications to consistories (see Section I, A.), and 2. with respect to the programming of agencies seeking synodical support.

C. That synod approve the additional appointments listed in Section II.

D. That synod grant a one-year extension for the completion of a study of nondenominational regional causes. (See Section IV, 3.)

E. That synod appoint Mr. Anthony Vroon as Denominational Financial Coordinator for a three-year term. (See Section IV, 4.)

Synodical Interim Committee

William P. Brink, Stated Clerk

**SYNOD OF THE CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH  
STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS AND DISBURSEMENTS  
JANUARY 1, 1972 - DECEMBER 31, 1972**

Balance, January 1, 1972 \$ 12,869.94

**Receipts:**

Quota for Synodical Expenses	@ \$3.00	\$142,165.08
From Resettlement Committee		20,000.00
Sale of Materials		497.65
Interest and Bank Credits		407.89
Donations for expenses of mtg. with Ref. Church in America		750.00
Receipts for other funds:		
Denominational Bg. Fund	\$ 34,654.42	
Spanish Literature Funds	97.11	
		<u>34,751.53</u>

Total Receipts

198,572.15

\$211,442.09

**Disbursements:**

Expenses for meeting of Synod		\$ 28,068.86
Synod officers		17,775.00
Stated Clerk-Office expenses		4,984.58
-Pension, S.S., Ins.		1,887.05
-Travel		814.74
-Furniture & Equipment		242.70
-Secretary, Sal. & Exp.		6,000.95
Treasurer's expenses		544.00
Interim Committee		4,092.40
Finance Committee		574.40
Printing Agenda		13,441.87
Printing Acts		15,350.22
Printing other materials		4,708.30
Committees' Expenses (See Schedule)		20,133.28
Synodical Deputies' Travel		5,197.04
Travel Insurance		1,380.00
Delegates to R.E.S.		3,697.24
Delegates to other assemblies		1,372.49
Bank charges and miscellaneous		89.34
		<u>130,354.66</u>

Total operating expenses

130,354.66

Assessment to R.E.S. & Travel Fd.		11,790.00
Loan to R.E.S.		2,000.00
Disbursed to other funds		44,364.47
Pension-Canadian Immigration Committee		225.00
Disbursement to Chicago West Side Christian School Association		<u>7,724.10</u>

Total Disbursements

196,458.23

Balance, December 31, 1972

\$ 14,983.86

Due to Seminary Bldg. Fund - \$28.00, and Board of Publ. - \$97.11.

## REPORT 20

## UNORDAINED EMPLOYEES' PENSION FUND

(Art. 60)

DEAR BROTHERS:

Your committee continues to supervise the administration of the Unordained Employees' Pension Fund which serves eligible employees of all of the denominational boards, employees of Rehoboth Christian Hospital, Christian Laymen's League, four Classical Home Missions Committees, and nine churches. During the past year, the employees of the Board of Publications became participants under the plan.

The optional additional life insurance coverage approved by synod in 1972 was implemented during the past year. This program permits the employees to purchase additional life insurance benefits at very favorable rates and ninety-two persons elected to avail themselves of this benefit.

The Relief Fund continues to provide support for former employees or their dependents in cases where their pension is inadequate or they receive no pension. The needs of the recipients are reviewed periodically.

Your committee has also been engaged in a study of ways in which the pension benefits of certain participants can be increased within the costs previously approved by synod. Since the former Unordained Pension Plan was underfunded, the assets received from the former plan were inadequate to provide the benefits which had been earned by the employees up to that time. Consequently, as employees have retired, it has been necessary to provide additional funds from the Supplemental Fund to provide the benefits to which they are entitled. The Supplemental Fund has been financed primarily through the return of the unvested portions of the accounts of terminated employees. As time goes on and we continue to fund benefits under the levels provided by this plan, it is anticipated that this problem will be eliminated. At this time, your committee recommends that benefits for all employees who were participants in the former unordained plan be increased by five percent per year from January 1, 1967, to retirement, but such increased benefits shall not exceed \$150.00 per month. This increase shall be based upon the fixed benefit provided under the former plan, \$114.19 per month for married employees, and \$70.80 for single employees. If the earned pension benefit of the employee is greater, such earned benefit will be paid. It is proposed that this change be effective as of January 1, 1973, and it is anticipated that this will cover employees of the Christian Reformed Board of Foreign Missions, Christian Reformed World Relief Committee, Christian Reformed Board of Home

Missions, and the Back to God Hour. Comparable increased benefits for eligible employees of Calvin College and Seminary will be based on the earned benefit at the date of retirement. These increased benefits will be funded from the Supplemental Fund which had a balance of \$117,972.81 as of January 1, 1972, and additional receipts from terminations during 1972 in the amount of \$31,394.46.

Your committee has also felt the need to employ an administrator on a part-time basis to handle the various administrative matters connected with the plan. In the past, this has been handled by the committee members, but the increased volume of such activities indicates the need for the committee to employ a person for this responsibility. At the date of writing this report, no definite arrangements have been made, although it is anticipated that a part-time administrator will be secured by the time synod meets.

### *Recommendations*

1. That synod approve a minimum pension benefit for all employees who were participants under the former plans equal to five percent per year from January 1, 1967, to date of retirement over the benefits provided by the former plans, but not to exceed \$150.00 per month, effective as of January 1, 1973.

2. That synod approve the hiring of a part-time administrator by the committee.

Unordained Employees  
Pension Fund Committee  
David Vander Ploeg, Chairman  
Al Bielema  
Gerard Borst  
Lester Ippel

#### PENSION PLAN FOR UNORDAINED WORKERS IN THE CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH

##### STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS, DISBURSEMENTS, AND BALANCES

January 1, 1972 - December 31, 1972

CASH BALANCE, January 1, 1972		\$ 3,149.83
<b>RECEIPTS:</b>		
Premiums received	\$207,311.57	
Occidental Life Insurance Co.		
Rebate due to experience rating	17,136.00	
Christian Reformed Board of Home Missions -		
Relief payments to former employees	840.00	
Interest on investments	3,021.14	
Securities Redeemed	37,000.00	
Calvin College contribution to Relief Fund	535.64	
		<u>265,844.35</u>
		\$268,994.18

## DISBURSEMENTS:

Premiums on Pension Plan	\$169,453.17	
Premiums on Life Plan	33,701.58	
Payments from Relief Fund	7,800.00	
Securities Purchases	52,000.00	
Expenses (Audit, Bond, Meetings)	395.65	
Bank Charges	4.41	
Refund of Premiums	<u>8,329.93</u>	
		<u>271,684.74</u>
		(\$ 2,690.56)

## BALANCE SHEET, December 31, 1972

## ASSETS:

Cash		(\$ 2,690.56)
Investments:		
Union Bank Certificate #113585	\$ 5,500.00	
G. R. Mutual Fed. Savings and Loan	15,000.00	
Mutual Home Fed. Savings and Loan	20,000.00	
Old Kent Bank Cert. #99182	10,000.00	
Old Kent Bank Cert. #59152	<u>5,000.00</u>	
Due from Agencies (net)		<u>55,500.00</u>
		<u>7,016.78</u>
Total Assets		<u>\$ 59,826.22</u>

## FUND BALANCES:

Relief Fund	\$ 20,020.46	
Pension Fund	<u>39,805.76</u>	
Total Fund Balances		<u>\$ 59,826.22</u>

# REPRESENTATIVES' REPORTS

## REPORT 21

### AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY

(Art. 18)

DEAR BROTHERS:

It is a pleasure to report to you on the activities of the American Bible Society, an organization unheralded and unsung that goes about its business in the service of the Word. It is rather difficult to put into words in the space allotted what all the ABS does and accomplishes on behalf of all of us, and for the Christian Reformed Church in particular. The ABS does not seek the headlines in local churches or on foreign fields nor does it approach any one with gimmicks in the interest of support and contributions.

We fear that in many minds there is confusion with the name "Bible Society." The Christian Reformed Church has consistently endorsed the work of the ABS in the United States and all over the world. The ABS is part of the United Bible Societies, headquartered in London, where the implementation takes place to provide Scriptures in all countries and continents of the world. We can visit Indonesia and we can see it at work locally in the state of Michigan. During the last year, in Indonesia two million Scriptures were produced by a Bible society-owned press in Bogor, Indonesia. Scripture distribution workshops were held in these areas: West Java, Central Java, and East Java. A total of 131 people attended, eighteen of whom were ministers. One can also observe that it cut across denominational lines by having fourteen denominations present! And this in Java, the most densely populated area in the world!

Then we go to Iran, an area which is pretty far away from us. Here new opportunities for Scripture distribution are being opened up through commercial bookshops. The society's five full time colporteurs also experienced considerable success in distribution through the schools. Christian young people were enlisted to do distribution work during the summer vacation season. Early in the year a three day workshop was conducted in Teheran for new Bible Society staff. A Translator's Institute was held at the University of Meshed. There were forty participants among which were representatives from Afghanistan, Iran, East and West Pakistan, Syria and Turkey! Guess how many languages were discussed? Armenian, Bawm, Bengali, Pashtu, Persian, Dari, Persian, Punjabi, Sindhi, Turkish and Urdu—not too well known to us, we sup-

pose! An interesting fact is that all sections and most Scripture Portions in Persian are *produced locally*.

All of us know that *Good News for Modern Man* is the best seller of all time. This book competes on the news stand and in the bookstore with all the other available periodicals. And it is *sold!* That is testimony in itself as to its acceptability and readability all through our country and beyond!

We turn to another country, predominantly Catholic, where his Word and his Spirit are also in evidence. In Spain sixty Baptist young people participated in a training course in a youth camp held in Denia. In nearby villages the new Spanish "Version Popular" New Testament became available. A total of sixty New Testaments and eight Gospel Portions were sold. The report tells us that "the joy of the young people was very great as they reported their experiences."

Another interesting note: in Czechoslovakia authorities gave permission for the import of large print Czech Bibles. Even in Czechoslovakia production has accelerated with the printing in that country of the four Gospels in a new Czech translation!

We must also report on the passing of a man, we suppose, not well known to us, who through his God-given talents contributed much to the perpetuation of the work and aims of the American Bible Society and the United Bible Societies all over the world. We refer to the late esteemed Dr. Olivier Beguin, Secretary General of the United Bible Societies. A contemporary comments: "Dr. Beguin once wrote that he saw the Bible as 'the most precious thing which we can offer' . . . How easy it is when one is always dealing with the Bible, when one's work has to do with it, to become so familiar with it that you no longer pay attention to its content! This was not the case with Dr. Beguin. His whole life and work stood under the Word of God and he lived from this Word. He knew the meaning of the Bible for the present and the future. He once wrote: 'The Bible alone can be the key which opens doors, the leaven which makes the dough rise, the light which reveals Jesus Christ, the cornerstone without whom nothing can be built.' . . . His aim was that the Bible should be given a more central place in the life of the individual and of the churches."

It is interesting to note that Dr. Beguin underscored the principle of sale. He continued to emphasize that Bible societies in their distribution should remember the principle of sale, in contrast to methods of free distribution, as the soundest and most steadily dependable principle. He said once, "Free literature is largely suspect as propaganda, and in the process of sale the seller is generally required to bear witness to the value of the book and so create interest in its contents." Another of his interesting quotes: ". . . to get rid of the suggestion that a 'missionary' is some one who goes from a 'giving' country to a 'receiving' country, with the inevitable overtones of condescension, and paternalism which that evoke." Certainly here was a man of vision and considerable acumen used in his service worldwide!

Our denominational leaders, in both domestic and foreign areas, know very well what the ABS does for their particular areas, unpublicized

and perhaps unheard. Home Missions says, “. . . that our missionaries are very grateful for the services that the ABS does provide . . . . know that a great number of our men do use the materials that are available through the ABS. I have heard men say, from time to time, that they are grateful for what is being done. Personally I am very happy for what the American Bible Society is doing for Key 73. They have bent over backwards to serve the churches in their efforts to bring the gospel of Jesus Christ to the people of North America . . . .”

From the Secretary of Foreign Missions this comment: “The ABS is the long time experienced agency for Bible publishing and distribution which has continued its services in behalf of the churches world-wide, and that there continue to be available for our church and missions the ready help that can be utilized on the mission fields, especially such as counseling in matters of translation, publishing and distribution. . . . The ABS is truly a universal organization in that it has the tie-in with missions and Bible production programs all over the world so that its ministry is truly worldwide and ecumenical. . . . She does not presume to be a substitute for the mission by engaging in the work that the missions are called upon to do. She remains a service agency on behalf of the church and missions . . . .”

Gentlemen, this is your American Bible Society, a service arm and an unflinching help to our various church and denominational programs!

Is it possible that each church could remember this “unsung” service with one collection per year?

American Bible Society

John Last,  
Synodical Representative

**REPORT 22**  
**CANADIAN BIBLE SOCIETY**  
(Art. 18)

DEAR BROTHERS:

When the work of Bible Societies is considered, attention is usually focused on the translation and distribution of the Bible in whole or in part to foreign and less developed countries. This indeed is a major concern, and each year the Canadian Bible Society commits more than a third of its gross revenue to this goal of making the Scriptures available inexpensively in every language needed.

In my brief period of serving synod as its representative to the Canadian Bible Society, I have learned that the society is also concerned with encouraging the distribution of Scripture within the nation. Canada is a nation with many ethnic groups and languages, and the society serves this multi-lingual situation by making available through its bookstores and representatives copies of the Bible or portions of it in the various translations needed. In 1972, Scripture distribution in Canada totaled 2,712,600 Bibles, Testaments, portions, and selections in seventy-eight languages, more than one for every ten of Canada's approximately 22,000,000 population.

The Canadian Bible Society is a participant in Key 73. They, with their U.S. counterpart, the American Bible Society, have produced Scriptures in the *Today's English Version* (TEV) with a special Key 73 cover for use in the mass Bible distribution program of Key 73. Through their contacts with many churches and denominations across the nation, the district secretaries are assisting in organizing the distribution so that there is widest coverage and minimal overlapping.

As your representative, I endorse the work of the Canadian Bible Society, and request synod again to recommend the organization as worthy of the continued moral and financial support of our Canadian people.

Canadian Bible Society  
Ken Verhulst  
Synodical Representative

**REPORT 23**  
**CHRISTIAN LAYMEN'S LEAGUE**  
(Art. 52)

**DEAR BROTHERS:**

The Articles of Incorporation of the Christian Laymen's League state that its main purpose is "to promote increased Christian endeavors among its members in all of life, to further Christian fellowship, to work in association with denominational agencies in furthering the church of Christ, to help promote and further the evangelistic program of the Christian Reformed Church and agencies approved by the synod of the Christian Reformed Church, in the furtherance of the Kingdom of God, to motivate and activate the laity of the Christian Reformed Church to effectively share Christ with others." The means that the Christian Laymen's League is using to accomplish this purpose is through **BLAST OFF**, our Christian television program for children, and **ORBITOR BIBLE CLUBS**.

**BLAST OFF** is designed with the child in mind. Entertainment that provides inherent personal, social, and spiritual value, helping children see common-place realities in their many dimensions—personal, social, material, and religious. To show, for example, that there is more to the ordinary things around us than meets the eye; that even a drop of water is important because it plays a part in our personal lives, (the personal dimension); because it affects the life of mankind, (the social dimension); because it is fascinating in itself in the way it is composed or the way it acts according to laws of science, (the material dimension); and because in all these dimensions it is a striking and beautiful manifestation of God's power and creativity, his love for us, and an expression of his presence in our world, (the religious dimension).

Each half-hour program clearly presents the message of salvation through faith in Christ and a genuine invitation for children to write in to our office in order to be enrolled in the children's Bible study course written by the Rev. John De Vries and produced by the World Home Bible League. Over 6,000 children have written in for the Bible study course, which means that an average of 400 children write in every month and are enrolled in the Bible study course.

During 1972 the program was shown on sixteen different television stations throughout the United States. Contacts have been made in some of the areas where the program is being shown so that we are able to refer the names of children to Bible-believing churches in the area so that they can followup and be used by God to further lead and guide the children into a right relationship with our heavenly Father and on into the church. The Christian Laymen's League hopes to develop the follow-up program to a much greater extent in 1973.

The Christian Laymen's League feels that the television program is not just an end in itself, but should also, and possibly primarily, be used as a means to an end—namely a way of getting in contact with children so that person-to-person contact and follow-up can be made. This will then also be a way of meeting their mandate which is mainly "to activate and motivate the laity of the church to become involved in reaching out for Christ."

Thirty-nine complete, one-half hour programs have been produced; and as soon as they have the necessary funds, they will begin production on another series of thirty-nine one-half hour programs.

At present, there is a great deal of interest on the part of some Canadian broadcasters in our BLAST OFF program, and it is hoped that it will be used to develop a one-hour program in Canada that will be seen on cable television.

### ORBITOR BIBLE CLUBS

A complete series of lessons has been written and printed for a three-year period. They have been working very closely with the Calvinette and Calvinist Cadet organizations in producing this material so that there is no overlapping, but rather an effort to complement one another. Both of these organizations, in fact, are using the material. The Calvinist Cadets will be using it to reach younger children, and the Calvinettes are encouraging their Junior Counselors to use the material as their own personal means of reaching out into the community, and therefore, reach boys and girls for Jesus Christ.

The lessons are written to teach youngsters from six to twelve years of age. They are complete in themselves as each lesson includes stories, games, handcraft projects, discussions, suggested songs, counselor's helps, and a variety of other materials designed to assist any Christian in reaching boys and girls for Jesus Christ. The lessons are especially designed so that with a minimum of preparation Christian mothers or young people can effectively conduct an ORBITOR BIBLE CLUB in their home, school, church, or backyard—in fact, any place where a group of children can meet.

In approximately another month the Christian Laymen's League will have the ORBITOR BIBLE CLUB stories available on cassette tapes, thereby making the course the kind of tool that anyone can use. For example, if someone feels that he is not able to tell the story, he can use the cassette tapes on which the stories have been recorded and then follow the discussions in the lesson material and help the children with the rest of the suggestions found in the ORBITOR BIBLE CLUB material.

During 1972 some four hundred ORBITOR BIBLE CLUBS were conducted throughout the United States and Canada. Undoubtedly, over one thousand adults were actively involved on a weekly basis using the ORBITOR BIBLE CLUB material as their means of reaching boys and girls with the Gospel of Christ. Christian Laymen's League sees this, too, as one of the ways in which they are "to motivate and activate the laity of the Christian Reformed Church to effectively share Christ with others."

The Christian Laymen's League desperately needs the continued prayers and financial support of the Christian Reformed Church.

The board members of the Christian Laymen's League are as follows: Lee Plas, National President—owner and President of Lee's Food Center.

Herman Petersen, Vice-President—President of Dickinson Printing.  
Henry Driesenga, Secretary—Executive Secretary of the Calvinist Cadet Corps.

Roger Prose, Treasurer—owner and President of Prose Five-and-Dime Stores.

Roger Roodvoets—President and Chairman of Laser Alignment Systems.

William Van Tongeren—Founder of Mercury Building Service.

Roger Vos—Manager of Woodland Sports Center.

Arie Ver Kaik—Child-Care Supervisor, Christian Youth Homes, Wedgewood Acres.

Bruce Cheadle—owner and President of Jobber's Warehouse Service, Inc.

Kenneth Jordan—owner of Beacon Light Christian Nursing Home.

Ralph Veenstra—employed at Lear Siegler, Inc.

In addition to the volunteer board, the full-time, paid staff consists of:

Willis Timmer, Executive Director of the Christian Laymen's League. His time and salary is equally divided between the Christian Laymen's League and Project Bibles for Mexico.

Mart Keuning, responsible for scripting, editing and production of the children's television program, BLAST OFF, as well as the scripting and editing of the ORBITOR lesson material, salary paid by the Christian Laymen's League.

Alice Zuidersma, secretary of the Christian Laymen's League. Being the only secretary employed at present, her tasks are numerous and varied to say the least. Salary paid by the Christian Laymen's League.

In addition, there are a number of non-staff volunteer workers; and because there are so many of them, we will not at this point mention their names because undoubtedly we will fail to mention each and every one.

The road that the Christian Laymen's League has travelled has not been necessarily smooth. Many problems have faced us from time to time—particularly those of a financial nature. The board and staff, however, remains dedicated to carry out the goals and ideals of the Christian Laymen's League. They go forward in the firm confidence and faith that the indispensable blessings of Almighty God are with this effort to complete the work that has begun to his glory.

#### *Recommendation:*

As synodical representative, I recommend that 1) synod continue to name a representative to the Christian Laymen's League and 2) synod recommend the continuation of placing the Christian Laymen's League on the approved list of non-denominational causes for financial support.

Christian Laymen's League

George Holwerda, Synodical Representative

## REPORT 24

## DORDT COLLEGE

(Art. 25)

## DEAR BROTHERS:

Dordt College, which has now completed its eighteenth year of operation, continues to enjoy the favor of God's blessings which was evident in many ways again this past year. As one who lives in close contact with the college and its many activities, I'm very pleased to submit this brief report on items of interest and progress at Dordt College.

Total enrollment for the 1972-73 school year was 955 students. This is approximately the same as the previous year. The college continues to attract a substantial and growing number of students from outside the immediate midwest area. This past year, over 55% of the student body were from more distant locations. Dordt's students come from twenty-five states, five Canadian provinces and one foreign country.

About half of the student body is enrolled in the primary and secondary education courses. Dordt's education majors who graduated last year did very well in finding positions. All but a very few of these people found teaching positions. Today, there are hundreds of Dordt alumni who are teaching in various locations throughout the Reformed community. Based on comment and reports that the college receives from the various schools, these graduates confirm by their faith and conduct what Dordt has claimed to be the goal of its entire campus program.

Besides the teacher education program, business administration has become one of the more popular programs with 13% of the students enrolled. Some fifty-two students, an increase of five over the previous year, are pursuing the Pre-Seminary course. The remainder of the students are studying in a variety of programs such as Medical Technology, Medicine, Law, Nursing, etc.

In last year's report, it was noted that Dordt has received full accreditation from the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. This was the result, of course, of much effort in the time-consuming work of self-evaluation and reporting to North Central. Recently, Dordt was notified that its self-study report is being used as model for other colleges now seeking accreditation. The Associate Executive Secretary of the North Central Association described it this way: "Dordt College has submitted a really distinctive self-study report emphasizing an evaluation of the impact that the college was making on its students in contrast to the usual statistical reports on the status of the institution."

As an institution, Dordt has always been committed to serious communal Christian scholarship. Dordt is presently alive with such scholarship, the evidence for which can be observed in many of its various activities.

The standing Purposes Committee, representing a wide cross section of the faculty, meets regularly to review and give serious study to the purposes and goals of the college. Whatever issues are agreed upon to be of significance in the understanding and implementation of Dordt's goals and purposes and which are, by the same token, crucial in the maintenance and promotion of the Reformed faith, are carefully studied and discussed. When a common position is reached, these subjects are presented to the entire faculty for further debate and refinement. This procedure has been very effective in removing misunderstandings, deepening insights, and uniting the faculty in its basic role.

Also, the theologians and philosophers on the Dordt faculty meet regularly with the College President to engage in an ongoing discussion of basic issues in these areas.

Another innovation in this connection which is of significance is the initiation of a faculty publication, *Pro Rege*. It is important that the academic community outside of Dordt benefit from the thinking that is going on at the college. Dordt is making a distinctive and worthwhile contribution to the academic world through this publication. Furthermore, such a publication reveals the fundamental agreement in perspective which characterizes the faculty. It also gives the Dordt faculty an excellent opportunity to remain close to the people and give the constituents a better understanding of the biblical norms that guide the faculty in their particular fields of study.

As part of the idea of continuing Christian communal scholarship, Dordt students are participating in the Evangelism Thrust in a unique and interesting way. In connection with a program worked out with the Rev. Wesley Smedes of the Denominational Home Missions Board and the Evangelism Thrust program, Dordt students sponsored a series of presentations during the school year which were designed to emphasize the relevancy of a Christian commitment to all of life and learning. Position papers were prepared on many different aspects of life and learning at the college. These papers will be published in booklet form at a later date and presented to the Home Missions Committee.

The annual operational budget of the college now totals close to \$1,700,000, of which 75% is met by student fees and tuition. The other 25% must come from gift support. We do not hesitate to talk about the generous, loyal support Dordt has received from God's people. The direct constituency support for Dordt has been truly outstanding.

The keystone of Dordt's gift support program has been the quota-relief system by the six Christian Reformed Classes of the Midwest, namely, Classes Minnesota North, Minnesota South, Northcentral Iowa, Orange City, Pella, and Sioux Center. Nearly all the churches of these classes submit their full quota-relief amounts plus an additional \$4.00 per family. The liberal support of the constituency also provides over \$60,000 in the annual Fall Foundation Day drive. Offerings of various churches throughout the United States and Canada also constitute a

vital source of financial help for Dordt and we certainly hope and pray that churches will continue to support Dordt in this way.

The college still has an indebtedness on its various academic buildings of over \$600,000, the interest and debt repayment on which Dordt must seek to raise through its spring Debt Reduction Program. Contributions to this campaign totaled over \$50,000 last year.

In speaking of the various aspects of the college and its campus life, we are compelled to conclude by coming back to the main concern of Dordt College and that is this: nothing at Dordt College will or should succeed if the school fails to be true to its basic commitment as a Christian, Calvinistic College. Learning and conduct at Dordt must be solidly based upon the Word of God and find agreement with the best in our Reformed tradition.

The college pledges itself daily to this high responsibility before our Lord and his people and earnestly seeks your prayers that God may bless the school's efforts. I wholeheartedly commend Dordt College to you for continued support and interest in its program and well-being.

Dordt College

Nicholas Vogelzang

Synodical Representative

**REPORT 25**  
**FAITH, PRAYER, AND TRACT LEAGUE**  
(Art. 16)

**DEAR BROTHERS:**

It is a pleasure to report on the ministry of the Faith, Prayer, and Tract League in 1972, which God in his providence has been using to make known the way of salvation at home and abroad.

The request for tracts has been so great that in eleven of the twelve months more tracts were sent out than in any previous like month. In 1972 thirty-five million tracts were sent out which was an increase of three million over 1971.

The Faith, Prayer, and Tract League supplies millions of tracts free; both in English, but especially in a dozen foreign languages. We supply S.W.I.M. teams with all the tracts they request, as well as churches and individuals who cannot afford to purchase them.

Our foreign programs have grown. Many are under the supervision of Christian Reformed missionaries. This year tracts were finally printed in Lingala—only to have the missionaries sent out of Zaire about the time they were to be shipped. After a lapse of some years, we provided a printing of two hundred thousand in Korea. Reports from India and Indonesia as well as letters received from other users of our tracts indicate they are being used in the salvation of souls.

Mr. John Brondsema serves as a very efficient manager. He writes most of the tracts, supervises their production and distribution; supervises the staff of twenty-five to thirty employees; designs all advertising programs; and oversees all foreign programs.

We have moved into our new building. It was dedicated on September 18 to be used for the distribution of the glorious gospel of salvation in Jesus Christ throughout the world by means of tracts. We urge you to join us in prayers of thanksgiving for the new quarters which were so urgently needed.

Realizing that our primary task is to get out the gospel of Jesus Christ, the board has increased its 1973 foreign program budget 50% over 1972; an increase from \$17,000 in 1972 to \$25,000 in 1973. The situations in India, Indonesia and elsewhere require haste.

For this reason the board desires your assistance in this world-wide ministry by recommending the league to our churches for their moral

and financial support, and that you appoint a representative to serve on its board.

Faith, Prayer, and Tract League  
Peter Doot, Synodical Representative

Board of Directors  
Faith, Prayer and Tract League  
Grand Rapids, Michigan

Gentlemen:

We have examined the balance sheet, resulting from cash transactions of Faith, Prayer and Tract League as of December 31, 1972, and the related statements of cash receipts and expenses and net worth and changes in financial position for the year then ended. Our examination was made in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards, and accordingly included such tests of the accounting records and such other auditing procedures as we considered necessary in the circumstances.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements, pages 2 through 5, present fairly the financial position of Faith, Prayer and Tract League at December 31, 1972 resulting from cash transactions and the results of its operations for the year then ended on a basis in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles, recognized as appropriate for organizations of this type, applied on a basis consistent with that of the preceding year.

Respectfully submitted,  
Vannatter, Howell & Co

FAITH, PRAYER AND TRACT LEAGUE

STATEMENT OF CASH RECEIPTS AND EXPENSES AND NET WORTH

YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 1972 and 1971

	December 31, -----	
	1972	1971
<b>RECEIPTS</b>		
Sales	\$ 261,245	\$ 214,378
Donations: Churches	21,394	18,934
Other	22,236	16,433
Interest	618	645
<b>TOTAL CASH RECEIPTS</b>	<b>\$ 305,493</b>	<b>\$ 250,390</b>
<b>OPERATING EXPENSES</b>		
Printing	\$ 110,728	\$ 99,394
Postage	47,114	38,854
Advertising	11,657	11,512
Supplies	15,612	8,861
Salaries and Wages	44,393	37,685
Employee benefits	3,116	2,041
Payroll taxes	2,614	2,123
Artists fees	2,131	2,729
Rent	2,185	3,240
General insurance	825	728
Electricity	856	343
Telephone	488	304
Trash and snow removal	158	119
Property taxes	1,214	1,109
Managers car allowance	860	825
India branch expenses	7,930	8,711

Spain branch expenses	3,715	3,198
Other countries branch expenses	5,722	6,243
Bank service charges	969	1,013
Audit and accounting	1,235	880
Freight	27	177
Sales refunds	96	267
State sales tax	514	492
Board meeting expenses	680	418
Travel expenses	41	104
Repairs and maintenance	142	77
Interest	974	-0-
Miscellaneous	724	340
	<hr/>	<hr/>
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	\$ 266,720	\$ 231,787
	<hr/>	<hr/>
EXCESS OF RECEIPTS OVER EXPENSES BEFORE DEPRECIATION	\$ 38,773	\$ 18,603
DEPRECIATION	<u>3,025</u>	<u>1,486</u>
	<hr/>	<hr/>
EXCESS OF RECEIPTS OVER EXPENSES	\$ 35,748	\$ 17,117
EQUITY, JANUARY 1,	<u>39,208</u>	<u>22,091</u>
EQUITY, DECEMBER 31	<u>\$ 74,956</u>	<u>\$ 39,208</u>

## BALANCE SHEET

DECEMBER 31, 1972 and 1971

	<u>December 31,</u>	
	<u>1972</u>	<u>1971</u>
<u>ASSETS</u>		
<u>CURRENT ASSETS</u>		
Cash on hand and in bank - Note 1	\$ 6,122	\$ 20,863
Accounts receivable - NSF checks	64	-0-
Postage deposits	392	1,792
	<hr/>	<hr/>
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	<u>\$ 6,578</u>	<u>\$ 22,655</u>
<u>PROPERTY, PLANT AND EQUIPMENT - AT COST - Note 2 and 3</u>		
Land	\$ 10,745	\$ 8,002
Building	88,274	3,311
Land improvements	4,150	-0-
Furniture and fixtures	18,102	5,992
Machinery	1,756	-0-
Leasehold improvements	-0-	4,643
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	\$123,027	\$ 21,948
Less accumulated depreciation (straight-line)	3,180	3,767
	<hr/>	<hr/>
NET PROPERTY, PLANT AND EQUIPMENT	<u>\$119,847</u>	<u>\$ 18,181</u>
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	<u>\$126,425</u>	<u>\$ 40,836</u>
	<hr/>	<hr/>
<u>LIABILITIES AND EQUITY</u>		
<u>CURRENT LIABILITIES</u>		
Current maturities on long term debt	\$ 1,500	\$ -0-
Accrued payroll taxes	1,252	1,453
Accrued sales tax	217	175
	<hr/>	<hr/>
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES	<u>\$ 2,969</u>	<u>\$ 1,628</u>

## LONG TERM DEBT

Mortgage payable bank 7% contra property  
payable at \$200 per month - net of current  
maturities

\$ 48,500      \$ -0-

## EQUITY

\$ 74,956      \$ 39,208

\$126,425      \$ 40,836

## STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN FINANCIAL POSITION

YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 1972 and 1971

	<u>December 31,</u> <u>1972</u>	<u>1971</u>
WORKING CAPITAL PROVIDED BY		
Operations	\$ 35,748	\$ 17,117
Depreciation	3,025	1,486
Increase in long term debt	<u>48,500</u>	<u>-0-</u>
TOTAL AVAILABLE	<u>\$ 87,273</u>	<u>\$ 18,603</u>
WORKING CAPITAL APPLIED TO		
Additions to property, plant and equipment	<u>\$ 104,691</u>	<u>\$ 14,258</u>
TOTAL FUNDS APPLIED	<u>\$ 104,691</u>	<u>\$ 14,258</u>
INCREASE (DECREASE) IN WORKING CAPITAL	<u>(\$ 17,418)</u>	<u>\$ 4,345</u>
ADDITIONS TO (REDUCTIONS OF) WORKING CAPITAL		
Cash	(\$ 14,741)	\$ 2,696
Accounts receivable	64	( 14)
Deposits	( 1,400)	( 570)
Current maturities	( 1,500)	-0-
Bank overdraft	-0-	2,710
Accrued payroll tax	201	( 399)
Accrued sales tax	( 42)	( 78)
	<u>\$ 17,418)</u>	<u>\$ 4,345</u>

## NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 1972 and 1971

Note 1 - Cash on hand and in bank consisted of the following:

	<u>1972</u>	<u>1971</u>
Petty cash funds	\$ 100	\$ 100
Checking account	210	5,219
Savings accounts	72	5,135
Certificate of deposit	-0-	5,000
Savings certificate	<u>5,740</u>	<u>5,409</u>
	<u>\$ 6,122</u>	<u>\$ 20,863</u>

Note 2 - The company leased a building in Grand Rapids, Michigan in 1971 and part of 1972. During late 1971 a decision was made to construct a building and move in at termination of the existing lease.

Note 3 - Faith, Prayer and Tract League followed the practice of expensing fixed assets in the year of acquisition up to 1968. In 1968 this practice was changed to capitalizing fixed asset acquisitions and depreciating these assets. The fixed assets as shown in the balance sheet represents only the fixed assets acquired since this change in practice in 1968.

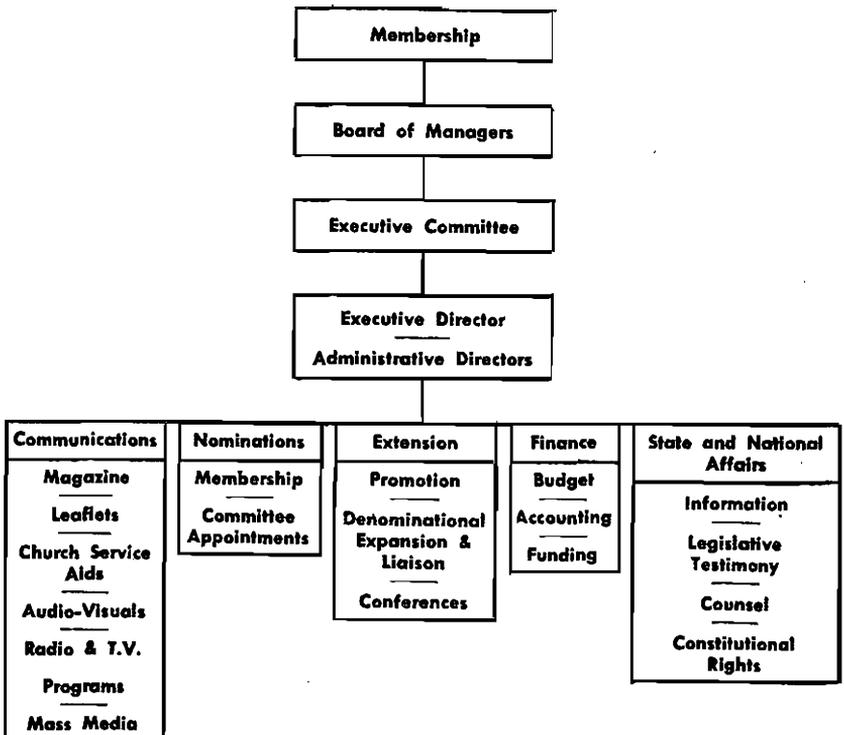
**REPORT 26**  
**LORD'S DAY ALLIANCE OF THE UNITED STATES**  
 (Art. 18)

DEAR BROTHERS:

The Lord's Day Alliance was organized in 1888 and is presently located in the City of Atlanta, Georgia. The move to Atlanta from New York City was made in 1970. Control of the Alliance is by a board of managers composed of representatives of fourteen denominations and three state alliances, together with certain "at-large members" selected by the board. Those denominations that are in harmony with the objectives of the Alliance are welcome to nominate representatives to the board.

To help enlighten those delegates who are unfamiliar with the Alliance, the following chart will help illustrate the organization of the Alliance—

**ORGANIZATION AND PROGRAM**



The purpose of the Alliance is: "to promote the first day of the week, the Lord's Day, as the Christian day of renewal and worship according to the Scriptures; and for that purpose to gather and diffuse information, to publish documents, to use the press, to cause public addresses to be made and use other means as shall be expedient and proper to the end that the blessings of the Lord's Day shall be secured for all people."

The executive director, the Rev. Marion G. Bradwell, conducts the business of the Alliance from offices leased until 1975 in the Methodist Center, Suite 409, 159 Forrest Avenue, N.E., Atlanta, Georgia 30303. The following are the officers of the Alliance for the coming year: The Rev. Charles A. Platt, S.T.D., First Presbyterian Church, Ridgeweek, N.J., President; the Rev. Andrew R. Bird, D.D., First Presbyterian Church, Norfolk, Va., Vice-President; Mr. Joe M. Abbot, Peoples Financial Corporation, Marietta, Ga., Secretary; Mr. E. Larry Eidson, Trust Company of Georgia, Atlanta, Ga., Treasurer; and Mr. Julius B. Poppinga, Newark, N.J., and Mr. John A. Nix, Atlanta, Ga., Counsel.

The Communication Committee has the responsibility for the publication, preparation and dissemination of all media of the Alliance. This committee reports that there has been a renewed interest in the publication "Sunday—The Publication for the Lord's Day." In place of the four-page format used in recent years, a new "digest" will be re-introduced. Thus, it will be possible to publish more of the interesting materials that come across the desk of the Executive Director. Our churches then, can be kept informed on the continued struggle and interest to keep the Lord's Day *holy*. This publication is sent to all contributors of \$5.00 or more per year to the Alliance. More than eighty-five thousand pieces of material have been distributed by mail, at conventions, or at general assemblies. This committee reports that two of the highlights of the year were the "Explo '72" and the "Kiwaniis International." The decals, bumper stickers and tracts are still very much in demand. Reprinting of "Count the Cost" was necessary. A request for eighty packets from the Middle Baptist Association is a sample of the type of requests during the past year. Unfortunately, our radio and T.V. spots production is in financial difficulty. Further production of these spots awaits more money. Financial backing is needed. The board is confident, however, that these will yet be produced.

The State and National Affairs Committee continues to be effective in the field of "Sunday Civil Rights," and also with individuals who are in danger of economic privation and/or unemployment because of their Lord's Day convictions. The following, I am sure, will be of interest to the delegates of synod: 1. This committee was in touch with a very aggressive group of pastors in the District of Columbia, whose organization is known as the "League of Universal Justice and Goodwill," and have come together to answer the threat of the wholesale commercialization of the Lord's Day. They prepared bumper stickers and window cards and made available policy statements and releases to all the churches and the media. The window cards say, "Don't Forget Your Family Prayers—Save Our Day of Rest and Worship . . ." 2. A group of the Alliance Board members and other interested citizens in Georgia are actively engaged in seeking to see that suitable Sunday legislation is

placed on the state's books. Attempts are being made to introduce into the state legislature a law that will be in accord with the constitution of the state, and that will be fair to all merchants and at the same time uphold the sanctity of the Lord's Day. 3. An invitation was received on June 14th by the chairman to participate in a conference in the Department of Labor in Washington to discuss a drafted revision of guidelines to eliminate religious discrimination by federal contractors. Great strides were made for the protection of those who worship on the first day of the week. These discussions are still in progress.

The Extension Committee reports that denominational participation in the Alliance has grown from five to fourteen in the last six years. Negotiations are still in progress with others for connection with the Lord's Day Alliance. The Extension Committee reports for 1972 that they had several very thrilling experiences by being at new conventions, etc., for the first time. The Southern Baptist Convention in Philadelphia; the Quadriennial General Conference of the Wesleyan Church at Junaluska, N.C.; the General Assembly of the Church of the Nazarene in Miami, Fla.; the Executive Council of the Church of God at Cleveland, Tenn.; and the General Conference of the United Methodist Church in Atlanta, Ga. were all visited for the first time. These visits open doors and certainly help to interpret the work of the Alliance. The results should prove to strengthen and broaden the work of this organization. Our director of information services was in charge of a booth and distributed twenty-four thousand pieces of material at "Explo '72."

The Finance Committee manages the Lord's Day Alliance's investment program, plus the handling of the financial records. Last year the investment program produced \$25,519.00 in dividends for various of the alliance programs. This was an increase of \$1,020.00 over the 1971 income. The total income for the alliance in 1972 amounted to \$51,358.00. This too, was an increase over the previous year. Of this total income, we can proudly report that our churches contributed a total of \$8,466.22. In 1971 the alliance established the "Fellowship of One Hundred." This fellowship is made up of those individuals and churches who contributed \$100 or more to the alliance. The fellowship is continuing to grow and now boasts a membership of eighty. The goal of the alliance is to bring the total "Fellowship" up to at least five hundred. The Christian Reformed Church now has thirty-four churches who are members of this fellowship. We are grateful to our God that our churches are responding to the financial needs of the Alliance.

The Lord's Day Alliance conceives its chief responsibility to be the implementing of the concepts that Sunday is the LORD'S DAY. To this end the alliance believes that for many people Sunday is the only day in the week when they can have the time to render a service to the church and to the Lord. The church should supply guidance to her people so that they will be able to give freely of their time as well as their possessions. Thus the alliance looks to the church and individuals for support, both financially and with prayers and supplications, so that its work may indeed be meaningful. I was appointed as the synodical representative by the Synod of 1971 and attended the board meetings held in October of 1972 in New York City and in February of 1973 in Atlanta, Georgia.

I believe in the work of the Lord's Day Alliance and wholeheartedly commend this organization to our people everywhere. I can assure the delegates to the Synod of 1973 that the alliance is busy in every possible way to keep Sunday truly God's Day.

*Recommendations to Synod:*

1. Maintain representation to the Lord's Day Alliance Board.
2. That our churches be urged to become members of the "Fellowship of One Hundred" thus making available to the Lord's Day Alliance additional funds so that many of the programs being proposed by the alliance can be put into effect.

Lord's Day Alliance of the United States  
Fred Fisher, Synodical Representative

**REPORT 27**  
**LORD'S DAY ALLIANCE OF CANADA**  
(Art. 31)

DEAR BROTHERS:

The Lord's Day Alliance of Canada has made application for Incorporation by Letters Patent which will come before parliament in July. Since the new board cannot be constituted until after the date of incorporation the annual meeting has been postponed until September. The complete annual report will be presented at that time. However, the secretary has kindly provided me with material for this report to synod.

I have informed the secretary of the decision of Synod 1972 regarding membership of our church in the LDA of Canada.

The Christian Reformed Churches in Canada contributed last year \$1,202.49 to the work of the LDA.

The secretary has made a tour of Western Canada, with appearances on radio and television arranged by a public relations firm, reaching an estimated audience of three million people. This included open line shows. Another tour was made of the maritime provinces. The work in Ontario has been centered on the *Ad Hoc Committee on Sunday Retail Selling*, composed of the LDA and twenty-four supermarket chains, labor organizations, retail merchants and consumer associations. This committee is conducting an advertising campaign inviting citizens to send a coupon to the Premier expressing their opposition to Sunday retail selling.

Other activities of the LDA included advising the Board of Trade in Halifax, Nova Scotia, and visiting the Deputy Attorneys General of the Provinces urging them to bring their provincial Lord's Day Acts up to date and to enforce the Act wherever possible. The Government of New Brunswick has introduced a new bill called "The Closing of Retail Establishment Acts" which will limit the number of stores open on Sundays.

I hope to present a full report with additional documentation to the Council of Christian Reformed Churches in Canada, meeting in November, 1973, for its evaluation of this new approach.

Meanwhile, I request synod to place the Lord's Day Alliance of Canada on the list of causes recommended for financial support for 1974.

Lord's Day Alliance of Canada  
Gerald Nonnekes

Synodical Representative

**REPORT 28**  
**THE LUKE SOCIETY, INC.**  
(Art. 26)

DEAR BROTHERS:

It is a privilege to report to you concerning the activities of the Luke Society, which was formed in 1964 to encourage a more personal involvement of Christian Reformed physicians and dentists in the medical aspects of missions. We appreciate the encouragement and endorsement received from previous synods, as well as the moral and financial support from our people. We have assisted in the medical work already in progress under the auspices of our denomination. In addition, our desire to provide support to physicians and dentists within our church who are led into mission projects has resulted in new and imaginative programs. It is our desire that our efforts and also our commitment to the denomination and its causes will enable synod and other agencies within our church to turn to the Luke Society for assistance and cooperation.

*Promotional Material*

Promotional material is available which relates to our two main projects, the Rehoboth Christian Hospital and Mississippi Evangelistic Medicine (Cary, Miss.). The material ranges in its appeal to both young and old. There is a slide tape production called "Keepers of the Temple." This production was prepared by Dr. Roger Hamstra and Mr. Don Van Heukelem. It is excellent for young people and teenagers in particular. The aim is to attract students into the health care profession. The Mississippi Evangelistic Medicine project is well presented by a closed loop reel program.

*Medical Missionary Scholarship Fund*

The society has a fund which is available to Christian Reformed students who feel led into the health care field and who are in need of financial help. The churches are encouraged to notify the Luke Society of potential candidates for this money. Students receiving these funds are encouraged to repay it by working within a medical mission project.

*Membership*

As of this writing, the Luke Society has 246 members and affiliates. There are many Christian Reformed medical and dental professionals who have not joined our organization and it is our desire that they too would join us in our missionary effort. Since communication between our members is essential for the maintenance of a vital organization, regional

meetings are arranged periodically for fellowship and for sharing those things that God is doing through our society. In recent months there were two such meetings; one in Denver, Colorado, and the other in Allendale, Michigan.

The Board of Directors is made up of seven members and meets four or five times a year. At the main office, Mrs. Barbara Waller, along with three assistants, efficiently handles the mail, contributions, and carries out the board's directions and policies. The Luke Society address is: The Luke Society, Inc., 3401 S. Bannock, Suite 213, Englewood, Colorado 80110

#### *Extern Committee*

The Extern Committee's function is to recruit Christian Reformed third and fourth year medical students for a two or three month tour of duty either at the Rehoboth Christian Hospital or with the Mississippi Evangelistic Medicine project. Through the years quite a number of externs have volunteered and have rendered invaluable service in these projects. We urge pastors and consistories to inform us of medical students in their churches who may be interested in such an experience.

#### *Mississippi Evangelistic Medicine*

Dr. Peter Boelens, Jr., continues his fine work in Cary, Mississippi. (Cary is northwest of Jackson, the capital of Mississippi, and is about twelve miles from the Louisiana border.) The Cary Christian Health Center is presently serving 350 families. In 1972, 3,367 patients were diagnosed and treated at the clinic. Over fifteen hundred laboratory procedures were carried out. The very capable and dedicated nurses delivered 101 babies, of which one was stillborn and one was premature. Since Dr. Boelens states that in this section of the country, the average number of premature babies runs about 14%, it is evident that prenatal care is successfully carried out. Mr. Bruce Bouma, a senior medical student at the University of Michigan, served a three month tour as an extern in Mississippi during the first three months of 1973.

During 1972, Dr. Boelens cared for fifty-eight hospitalized patients and supervised the care of all pediatric patients in Kuhn Memorial Hospital in Vicksburg, Mississippi. Elvinah Spoelstra, a social worker formerly in Korea, has joined the staff at the clinic as of May, 1972, and has added considerable impetus to the expanding work. In addition, Dr. Boelens is training two public health nurses in the physical and developmental assessment of children and the treatment of minor pediatric illnesses.

The summer program of 1972 was highlighted by a Daily Vacation Bible School and community program for the young people of the Cary area. This has helped the churches in the area to grow. Approximately one hundred children and young people attended the Bible study groups. Ten young people and two adults from Grand Haven, Michigan, conducted the Bible school. They were assisted by five college students who worked there most of the summer.

The Mississippi Evangelistic Medicine project has secured a ten-year lease for a vacant school in Cary. They have arranged this with the

County Board of Supervisors for the nominal fee of \$50 per year. The building is structurally sound but needs extensive repairs and renovation for maximum utilization. It will contain the Head Start program, a Girl's Club, Bible School and classes, and a Thrift Shop where clothing and shoes can be distributed to the poor. Surrounding the school is a five acre plot of ground that could be converted into a fenced-in recreational facility. An estimated \$50,000 was needed for the renovation of the school; however, volunteer help and donated supplies reduced this figure substantially. This endeavor is an outgrowth of the initial medical work and indicates the effective impact of Dr. Boelens' work. The Luke Society believes this to be a worthy cause deserving our financial support.

### *Rehoboth Christian Hospital*

Rehoboth Christian Hospital is governed by a local board of governors elected by the Luke Society. The board consists of twelve people, seven of whom are members of the Christian Reformed Church. Mr. Paul D. Lang replaced Mr. Albion Afman as the Hospital Administrator, following the interim services of Mr. Clarence Westenberg. Mr. Lang comes to Rehoboth with considerable experience and with good recommendations. He is committed to maintaining the Christian nature of the hospital, which continues to be the primary basis for our involvement.

The unreimbursed care amounted to \$96,786 in 1971. In 1972, it amounted to \$83,157.

The physicians of the hospital are planning the construction of a medical arts building which will be adjacent to the hospital. The Luke Society and the hospital Board of Governors have encouraged this addition which will provide the needed outpatient facilities and maintain the close relationship of the physicians to the hospital.

The spiritual responsibility at the hospital was transferred to the Luke Society by the Synod of 1972. The Board of Governors and the Luke Society continue to recognize the need for a full-time chaplain and efforts to obtain one are in progress. The Luke Society has met with the denominational Chaplain Committee seeking their advice and assistance in finding a full-time chaplain for the Rehoboth Christian Hospital. When the time comes a call will be extended by one of the churches of Classis Rocky Mountain.

During this past year, the Rev. Rolf Veenstra, pastor of the Rehoboth Christian Reformed Church, has continued to visit patients at the hospital; in addition, he has provided guidelines in defining the nature of a Christian Hospital. An inservice dialogue among the department heads on the topic "Christianity at Work" has been arranged by the hospital administration, inviting several Christian ministers from the community to lead the discussion.

### *Recommendations*

As synodical representative, I recommend that:

1. Synod grant a Luke Society representative the privilege of the floor when this report is under consideration.

2. Synod continue to place the Luke Society, Inc., on the approved list of non-denominational causes recommended for financial support.

*Grounds:*

- a. The continuing need for medical supplies and mortgage payment assistance at Rehoboth Christian Hospital which the Luke Society operates at synod's behest.
- b. The care of indigent patients at Rehoboth Christian Hospital.
- c. The need for medicine, equipment, and assistants in the Mississippi Evangelistic Medicine project.
- d. The continuation of the Medical Missionary Scholarship program to assist in staffing Christian Reformed projects.

The Luke Society, Inc.

Everett van Reken, M.D.  
Synodical Representative

Luke Society Board of Directors 1973:

Henry Evenhouse, M.D., President  
Oak Lawn, Illinois

Bert De Groot, M.D., Vice President  
Seattle, Washington

William G. Bouman, M.D., Secretary  
Grand Rapids, Michigan

Peter A. Boelens, D.D.S., Treasurer  
Lansing, Illinois

Gary Vander Ark, M.D., President-Elect  
Denver, Colorado

Gerrit Kemme, M.D.,  
Zeeland, Mich.

**REPORT 29**  
**REFORMED BIBLE COLLEGE**  
(Art. 25)

DEAR BROTHERS:

As your representative for the Reformed Bible College I would like to present to you some of the outstanding happenings during this present thirty-third academic year. "The Lord has done great things whereof we are glad."

1. *Courses of Study*—RBC is authorized by the State of Michigan to offer a four-year course leading to the Bachelor of Religious Education Degree, and the two-year curriculum leading to the Associate in Religious Education Degree. The four-year program prepares a person for service in evangelism through local church or mission, while the two-year program prepares the technically trained person (teachers, nurses, aviators, secretaries, and the like) for service in the gospel. RBC also had many special students who attend for specialized programs of one or more semesters.

2. *Enrollment*—RBC is now at its highest enrollment in history. From ninety students in September 1970, 110 in September 1971, and 121 in January 1972, the enrollment rose to 165 in September 1972. Students come from Canada, the Netherlands, Indonesia, Greece, India, Malaysia, Nigeria, and Taiwan, as well as from the United States.

3. *Instruction*—One-third of all class hours is spent in the study of Bible and Reformed doctrine. Every student majors in this area. Minors now available at RBC are history, music, New Testament Greek, Social work, and Spanish. Furthermore, each student chooses to follow an area of concentration either in missions or in religious education. Such training equips the prospective worker for service in many types or specialties—evangelism, youth work, literacy, linguistics, administration, lay preaching, and other tasks.

4. *Faculty and staff*—During the 1972-1973 academic year, the Rev. John H. Schaal, academic dean, is completing his term of service at RBC. A member of the original board of the school, the Rev. Mr. Schaal has spent twenty-five years as teacher. He will be replaced as dean by Professor Harold Bruxvoort on July 1, 1973, although he will continue teaching through December. The Board of Trustees in March appointed the Rev. George Kroeze, pastor of Zion Reformed Church, Grandville, Michigan, to be the Rev. Mr. Schaal's successor as Professor of Bible.

5. *Mexico Summer Training Session*—RBC has continued a missionary orientation and recruitment program in Mexico since 1968. Fifty-four students, nurses, teachers, and other young adults participated in 1972. Mexico STS involves ten weeks of Spanish study, primitive living at Wycliffe Bible Translators' Jungle Camp, and several weeks of field training assignments. The splendid cooperation of many local congregations makes it possible for your people to participate in Mexico STS. A number of former STS participants now serve with the Christian Reformed Board of Foreign Missions in Mexico as well as with other missions elsewhere.

6. *Support*—RBC tuition continues to contribute a larger share of the required annual budget. Tuition now provides the largest single source of revenue (a great change from less than ten years ago, when no tuition was charged). However, church offerings and personal gifts continue to provide a large part of RBC income, making it possible for RBC to continue its ministry of training for evangelistic and missionary service. Contributions come from Christian Reformed, Reformed, Presbyterian, and other congregations.

7. *Name Change*—During the past year, the name of the school was changed from "Reformed Bible Institute" to "Reformed Bible College," as approved by the Michigan State Department of Treasury in March 1972.

8. *Alumni*—RBC alumni are serving today with home and foreign missions affiliated with several denominations as well as with numerous interdenominational agencies, such as Wycliffe Bible Translators, Christian Literature Crusade, Gospel Recordings, Missionary Aviation Fellowship, and other groups. Churches and agencies are directing an increasing number of requests to RBC for youth and education leaders for local church as well as for workers in evangelism. Only a few of these requests can be filled because the number of graduates is smaller than the number of requests.

9. *Guest Lecturer*—Among the many guest speakers who appear on RBC campus, one of the most significant was the Rev. Harvie M. Conn, Associate Professor of Missions and Apologetics, Westminster Theological Seminary, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, who delivered the second series of Baker Missions Lectures on March 12-14, speaking on "Luke's Theology of Missions."

We are profoundly thankful to God for his many mercies to Reformed Bible College. We covet the continued interest, prayers and support of Christian Reformed people. We pledge ourselves to serve with increasing faithfulness and excellence to train Christ's people for their work of ministry.

I am personally grateful for the privilege of serving as synodical representative for RBC, and I commend this cause for your continued support.

Reformed Bible College

Harry Vander Ark, Synodical Representative

REPORT 30  
THE EVANGELICAL LITERATURE LEAGUE  
(Art. 26)

DEAR BROTHERS:

With God's blessing the work of TELL has prospered another year. During the past year we have again been able to provide Latin American countries with nearly 20,000 books of Reformed persuasion and have also continued our free tract distribution to more than 1500 ministers, missionaries, and churches. The power of the written word is particularly evident in these countries where so little Christian literature is available. Numerous indications of the transforming power of the Gospel come by way of letters of gratitude sent to our office.

The work of TELL involves not only the distribution of many kinds of literature but also the choice and preparation of these. In addition to the thirty-five titles presently being distributed by TELL, we are in the process of preparing several other important works to be added to the list. I want to make mention of just a few of these:

17 volume *Commentary on the New Testament*, by Erdman  
*Reformed Dogmatics, an Introduction*, by Berkhof  
*Introduction to the Old Testament*, by Young  
*Pulpit Manual*, by Wolf  
several hymnals and song books

New books that have come from the printer to us during this past year include:

*The Biblical Basis for Infant Baptism*, by Small  
*Commentary on 1st Corinthians*, by Wagner  
*Walking With God (Meditations)*, by Boonstra

We are grateful to our Lord that his people continue to send in gifts making this work possible. There is much more that could be done with added gifts. We shall continue to labor for him whose kingdom will surely come. We are grateful for those who work for this cause: a board of dedicated laymen, the Director, Mr. Hubert Van Tol, the secretary, Mrs. Vonda Style, the Promotion Director, whose efforts reach to all the churches, Dr. William Rutgers, and also the part-time workers who give so much assistance.

Our prayer is that the many individuals, organizations, and churches will support us with their prayers and gifts for another year. We are ready and willing to provide a Financial Report to any church or organization that requests such. Brethren, pray that this work may prosper.

The Evangelical Literature League

David W. Bosscher  
Synodical Representative

**REPORT 31**  
**UNITED CALVINIST YOUTH**  
(Art. 25)

**DEAR DELEGATES:**

The three Divisions of United Calvinist Youth (Calvinettes, Cadets and the Young Calvinist Federation) continue to provide outstanding ministries for our youth. Many thousand Christian Reformed young people are involved in the more than fifteen hundred clubs and youth groups of the UCY.

This year a major effort called Youth Aflame trained thousands of UCY leaders to reach unchurched youth more effectively. Our church is indeed fortunate to have such a vital, ongoing ministry for youth.

We are pleased to present, herewith, our reports for this year.

Your Synodical Delegates on the UCY Board

**YOUNG CALVINIST FEDERATION**

The Young Calvinist ministries influence not only thousands of Christian Reformed young people, but are increasingly being used by the Lord to help other young people. The Servicemen's Ministry, which has long been one of the strong ties with their church home for our men who have been separated by the wars—hot and cold—of the last thirty years, has increasingly been a blessing to hundreds of young men not associated with our church. Letters and reports coming to Thelma Vander Hoven, our efficient and spiritually dedicated Servicemen's Secretary, indicate that many lives have been changed through this ministry of love and concern. Even though the numbers decrease, the outreach aspect of this ministry increases. And so it is with the ministries of INSIGHT and the leadership materials produced by YCF. Youth leaders and families in the Reformed Church in America and in other denominations as well, are beginning to use these materials.

Another great convention was held in Hamilton, Ontario, last summer, drawing together over twenty-two hundred young people and leaders from all parts of our denomination. The unifying influence of this annual event for our denomination is incalculable. Interest in this year's convention slated for Southern California, August 17-21, is very great with over sixteen hundred young people registered already by March 15. Dr. Joel Nederhood, of our Back to God Hour, will speak to the conventioners this year, and again, a program has been planned that not only appeals to young people "where they are at" but also acquaints them with the ministries of the church and presents challenges and meaningful opportunities for their own Christian service. The Federa-

tion's goal of helping youth to "know Christ and serve him always and everywhere" is behind every programming event, whether at the convention or throughout the year in hundreds of local activities in the forty-eight Leagues and 650 youth groups of the organization.

Fewer SWIM fields than previously were available for service this year. It is hoped that our church leaders will continue to recognize the tremendous training value of this and similar programs (such as the Pine Rest-YCF Christian Youth Corps, STS, Bonaire, etc.). If the vision of service is to remain alive among our young people, the church must remain active in providing arenas for training and development.

We thank God for his continuing blessing on all facets of the YCF ministries in a constantly changing cultural situation. The key to most of the effectiveness of these ministries is the local leader. As increased opportunities for training of these leaders is made available, local churches must encourage their participation and support their training for these ministries. The significant role that mature, dedicated and well-trained leaders can have in the local church's ministry among its own and neighborhood youth is just beginning to be adequately recognized. We would urge our synod to recommend and substantially provide for this training not only for YCF, but also for Calvinette and Cadet leaders so that they may not only minister effectively as youth leaders, but as *Calvinistic* youth leaders.

Marla Koning, Synodical Representative

### CALVINETTES

We, the Calvinette Board, are pleased to submit our annual report to the synod delegates.

"Project Philip," through the World Home Bible League, was the project in which we encouraged all the Calvinette clubs to participate. The goal set for each girl was \$5.00 to earn in any way she chose. A record, "Let the Whole World Know," was prepared especially for the project for each girl to sell. Approximately \$40,000 was earned for this project.

Our third annual convention was held at Calvin College on August 9, 10 and 11, 1972 with 270 counselors attending from all over the United States and Canada. One counselor from Australia was also present to give a brief talk on the sister organization in Australia.

Our program revision will be complete by summer. There will be a new program, Busy Bees, for grades 2 and 3 or 3 and 4 which is an introduction to club activities. The present junior and senior programs are being revised. A new advanced Calvinette program for grades 8-10 is a personality development course which is a two-year program. The material should be available for the season in the fall of 1973. Each club has the option to immediately start the new program or gradually work itself into it within two years.

The Calvinette organization has 552 clubs in the United States and Canada with fifty-nine Councils.

Youth Aflame seminars were well-received.

Our budget for this year will be \$114,124. Program revision costs are included. We still need your many prayers and financial support to carry on the program. We have so much for which to thank the Lord.

Sharon Blohm, Synodical Representative

### CALVINIST CADET CORPS

This is my first report as your synodical representative to the Calvinist Cadet Corps. My term of service began in September of 1972 although I had a bit of an introduction to Cadeting as it exists today while attending the annual Cadet Congress and Counselors Convention in August. It is my intention to report the impressions I've gathered in the past six months rather than statistics.

The first and outstanding impression I've gained of the Cadet movement has been one of *enthusiasm*. I refer to the attitude of counselors whom I've met in various ways. I refer to the way in which the last congress was conducted and the spirit which permeated those days. I refer to the Counselors' Convention held at Alma College last August. I refer to the spirit of those dedicated counselors who serve on the executive committee of the corps. I refer to the reports of both Cadets and counselors as they tell of the exciting things which took place at the Third International Camporee last July. The whole Cadet movement is permeated with a spirit of enthusiasm and boldness—an eagerness to move ahead in the work of our Lord.

Another lasting impression I've formed has to do with *efficiency*. Never have I had the opportunity to work with men who were so concerned to handle time, money, and abilities with as little waste as possible and in a way which is always directed to a goal. I was struck by this at the Congress meeting. It was so much more than a get-together of counselors with similar interests. It was a time of intense and concentrated WORK in which every counselor in attendance was busy planning the future of cadeting. At congress I saw how Christian men, working together, could set goals, adopt budgets, commit themselves, and move forward with vision and confidence in this work of God. Efficiency also marks the conduct of executive committee meetings each month. Little time and effort are wasted in non-productive activities. Much is accomplished in a short time. Efficiency marks the work of the director, administrative assistant, secretary, and all connected with the corps office. Much of this can be attributed to the cassette communication system developed for the exchange of information between the office and the councils and club out in the field.

A third impression I have is that of *effectiveness*. Cadeting has a goal. It is a ministry to boys. And all of its programming, planning, helping and producing is aimed at leading the boy into a closer relationship to Jesus Christ. Self-contained training programs have been developed for use by the counselors in order to prepare them for a better ministry. New avenues of publicity are being used to challenge more churches to adopt this ministry. Counselors are growing, clubs are increasing, boys are being reached. The Cadet program has been effective far beyond expectation. This is best seen in the fact that many churches of Reformed

persuasion but not of our denomination are adopting cadeting as their ministry to boys because cadeting expresses the Reformed approach at its best.

I mention one other impression. It is that of *vision*. There is vision found in all of those on the executive committee. There is vision found in the director, assistants, editors and all connected with the Cadet office. There is vision found in those counselors who give of time and money to reach boys. It is the vision of communicating the riches of Jesus Christ to boys. That vision is seen in the decision of the congress to move ahead with a complete program revision in order to meet the needs of today's boy. There is vision seen in the fact that the entire budget for the next fiscal year has already been pledged by the local clubs and councils. There is vision found in the continued planning for a broader and better Cadet movement.

I am humbled as I look at modern cadeting. It has grown tremendously since my first contacts with it over twenty years ago. It has attracted and held men of dedication—men who love Jesus as Lord—as ministers to boys. I pray, and I trust all who read this report will pray with me, that our gracious Lord will continue to bless the Calvinist Cadet Corps and use it even more fully as a ministry to boys.

Elton J. Piersma  
Synodical Representative

**REPORT 32**  
**WORLD HOME BIBLE LEAGUE**  
(Art. 31)

**DEAR BROTHERS:**

The World Home Bible League is happy to report to the synod of the Christian Reformed Church that God's richest blessing has again been bestowed upon the efforts of the League in its worldwide ministry. Last year was a banner year in the distribution of the Word of God. Never before since the founding of the World Home Bible League in 1938 have we experienced such eagerness on the part of churches throughout the United States, Canada and the rest of the world for Bibles, Testaments and Scripture portions.

Many of the Scriptures provided were purchased from commercial concerns. Other Scriptures were printed by the League. In order to keep up with the rapid acceleration of publication, we have now opened up a new volunteer Handclasp Operation in the Holland-Zeeland area. This together with our Handclasp Operation in South Holland will produce somewhere over ten million Testaments and Scripture portions during the year 1973. Operation Handclasp is a volunteer program enlisting the donated services of the churches to produce Scriptures.

We have a total of forty churches sending in volunteer workers to our South Holland Handclasp Operation. There are at this writing thirty-three churches in the Holland-Zeeland area sending in volunteer workers. These workers through their consecrated efforts have reduced the overall cost of Scriptures to the World Home Bible League by approximately eighteen percent. This type of an operation has allowed the World Home Bible League to be very flexible in personalizing Scriptures for many of the Christian Reformed Churches, mission stations, and others.

The distribution of the Scriptures overseas has also been very brisk, and, although it is impossible to report all the activities in such limited space, we are reporting with great humbleness before God that our Scripture distribution combined with our Bible Studies program has laid a network of witnessing points across the world. In Japan, the Rev. Maas Vanderbilt reported in December, 1972, that twenty centers of Bible Studies materials had been established in that country and that soon a full time man will be needed to head up the work. In Taiwan, over ten percent of the churches are presently using the Bible Studies program and Scriptures. We are delighted to report that in this country there has been a considerable number of conversions reported. One of the more interesting aspects of the distribution is that the Chaplaincy Corps at the MacKay Hospital in Taipei has enrolled more than three

hundred of their patients and nurses in this course. They have reported sixty-six conversions.

The Bible Studies program, coupled with Scripture distribution and special booklets for children's use, reports tremendous progress also in Singapore, Malaysia, the Philippines, Bangladesh, India, Ceylon, and many of the countries in Africa, including Nigeria.

In Nigeria, at the request of the Literature Committee of the Christian Reformed Church, the World Home Bible League committed itself to the distribution of forty-five thousand Testaments and ten thousand Bibles to be distributed in the classrooms of Nigeria where Nigerian children are learning English. Some vernacular language Gospels were also given to the Nigerian field.

In a letter written by the Rev. Chester Schemper and submitted to the General Conference of the Christian Reformed Church at a session meeting in Mexico City in December, 1972, it was reported that a total of \$236,500 would be spent for Scripture publications in Mexico alone. In this budget were included one hundred thousand Spanish Bibles, more than two hundred thousand New Testaments, more than eight million assorted Scripture tracts, and other Scripture compilations and Gospel portions.

During the past year the World Home Bible League has been busily engaged in publishing the translations produced by Wycliffe Bible Translators. A total amount of 9,075,362 translations were paid for by the World Home Bible League, amounting to the sum of \$70,000.

Perhaps one of the more interesting programs initiated by the League in 1972 was begun through the efforts of Mr. William Ackerman, International Director of the World Home Bible League, who made arrangements with the Astronaut James Irwin and his organization for the distribution of one hundred thousand Space Age New Testaments. Besides the distribution of these Scriptures to young people there will also be an attempt made to place these Scriptures on airplanes flying in all the free countries of the world. In addition to this, the World Home Bible League is supplying Scriptures for Col. James Irwin, the eighth man to walk on the moon, for his foreign contacts. Col. Irwin is invited to visit many dignitaries, such as kings and princes and presidents of various countries, and wherever he goes he is leaving his personal testimony and a copy of the Holy Scriptures. Some of these are even going behind the Iron Curtain.

The World Home Bible League also rejoices that during the past year the first shipment of Scriptures, several hundred in number, was sent to Cuba, the first since the year 1960. In addition, God has given us a new avenue into another Communist country. We are not permitted to advertise this for fear of reprisal and possible closing down of our line of supply, but we are thrilled at the aspect of a new open door behind the Iron Curtain. Printed materials are often able to reach where missionaries are not.

The total distribution of World Home Bible League Scriptures throughout the world amounted to more than 7,281,000 volumes, not counting some distributions not as yet reported from foreign countries during the year 1972.

The World Home Bible League has appointed a committee, representing Christian Reformed ministers, which has been asked to carefully scrutinize the paraphrased New Testament currently being distributed by the World Home Bible League. This study committee will come up with recommendations concerning possible changes in language where the paraphrased text does not reflect fidelity to the original Hebrew and Greek.

The World Home Bible League is very grateful to the churches, to the consistories, and to the individuals of the Christian Reformed Church for their loyal support of that program to which Christian Reformed people submitted through ecclesiastical channels the sum of \$95,068.57. The total budget for the World Home Bible League is \$2,139,000 for next year.

We respectfully petition the synod of the Christian Reformed Church once again to give us their financial and moral support.

World Home Bible League  
Alvin Vander Griend  
Synodical Representative

## REPORT 33

DELEGATES TO THE REFORMED ECUMENICAL SYNOD, 1972  
(Art. 31)

## DEAR MEMBERS OF SYNOD:

We as delegates to the RES of 1972 wish to thank synod for the privilege of representing the CRC at the seventh session of the RES held in Sydney, Australia. In reporting to synod we wish to share with you some of the actions taken by the RES of 1972 and offer a few reflections on the work of this ecumenical assembly.

The synod met at Moore Theological College, the seminary of the Anglican Church, Sydney Diocese, known for its Reformed stance. About eighty delegates were present, representing about forty Reformed and Presbyterian churches from around the world. The officers elected by the RES of 1972, who thereby serve as its Interim Committee, reflect to a large extent the global composition of the member churches. Dr. Paul G. Schrottenboer was re-elected as General Secretary for another four-year term.

Serious consideration was given to the names "Council of Reformed Churches" and "Assembly of Reformed Churches" as alternatives to "Reformed Ecumenical Synod," but after weighing the arguments pro and con, it was decided to retain the name "synod."

The RES of 1972 experienced some harrassment directed against the presence of the South African delegates in Australia. These protests proved to be rather ineffective and did little to influence the synod. Yet the problems of race relations are real. In facing these problems of racial tension, the RES of 1972 reaffirmed the rather strong positions taken at Lunteren, The Netherlands, in 1968, and updated these positions on a number of points. Many crucial issues, however, were left unresolved. It was clear, moreover, from these synodical deliberations that racial inequity is not only a South African problem, but a world problem facing all Reformed churches.

The RES of 1968 had wrestled long and hard with the question of the biblical warrant for women holding special offices in the church. This matter reappeared on the agenda in Sydney. From the discussions it was apparent that rather wide differences prevail among Reformed churches with respect to the place and role of women in the church, both in thinking and in practice. Synod did not feel free to open this door to women. Member churches were encouraged, however, to make full use of women in auxiliary services, especially in the diaconal ministry of the church.

Another matter of unfinished business is the Sabbath-Sunday issue. The RES of 1972 had received a majority and a minority report from its study committee, which had been charged by the previous synod to draft a contemporary Reformed view of sabbath and Sunday in the light of Scripture and the creeds. In Sydney the advisory committee was similarly divided on this issue. Synod was unable to reach a consensus. Now a new study committee has been appointed to report to the RES of 1976.

On a number of issues synod tried in vain to reach agreement. Often it was difficult to make progress beyond the decisions taken in Lunteren in 1968. Again and again it appeared that the so-called "hermeneutic problem" is crucial to our differences of insight, including questions concerning the nature of biblical authority and methods and principles of interpreting Scripture. The CRC report on "The Nature and Extent of Biblical Authority," adopted by the Synod of 1972, came too late for official consideration by the RES of 1972. It may, however, enter into future discussions.

Overtures came to the RES of 1972 challenging the right of the Gereformeerde Kerken to continued membership in the RES. These overtures were born out of concern about the affiliation of these churches with the World Council of Churches and certain questionable theological views held by some within these churches. The Synod of the CRC in 1972, taking note of these overtures, instructed its delegates "to oppose any definitive action by the RES re termination of the membership of the Gereformeerde Kerken at the RES in Australia 1972." This view also prevailed at the synod.

What we have reported is no more than a sampling of some of the major actions taken at Sydney. To fill in details on these matters and others we refer you to the Acts of the RES, 1972. But often the actions behind the acts are almost as significant as the acts themselves.

The RES is indeed a remarkable and in many ways an impressive gathering of Reformed churches. That such a convocation can happen in our divided world is in itself noteworthy. In the face of growing disenchantment with various other forms of ecumenical activity, the RES could emerge as a uniquely useful ecumenical channel for promoting the coming of the Kingdom in our times.

It is encouraging to note that the non-Western churches are beginning to come to their own within the RES. But their involvement must increase. Past agendas of the RES have concentrated too much on the concerns of the Western churches. The non-Western churches must assume greater responsibility in the writing of future agendas.

The RES also poses some parliamentary problems. Member churches bring to this synod a variety of traditions concerning how things are brought to the floor of synod and how they are dealt with by the assembly. Differences in parliamentary practice sometimes qualify the decisions taken.

The RES is burdened in a unique way with the race problem by the very formative role which the various South African churches play in the synod. The fact that these Reformed Christians occupy such a large place in their own society offers them an almost unmatched potential

for promoting kingdom living in their land. Yet this very complex apartheid problem often stands in the way. And it spills over into the meetings of the RES. There is indeed evidence of a growing readiness to overcome this problem. There is no instant solution. The crucial question is whether movement in the right direction is discernable from one session of the RES to the next. Moreover, it must not be forgotten that nearly every Reformed church has its own counterpart to this racial problem. Therefore the racial issue will continue to demand a great deal of attention within the RES in the years ahead.

Preliminary steps were taken to establish an RES theological education fund and to promote theological interchange and greater use of mass media in missions. These decisions reflect a felt need on the part of many in the RES to move beyond discussion into the area of more open activity. The future impact of the RES will doubtless depend largely upon its willingness to enter more actively into the work of the church in the world.

It is time for the CRC to develop a greater sense of active involvement in the work of the RES. The cause of the RES should be presented to our people more effectively. It is worthy of our continued and growing support. In the years ahead the CRC must assume greater responsibility for participating critically and creatively in the various programs of the RES.

Reformed Ecumenical  
Synod Delegates

Voting Delegates

Dick Farenhorst

Joel Nederhood

Gordon Spykman, Reporter

Non-Voting Delegates

Sierd Woudstra

Edward Van Baak

Wesley Smedes

# STUDY COMMITTEE REPORTS

## REPORT 34

### NEO-PENTECOSTALISM

(Arts. 74, 76)

DEAR BROTHERS:

In response to overtures from two classes and an Appeal from an individual, the Synod of 1971 appointed your committee to “study, in the light of the biblical teaching on the Holy Spirit, the teachings and practices associated with that which is popularly called ‘Neo-Pentecostalism,’ and explore the reasons for its growing appeal in the Christian Reformed Church” (*Acts*, 1971, Art. 116, pp. 97f.). Grounds for this action speak of “much unrest and confusion over this matter in our denomination,” and observe that the church’s creeds do not speak explicitly to these things. Synod felt some urgency about its mandate, in view of developing “crises” in some local areas and the “urgent need” of consistories and individual members of the churches for guidance, and so instructed your committee to submit the fruits of its study to the Synod of 1972.

With regret your committee informed the Synod of 1972 that it had not been able to complete its study and that it would be necessary to delay its report until the Synod of 1973 (*Acts*, 1972, Report 42, p. 485). Synod patiently accepted this request for more time and decided to “continue this committee and request that its report be presented to the Synod of 1973” (*Acts*, 1972, Art. 26, p. 32). The Synod of 1972 also broadened our mandate by requesting your committee to formulate “practical advice to the churches confronting similar problems” as those which had arisen within the Christian Reformed Church of Clinton, Ontario (*Acts*, 1972, Art. 73, II, C. 3; p. 102).

The original overtures of Classes Sioux Center and Chicago North had called for advice specifically in regard to “the special gifts of the Holy Spirit.” Mr. H. J. Jongsma requested that a study be made of “the extended indwelling of the Holy Spirit” and of “believer’s baptism.” In its mandate to your committee the Synod of 1971 spoke in more general terms and thereby enlarged the scope of our study in order to put the concerns of the overtures and appeal in a larger context.

## I. INTRODUCTION

In pursuance of its study your committee has attempted to acquaint itself with neo-Pentecostalism by various means: interviews and correspondence with participants in the "movement" (both lay and ordained), literature produced by those involved in the "movement," and published studies of the "movement." In its attempt to evaluate neo-Pentecostalism "in the light of the biblical teaching on the Holy Spirit," it has examined anew the biblical data, studied the writings of various Christian theologians who have attempted to evaluate this phenomenon in historical, theological and biblical perspective, and consulted the reports, decisions and pastoral letters issued by the broader assemblies or pastoral bodies of other denominations concerning the "movement."

In view of the fact that neo-Pentecostalism is itself an "ecumenical" phenomenon which has occasioned serious attempts at evaluation on the part of many ecclesiastical assemblies outside of our own denomination, your committee has judged it wise and proper to give special attention to documents of various kinds issued by these assemblies. Worthy of special mention are:

*Herderlijk Schrijven van de Generale Synode der Nederlandse Hervormde Kerk*, 1960.

*Het Werk van de Heilige Geest in de Gemeente: Voorlichtend Geschrift over de Pinkstergroepen*, Uitgegeven in Opdracht van de Generale Synode van de Gereformeerde Kerken, 1968.

"Communion of the Spirit," report of a special commission to the 35th General Assembly of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, 1968.

"'Adiaphora' and 'Guidance,'" report of a special commission to the 36th General Assembly of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, 1969.

"The Baptism with the Holy Spirit," report of a special committee of Classis Victoria (Australia) to examine the teaching of the Rev. Dr. J. A. Schep, 1969.

"Minutes of Classis Victoria," pertaining to the decisions of Classis Victoria based on the above report, and including a brief "Word to the Churches," 1969. (The decisions of Classis Victoria were upheld by the 1970 Synod of the Reformed Churches of Australia.)

"Report of a Special Episcopal Commission to Study Catholic Pentecostalism," submitted to a meeting of American bishops held in Washington, D.C., November, 10-14, 1969.

*The Work of the Holy Spirit*, report of the Special Committee on the Work of the Holy Spirit to the 182nd General Assembly of The United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, 1970.

"Report of the Committee Appointed by Classis British Columbia to Study the Problem of Rebaptism," together with the "Minutes of Classis British Columbia" pertaining to this report, 1971.

*The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit, With Special Reference to 'the Baptism of the Holy Spirit,'* report of a special commission

to the General Assembly of The Presbyterian Church in the United States (Southern), 1971.

The committee gratefully acknowledges its indebtedness to these several documents. It is convinced that the attitude of the Christian Reformed Church to neo-Pentecostalism ought to be in accord with that of other Christian and Reformed communions where this is consistent with Scripture and our creeds, pastorally useful, and spiritually edifying.

## II. PENTECOSTALISM AND NEO-PENTECOSTALISM\*

The movement whose "teachings and practices" we have been asked to study is difficult to define. It is still too new, too diverse, too unstructured, too inarticulate (i.e., its published literature is largely incidental and devotional, and its spokesmen are still struggling to find or develop an adequate, generally accepted, and precise language for self-expression). This situation has been observed by all the studies which have come to our attention, consequently they tend for the most part to be cautious and tentative. We acknowledge the same tentativeness about our own analysis. Furthermore, we make no attempt to distinguish between the movement in general and the peculiar character it may have, if any, within our own denomination. Such distinctions have neither been possible within the limits of time granted us, nor required by the specific mandate assigned us.

Although a clear distinction exists between Pentecostalism and neo-Pentecostalism, there is historically a definite geneological link. Pentecostalism itself sprang up in the early decades of the 20th century as a movement rising out of North American Holiness circles. These, in turn, were the offspring of Wesleyan theology with its emphasis on instant sanctification as a "second work" of the Holy Spirit subsequent to conversion, associated with an intense religious experience, and commonly called "the baptism with the Holy Spirit." In reaction to a diminishing emphasis on sanctification in the traditional Wesleyan churches, a revived Holiness movement exploded into more than a score of new denominations committed to Holiness principles in the decade 1895-1905. Although the primary factors leading to this proliferation of new denominations were religious (and theological), the whole upheaval was far more complex so that with considerable justification the rise of this family of new churches has been called "a conservative counterweight among the lower classes to the liberal thinking of the upper and middle classes."

Within certain circles among these Holiness communions, with their preoccupation with and intense cultivation of religious experience, there arose fairly early a doctrine of the "third blessing," subsequent to sanctification and conceived as of the "baptism with the Holy Spirit and fire." Although glossolalia and healing were often associated with the revival

\*For the history of Pentecostalism see: Vinson Synan, *The Holiness-Pentecostal Movement in the United States*, Grand Rapids, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1971; or more exhaustively: Walter J. Hollenweger, *The Pentecostals: The Charismatic Movement in the Churches*, Minneapolis, Augsburg Publishing House, 1972.

experiences so prized by the Holiness communions (as they had been also by earlier American revival movements), these were not at first conceived of as essential elements. However, in the teaching of Charles Parham, often called "the apostle of Pentecostalism," and in the later Pentecostal movement, glossolalia was recognized as the only sure evidence of one's having received the "third blessing." Subsequently, Pentecostals taught that no Christian should be satisfied until he had spoken with "tongues" as proof that he had received the Holy Spirit. The "second blessing" (sanctification) may have cleansed and purified the believer, but only the "third blessing" brought power for service.

For Pentecostals the universal ideal for Christian believers was the complex of experiences present in the early church as portrayed in the Book of Acts and reflected in Paul's epistles. Distinction was seldom made between the experiences of the 120 on the day of Pentecost and that of later converts who, according to Acts, were baptized with the Holy Spirit. Furthermore, although it was taught that glossolalia was the universal and only valid sign that one had been baptized with the Holy Spirit, it was assumed that all the other "gifts" of the Spirit mentioned by Paul in his First Epistle to the Corinthians should naturally be expected to be present in the community of believers. Pentecostals rejected the long-accepted view that these "supernatural" gifts had served their purpose in the early years of the church as verifiers of the apostolic gospel and so had ceased to be given, at least in the normal course of the Spirit's working, since shortly after the close of the apostolic age.

As Pentecostalism began to make inroads into those communions which stood outside of the Wesleyan and Holiness traditions, i.e., among those which had not accepted the doctrine of instant sanctification as the "second blessing" of the Spirit, another form of Pentecostalism came into being, one which viewed sanctification as a process of "growth in grace." For these the "baptism with the Holy Spirit" was looked upon as the "second blessing." Nevertheless, with this one major exception, the distinctive views of Pentecostalism became generally accepted throughout the movement.

With its great emphasis on religious experience, its want of sound exegetical or hermeneutical principles for interpreting Scripture, its lack of theological leadership (indeed, its general suspicion of and consequent denigration of theology), and its break with confessional and theological traditions, Pentecostalism was defenseless against the rise of extreme, not to say bizarre, practices and doctrines; witness on the one hand the extreme chaos of some Pentecostal worship services and the emergence of such sects as the snake-handlers of Appalachia (based on Mark 16:18), and on the other hand the Jesus unitarian heresy which is still entertained by roughly one-fourth of American Pentecostals. It should be noted, however, that wide-spread charges that Pentecostals tend as a group to be emotionally unstable seem to have been disproved by recent studies.

Although neo-Pentecostalism has traceable links to and some marked affinities with Pentecostalism, it is a distinct phenomenon and can only be fairly described as much by contrast with that movement as by comparison. The cultural and religious climate of the mid-twentieth century

differs so radically from that of the century's first decades that cultural factors affecting religious experience today tend to produce religious phenomenon equally different. (For an attempt to identify some of the contemporary cultural factors see the next section of this report.) Moreover (or as a result of these factors), participants in neo-Pentecostalism for the most part do not come from the Holiness communions with their distinctive doctrinal baggage and peculiar ethos. They come rather from those communions which have long-standing confessional and theological traditions to which they generally remain true. In view of this fact, they show little inclination to be schismatic. In fact, there is among them generally an aroused enthusiasm for their own confessional communions and religious traditions (e.g., among Roman Catholics there appears a renewed enthusiasm for the Mass and for devotion to the virgin Mary). At the same time, they manifest a broad, unself-conscious and unofficial ecumenical spirit by regularly sharing their faith and religious experiences with persons from diverse confessional and ecclesiastical backgrounds in informal gatherings both large and small. Although they share common religious experiences and certain common assumptions (see below), and appear to be developing a common language, there is not among them a fixed, generally accepted body of doctrines or tenets that set them apart from their fellow church members. Moreover, while Pentecostalism was a movement primarily of the economically and educationally deprived segments of American society, and reflected this fact in its tendency toward undisguised anti-intellectualism and extreme irrationalism in religious expression, neo-Pentecostalism tends to draw its participants from the middle and upper economic classes and from the better to highly educated. Many of the leading spirits in the movement are ministers or priests in churches that maintain relatively high educational standards for their clergy.

With Pentecostalism, however, neo-Pentecostalism tends to share:

- (1) a great stress on individual religious experience combined with a measure of impatience with traditional churchly emphases on doctrine, liturgy, and institutional structures and orders;
- (2) a profound interest in the Holy Spirit, together with a Jesus-centered piety;
- (3) an assumption that all the extraordinary (miraculous) "gifts" of the Spirit are to be expected and sought by Christians today, just as in the days immediately after Pentecost;
- (4) enthusiasm for witnessing and testimonies—sharing the faith and its triumphs;
- (5) a great emphasis on prayer and praise, both individual and group;
- (6) a tendency toward pneumatic, in distinction from grammatical-historical-theological, interpretation of Scripture, a method of interpretation which tends on the one hand toward a fragmentation of the biblical literature, and on the other hand toward the paradoxical combination of a naively literal and an allegorical understanding of the biblical text;

(7) a heightened awareness of the demonic and a corresponding interest in exorcism;

(8) the assumption that the truly spiritual man is characterized by a complete yielding to the Holy Spirit (frequently evidenced by the total "yielding of the tongue"—man's most "unruly" member—to the Spirit in glossolalia), so that he seeks and receives direct divine guidance apart from the normal processes of decision-making;

(9) a distinctive "language" of faith which, however useful the participants may find it for prayer, praise and testimony, lacks theological precision;

(10) and impatience with, if not distrust of, theology and disciplined intellectual effort generally.

There can be little doubt that neo-Pentecostalism is *essentially* a revival movement within the confessional and traditional churches. Participants commonly testify of a former "hunger," "emptiness," "powerlessness," "lovelessness," "loneliness," "unfulfilledness," "deadness," "carnality" that has now been overcome. They profess an experience of the living Jesus who before was hidden for them behind the doctrines, liturgies and unspiritual atmosphere of the churches. They now testify to having the joyful assurance of salvation, the desire for prayer and praise, the freedom to testify and witness, liberation from bondage to sin, the power to live holy lives in the service of Jesus, a delight in the Word of God, a new capacity to love, a desire for Christian fellowship, and a peace that they have never known before.

The following testimony is typical:

What a hungry man I was for the evidence of God's power and the reality of a living Christ in my ministry. For seven years I had preached the Gospel. But Mark 16:17 bothered me.

I asked myself, "Why weren't these things following my ministry?"

My heart was hungry and desperate for a real moving of God in our midst.

My wife and I loved him, wanted to serve him and be used mightily of him, but it didn't look as though we were being used. Clearly, the scriptural evidence of God's blessing was not following our ministry. What few Christians we had were drying up spiritually, and we didn't know what to do.

One day a friend from a neighboring city dropped in to see us. We visited for hours sharing our heart hunger. Both of us were searching for more of God's power in our lives.

A week went by and one Sunday afternoon, the same young man from the neighboring city dropped in to visit with us. He and his wife beamed with enthusiasm. They had met God in a new way. As they told us of their experience in receiving the Holy Spirit I knew that this was our answer.

Special services had been held at the Episcopal Church in their town where Mrs. Jean Stone . . . spoke on the Holy Spirit. There they had been introduced to the Third Person of the Trinity—and discovered a new relationship with the Lord which was apparent in their attitude.

We could scarcely wait for the Monday evening service. After the message, those wishing to receive the fullness of the Holy Spirit met together. God's desire to fill us with his Spirit was explained from the Scriptures. We were told to relax and believe that God would answer prayer as those ministering laid their hands on our heads and prayed for us. We were told to worship the Lord Jesus Christ as the Holy Spirit led us—quietly and reverently. For it would be the Holy Spirit who would use our voice, although we would do the speaking, and miraculously guide our tongue in a language we would not know.

As we prayed, God came in mighty power on my soul, and for the first time in my life I sensed the reality of the Holy Spirit. My body was flooded with a glow of warmth. My heart overflowed with praise to God and I felt as though I were walking on air, as for 5 or 10 minutes I worshiped him in a language I never heard before.

A great calmness and stillness came over me and peace flooded my soul. I knew then that this was evidence of his power in my soul. The terrible hunger and thirst was satisfied at last and all I could do was praise God.

The response of my wife was different. The devil kept telling her that her experience was purely emotional. Next morning she went over to the church to pray. Then, it was as though the Lord plainly said, "Child of mine, I love you."

Immediately she came home to tell me, but somehow she still did not have the peace of mind and heart she desired. So we knelt down to pray, and it was then the full impact of what the Lord had told her broke over her soul. The joy of the Lord filled her heart and she began to worship the Lord. All doubts, fears and discouragement disappeared, and in its place a rest, such as she had never known before flooded her soul. The joy we shared together is unsurpassable.

The next night we shared what God had done for us with our Sunday-school superintendent. She replied simply, "This is what we all need."

Since then many in our fellowship have entered into this relationship with the Holy Spirit. The whole life of our church has been altered. Meanwhile of course, the Holy Spirit has changed my life in many ways.

I now have a rest of soul I never had known before. "There is a rest for the people of God."

I preach with more freedom—and the Lord has used the messages more effectively than ever before.

The Bible is real, interesting, alive. It opens up to me with new and refreshing meaning.

Discouragement is not unknown, but I can say it does not upset me, as it once did. There is a trust and faith in God's word that gives comfort and boldness.

It is so easy to witness to my faith in Christ now. Before, I witnessed with a feeling it was my duty. Now I want to.

Before, preaching was drudgery because there was no power to get it done with. But now the Holy Spirit does it through me, and I eagerly look forward to each opportunity.

There is great satisfaction in my daily Christian life. Before I received the fullness of the Holy Spirit, I had to rely on past experiences to keep me going. Not so now; he lives within with evidence each day.

As I look back over the year since the Holy Spirit first spoke to our hearts I am amazed at what he has done.

We pray for the sick, and they are healed.

.....  
 Meanwhile, our Bible study has doubled in attendance. Prayer meetings have started again, and God has proved himself in many ways through the gifts of the Spirit manifested in our prayer meetings.

The Lord gave us prophecy concerning one of our couples in the church, "That if repentance for sin was not made, sudden destruction would be upon them." Repentance was made! The wife was healed and filled with the Spirit and the young husband has returned to the Lord.

When another couple was filled with the Spirit, the Lord gave a promise through interpretation that their children would be brought to the Lord. Both now have returned to the Lord.

Moreover, as the Holy Spirit works in our church others are being converted to Christ. For this we praise God.

.....  
 Praying in the Spirit gives me real peace, power, rest, comfort, courage, love. It edifies and lifts, upbuilds, strengthens and is evidence that the Spirit is within me. The Bible says, "He that speaketh in an unknown tongue edifieth himself" (I Cor. 14:4). Our spiritual faculties are greatly built up and strengthened, "For if I pray in an unknown tongue, my spirit prayeth, but my understanding is unfruitful. What is it then? I will pray with the spirit and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also" (I Cor. 14:14, 15).

Speaking to God in a language that only the Holy Spirit can direct is a wonderful privilege. Our spirit understands and rejoices in the heavenly communion and praise. And when the Holy Spirit is guiding us in what to pray, no selfishness can enter in. The Holy Spirit knows what to pray for and how; many times we do not. It is a time of refreshing and rest to the Spirit-filled Christian (Is. 28: 11-12).

.....

It is a joy just to sit at the feet of Jesus and let him teach us day by day. . . .

I believe the Holy Spirit is moving over this earth one more time preparing the Christians for the Lamb's return. He is finding the hungry hearts in all denominations and sending them forth as human dynamos, filled with the Holy Spirit to win the lost. I believe this is for every Christian who will receive.

("This Is What Happened When the Holy Spirit Came to a Methodist Church," Marvin Buck; *Christian Life*, 23 (1962) pp. 34-36.)

This testimony is typical in many respects; in the experiences related, in the vocabulary employed, in the understanding of Scripture reflected, in the implied doctrines of salvation, the church, and the last things. Here is neo-Pentecostalism in a nutshell.

### III. WHY DOES NEO-PENTECOSTALISM SEEM TO HAVE WIDESPREAD APPEAL TO MEMBERS OF THE CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH?

Our investigations which were designed to provide an answer to the question which constitutes the title of this section of our report focused on two areas: A. the statements of Christian Reformed Church members who participate in the neo-Pentecostal "movement"; and B. the contemporary cultural context in North America.

#### A. Statements of Christian Reformed people who participate in the neo-Pentecostal "Movement"

1. The materials we used in this investigation were solicited and unsolicited letters sent to the committee, interviews, published articles, papers submitted to the committee, and classical reports. We present a miscellany of comments gleaned from these sources. Although these comments are by no means exhaustive of the materials available to us, they do represent the spectrum of Christian Reformed neo-Pentecostals' testimonies concerning the reasons why they have been attracted to neo-Pentecostalism.

a. "The church is too overly protective of tradition, concerned with worshiping in dogmatic, theologically correct truth, forgetting we must worship in Spirit also."

b. "Some churches have a form of godliness but deny the power thereof."

c. "We were sick and tired of our weak and ineffective lives. We showed so little power and grace. At first it almost seemed as if the outpouring of the Holy Spirit was passing by the Christian Reformed Church. A church can block the Holy Spirit."

d. "We gloried in our heritage, not in our Lord."

e. "There is so much noise but so little love, and people were sick of controversy."

f. "People were tired of hearing the same clichés Sunday after Sunday. What they heard had not really changed their lives much. We had somehow lost touch with a personal Savior. People couldn't notice that we had been with Jesus."

g. "People want the peace that comes from being peacemakers. Christ is being exalted now and praised as never before. We were meant to be a Christ-centered, Spirit-filled witnessing church. Then people began to gather in prayer. The Lord heard and answered. Then the Holy Spirit began to grace our people with his filling. What could not our whole wonderful Christian Reformed Church do if it had the infilling of the Holy Spirit!"

h. "Neo-Pentecostalism among Christian Reformed believers is appealing. It indicates there is still life, and shows that we are still reforming while being Reformed. If our denomination had become immune to appeals like this, it would be on its death bed."

i. "Distinctions of higher clergy and lower lay people are present. These are not based on the Spirit of God, but are based on education and synodical approval."

j. "There is a lack of originality, internal leadership and vision. There is a form of isolationism, yet we try to progress by importing. We have an inferiority complex stretching across the Atlantic Ocean to the Netherlands. We need to be involved in the here-and-now contemporary scene; we need sharing and group prayer; we need the guitar. We need to test these things, not detest them because of their novelty. We are witnessing an exodus of membership because of our intolerance, our complacency, our lack of enthusiasm, our lack of Christian love and fellowship. Youth wants a triumphant sense of the victory that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. What is happening in neo-Pentecostalism is the Lord's doing, which is marvelous in our eyes."

k. "There is so much opposition to what is simply an outpouring of the Holy Spirit."

2. We are able to make some observations and generalizations on the basis of this data.

a. The neo-Pentecostals with whom we became acquainted do not reject the Christian Reformed Church. They rather constitute a "loyal opposition" in the Christian Reformed Church. They love the church. They were saved in the church through the ministry of the church. They, however, wish the church to embody more concretely and visibly the gospel of Jesus Christ. Their negative critique of the church is designed to spur the church to reform and revival. They have not abandoned the church and have no intention of doing so in the future. (Cf. g. and h.)

b. The neo-Pentecostals with whom we became acquainted admitted to a deficiency in their pre-neo-Pentecostal Christian faith and life: the lack, in part or in whole, of an experiential embodiment and validation of the doctrinal articulation which the church proclaims as the structure of the gospel and which the members of the church appropriate to themselves. Without exception our respondents indicated that the Christian Reformed Church has not placed enough emphasis upon the experience of a personal relation to God the Father, Jesus the Savior and the Holy Spirit. For our respondents, the individual's experience is the/an important norm for valid, authentic Christian faith. (Cf. f., g. and j.) They found experience emphasized among the neo-Pentecostals and were

attracted by this emphasis. Their experience of God the Spirit provided them with new confidence and joy in Christ, a confidence and joy greater than they had known previously.

We wish to emphasize that the neo-Pentecostals' certainty of salvation and joy in Christ depend heavily upon their personal, individual experience. Experience, however, needs interpretation. What is the content of this experience? Is this experience really an experience of the Holy Spirit's active presence? The objective sign which validates the experience as a real experience of the Holy Spirit's active presence is often the spectacular, extraordinary phenomena: e.g., "speaking in tongues," "divine healing," "prophecy," etc. According to I Corinthians 12, Mark 16, etc., these phenomena are gifts of the Holy Spirit which makes his active presence visible. The presence of these phenomena, consequently, validate the interpretation of the personal, individual experience as a real, authentic experience of the Holy Spirit. (We have dealt with this matter at some length in the section of our Report entitled "Hermeneutic, Individualism, and Extra-Ecclesial Koinonia." Cf. Section VIII.)

c. The neo-Pentecostals with whom we became acquainted dissociate, at least in degree, "doctrine" and "life" (experience). This dissociation they express in a depreciation of reasoned constructions of the content of the gospel in particular, and in a downgrading of the educational requirements for the ministry. (Cf. a, b, d, f and i.) These tendencies they share with many neo-Pentecostals associated with other confessional traditions.

d. The neo-Pentecostals with whom we became acquainted spoke of the church as an objective (third-person) entity of which they were a part, but from which they feel to a degree alienated—at least from the church as an institution, an organization, a structure. They both love the church and simultaneously feel themselves alienated from her. The church conceived of as a community of believers like themselves they participate in willingly. (Cf. a, e, i and j.) But it is at the feet of the church as an organization, an institution with a structured communal life, that they lay the responsibility for their old experiential deficiencies. This dissociation of the church and the individual Christian was not unique to the "laymen"; it was expressed by the clergy as well. This suspicion of and alienation from the church in her institutional, organizational and structural dimension is common among neo-Pentecostals in all ecclesiastical traditions.

e. The neo-Pentecostals with whom we became acquainted conceived of the gospel as concerned primarily with the salvation of the individual from sin, and with the individual's life of personal piety. They evidenced little interest in and concern for the cosmic scope of God's redemptive activity in Jesus Christ and the related work of the Holy Spirit. Among our respondents the gospel virtually begins and ends with the individual. They evidenced little appreciation for or sensitivity to the significance of God's redemptive activity in Jesus Christ for societal structures. None of our respondents indicated any awareness of the "Kingdom" dimension of the gospel. Their societal interest was confined to fellowship among

the like-minded and a soteriologically oriented concern for the non-Christian.

f. The neo-Pentecostals with whom we became acquainted emphasize the importance of spontaneity. The spontaneous, unplanned response of the moment to the circumstances of the moment seems more easily accepted as the work of the Holy Spirit than does the carefully planned, articulated and initiated response of an established ecclesiastical community functioning within and through its established offices and structures.

This analysis of the neo-Pentecostals among us focuses upon but one aspect of the matter—their experiences, tendencies, feelings, and attitudes. But it must not be overlooked that there is heard in their statements a persistent and many-faceted critique of the Christian Reformed Church as they have experienced it concretely in their lives. They tell us that the Christian Reformed Church has gloried too much in her own peculiar heritage and has been overly protective of her traditions. She has manifested an isolationist stance over against the American Christian community, and at the same time an excessive dependence on the Reformed community in the Netherlands, as if all that is good and Christian comes only from the Reformed community of the land from which we sprang. Intolerance and complacency have marked our attitude toward the Christian communions around us.

In her worship the Christian Reformed Church has been excessively concerned with right doctrine, while neglecting "worship in Spirit." Worshipers have been bombarded Sunday after Sunday with tired clichés (one of the curses of mere traditionalism), rather than confronted with the living Jesus. There has been controversy instead of love, bickering instead of fellowship, praise and witnessing. A premium has been placed on education as preparation for the ministry rather than on evidences of the Spirit, and those so prepared have been elevated to the status of "clergy" to the devaluation of the "laity."

These criticisms are hardly estimations produced by the cool eye of sympathetic but disinterested observers. They are rather the complaints of disaffected sons and daughters of the church, whose personal experiences have caused them to feel cheated by mother church out of the full inheritance of the gospel. That is not to say, however, that these criticisms are to be lightly dismissed. They touch too surely on festering sores long complained of. However jaundiced the eye of the disaffected may be, and however distorted we may judge their present perceptions of themselves and of the church to be, it would be unwarranted for the church to hear their complaints with pained innocence. In the long history of the Christian church most outbreaks of sectarian-like movements have been occasioned in part by deficiencies in the church. We may not easily suppose that present events constitute an exception. The criticisms of our neo-Pentecostal brothers and sisters call us to repentance and renewal, to a renewed "concern for a rich spiritual life of the church as a whole, and of all its members" ("A Word to the Churches," *Classis Victoria*). Where the church has not been a source of spiritual aid and enrichment to all its members, where it has failed to manifest

richly the fruit and gifts of the Spirit, where it like the believers in Corinth lives too much like "men of flesh" rather than like "men of the Spirit," it must be called anew to the riches of Christ and to a "walk" that is "by the Spirit."

Although we recognize that there is some validity to the neo-Pentecostals' critique of the "established" church, we do wish to point out that the "established" church has not been insensitive to the problems which the neo-Pentecostals describe. The church, we must remember, consists of people who, like the neo-Pentecostals, are part of and influenced by the contemporary North American cultural context. This church has evidenced sensitivity to the problems described by the neo-Pentecostals in some congregations and in some geographical areas in the following phenomena: the organization of small-group meetings for prayer and/or Bible study; greater informality in worship services, greater congregational participation in worship, an emphasis on response or involvement in the religious education program and the attempt to structure mission into the "routine life" of the entire congregation. If these attempts are to be useful vehicles of the Spirit of God, they must enlist the cooperation of the *total* church. When these attempts are not useful or are inadequate, the church must be flexible enough to introduce modifications and changes in the life of faith which will enable the church to serve as the agent of God in the contemporary witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ.

#### B. The Contemporary Cultural Context in North America

The rise and spread of neo-Pentecostalism among members of the Christian Reformed Church is not an isolated phenomenon. Since 1960 neo-Pentecostalism has been visible in all of the established, so-called "mainline" denominations of Protestantism: e.g., The United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., the Reformed Church in America, the Episcopal Church, the Lutheran Church in America. Neo-Pentecostals are numerous, also, in the Roman Catholic Church. Both clergy and laity are found among the neo-Pentecostals. Furthermore, college, university and seminary professors, university graduates from a diversity of professions and skilled craftsmen are found among the neo-Pentecostals. The neo-Pentecostal phenomenon is, we conclude, a factor which is rooted firmly in the contemporary religious situation in North America.

Change, development and movement do not originate in a vacuum. The neo-Pentecostal phenomenon is an integral factor in the cultural context of contemporary North America. During the last two decades the rate of cultural change has accelerated rapidly. Increased social mobility has strained the fabric of both the extended and the nuclear family virtually to the breaking point. Advances in communication have reduced "distance" so that the entire world is present in one's living-room, and everyone has relatively easy access to places which a few decades ago were shrouded in romantic mystery. The world has become a global village. The average family moves to a different geographical location with some frequency. Changes in neighborhoods, schools, churches and friendships accompany these geographical moves. A degree of rootlessness results.

North American society, moreover, has become oriented increasingly to a consumer economy which has prospered fantastically as North America satisfied the consumer needs of the world. Increased productivity and planned obsolescence have been said to be the answers to all the ills of the consumer-oriented economy. The threat to society which was posed by the "nuclear age" stimulated an educational boom. Colleges and universities swarmed with a clientele which was equipped to develop and man increasingly sophisticated gadgetry designed to increase the productivity of our economic colossus.

But the higher standard of living generated by this economic evolution had a price tag attached to it. Many were excluded from gainful employment because they lacked the necessary sophisticated skills; consequently the distance between economic and social classes widened. Increasingly the technological society exercised a depersonalizing effect on its members. Its promise of increased stability and comfort also aborted. Technology's energies seem to be devoted to war. Technology's terrible by-product is ecological crisis. Population control is considered necessary as a result of greater longevity and lowered mortality rates due to the success of medical research. And technological effort to control population seems to have spawned a deteriorating sexual morality.

Increasingly North American people have become suspicious of the educated elite. Their activities in the sciences and in the humanities are viewed as much as threats to our culture as they are as assets. "Credibility gap" is a term frequently used relative to both the huckstering of the advertising industry and the pronouncements of the politicians. The proclamation of the gospel by a theologically trained ministry is not immune to this same suspicion of words. Leadership by intellectuals is scorned. Their "theory" appears impractical and consequently valueless; they, too, are but architects (and victims) of the whole culture, which seems to be disintegrating under our eyes. Moreover, science and technology have increasingly been drawn into the orbit of political and commercial concerns and so have served, even encouraged, the militarization of our culture and the mad materialism of our society. A vaunted intellectualism has prostituted humanity and left our culture bankrupt.

Every "solution" to our problems seems only to have spawned new problems more serious and threatening than those they were conceived to solve. Hope in man's ability to solve his problems is therefore abandoned. Unless there is an irruption into his world from outside the world—from God—there will be no aid or succor for man. And since the necessary irruption from the "other" world must introduce into history extraordinary phenomena of cataclysmic proportions to provide relief for man, ordinary descriptive language does not serve as an adequate vehicle for bearing witness to it. Resort must be made to metaphorical language, to imaginative language, for the purpose of pointing to the irruption which is viewed as imminent. The one who points to the coming irruption, moreover, does so, not as an uninvolved spectator, but as a participant in that to which he points. What we are here describing has sometimes been apocalypticism. Its perspective and language are analogous to that of Daniel 7-12 and the Revelation (Apocalypse) of St. John.

In this maelstrom of change and uncertainty, the *present moment* has taken on a significance which it did not have in previous ages. There may be no future! A general malaise clouds the continent. If we cannot think our way out of the crises in which we find ourselves, let us at least enjoy the present moment. And if none of our institutions and organizations seem capable of solving our problems, let us ignore or destroy them and begin once more from the bottom. *This moment* is the crucial one. How can we enjoy this moment? We can use drugs which will expand our consciousness so that we can pack the maximum of experience into this moment. We can turn inward to explore and exploit the possibilities of the subjective realm of "spirit."

The result is visible in the contemporary musical idioms, the "dance patterns," in communes, in the fad of eastern religions, the occult, Satan worship and witchcraft—and in the "Jesus-people." These are all attempts to have a positive, satisfying, self-conscious experience of one's self in this moment. The individual who is threatened on all sides by a complex world with which he cannot cope, which threatens to overwhelm him, which he feels powerless to influence can attempt to establish a workable area with which he can come to terms—the area of his own private, unfettered self. He may not understand his own self, but he can experience his own self. (The evidence at the end of 1972 suggests that even these attempts to achieve and live a "meaningful" life are proving unsuccessful.)

We summarize our analysis of the contemporary North American cultural context in which neo-Pentecostalism has emerged—a context in which cultural change is rapid:

1. Reason is distrusted; spontaneous (or stimulated) private (or group) experience is emphasized.
2. The sciences and technology have not enabled us to solve our problems; they have intensified old problems and created new ones. They have prostituted humanity. Consequently, both science and technology are viewed with caution if not distrust.
3. In the technological society, man has become depersonalized.
4. Education is distrusted and anti-intellectualism flourishes in a society that had developed great expectations based on education.
5. There is a strong emphasis on the present moment and on the self-conscious experience of the self both as a physical and as a spiritual being.

We suggest that this cultural contest can neither be ignored nor minimized when one attempts to account for the emergence and widespread expression of neo-Pentecostalism among members of the Christian Reformed Church. We recognize and respect their own account of why they were attracted to neo-Pentecostalism. We find, however, that the contemporary cultural context of North America constitutes at least a substratum that is congenial to the emergence of neo-Pentecostalism and that influences the contours and character of neo-Pentecostalism.

This analysis of the contemporary North American cultural context does not warrant our understanding neo-Pentecostalism as a mere "religious" veneer over a "secular" phenomenon and consequently to dismiss

it. We recognize, believe and confess that the Lordship of Jesus is exercised continually over the creation, and that the Spirit of God operates in and through all the phenomena of the day. To limit the sphere of the Lordship of Jesus and the activity of the Spirit is to repudiate the plain teaching of the Bible in passages such as Colossians 1:15-20 and John 1:1-18, and to contradict Lord's Day X of the *Heidelberg Catechism*. We do suggest, however, that all our institutions, rational formulations and religious experiences are culturally conditioned. We may neither ignore nor minimize the cultural conditioning of neo-Pentecostalism as we seek to come to terms with the present context of the Christian Reformed Church.

We suggest that the contemporary rediscovery of the apocalyptic dimension of the New Testament and the significance of the apocalyptic dimension in the New Testament church is no accident. We live in an age which is congenial to the apocalyptic perspective. Neo-Pentecostalism is stimulated by and thrives in an apocalyptic context. The individualism of neo-Pentecostalism, its emphasis upon the spontaneity of Christian faith and life, and upon the experiential dimension of truth, its virtual abandonment of the "Kingdom" concept and its emphasis upon God's irruption into the contemporary world through spectacular phenomena such as the gifts of the Spirit are comprehensible in a movement which has emerged out of the apocalyptic context of contemporary North American culture.

#### IV. THE HOLY SPIRIT IN SCRIPTURE AND IN OUR REFORMED CONFESSIONS

##### A. The Holy Spirit in Scripture.

Any unprejudiced evaluation of neo-Pentecostalism must begin with the acknowledgment that two of its main emphases, viz., (1) that salvation must be a profound and transforming *experience* in addition to a confession of a body of doctrine, and (2) the importance of the Holy Spirit in applying salvation to sinners, are in accord with the Scriptures.

That to which men are called and invited by the gospel is not the mere acceptance of certain propositions about the nature of God, man, the world, right religion and true ethical principles, together with a disciplined and rational ordering of life in accord with those truths and principles. On the contrary, it is: "godly grief" for sin (II Cor. 7:9-10); the "knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord" (II Peter 1:2-3, 8; 2:20; 3:18; II Cor. 4:6; Phil. 3:8; John 17:3); "peace with God" (Rom. 5:1, 11; 8:6; 14:17; 15:13); "joy" (Rom. 5:2-3, 11; 12:12; 15:13; 11 Cor. 6:10; 7:4; Phil. 3:1; 4:4); and the familiar trio: "faith, hope and love" (I Cor. 13:13; etc.). These are surely all *experiences* (or involve experience). And when Paul speaks of "God's love having been poured into our hearts" (Rom. 5:5), of being "controlled by the love of Christ" (II Cor. 5:14), of being "set free from sin and becoming slaves of God" (Rom. 6:22), of being "transformed by the renewal of your mind" (Rom. 12:2), of being "made alive together with Christ" (Eph. 2:5; Col. 2:13), of "old things" passing away and all things becoming "new" (II Cor. 5:17), of being "comforted in all our afflictions" (II

Cor. 1:4; etc.), of receiving the Holy Spirit as the "guarantee" of our salvation (II Cor. 1:22; 5:5; Eph. 1:14) by whom we are "sealed unto the day of redemption" (Eph. 4:30; 1:13; II Cor. 1:22) and through whom we call God "Abba! Father!" (Rom. 8:15; Gal. 4:6), he is surely speaking of matters that have a profoundly experiential dimension.

Similarly, when neo-Pentecostals ascribe the experiences accompanying salvation to the work of the Holy Spirit, they are echoing biblical teaching.

As early as Psalm 51 we hear the godly man praying:

Create in me a clean heart, O God,  
and put a new and right spirit within me.

Cast me not away from thy presence,  
and take not thy holy Spirit from me.

Restore to me the joy of thy salvation,  
and uphold me with a willing spirit (vss. 10-12).

Isaiah declared that Israel's persistent rebelliousness against God "grieved his holy Spirit" (Is. 63:10). Nehemiah confessed that God gave Israel "his good Spirit to instruct them" in the wilderness (Neh. 9:20). And when the prophets announced God's great new saving action which was to come, they frequently spoke of what God's Spirit would do in the hearts of his people: "For I will pour water on the thirsty land, and streams on the dry ground; I will pour my Spirit upon your descendants, and my blessing on your offspring" (Is. 44:3; cf. 32:15). In Isaiah 59 the Lord declares, "And he will come to Zion as a Redeemer, to those in Jacob who turn from transgression" (vs. 20). To that he adds: "And as for me, this is my covenant with them . . . : my spirit which is upon you, and my words which I have put in your mouth, shall not depart out of your mouth, or out of the mouth of your children, or out of the mouth of your children's children . . . from this time forth and for ever more" (vs. 21; cf. also Ez. 39:29).

Here the future work of the Spirit is associated with God's enduring covenant with Israel; and through Jeremiah the Lord announced that "the days are coming . . . when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, not like the covenant which I made with their fathers when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant which they broke, though I was their husband . . . . But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days . . . : I will put my law within them, and I will write it upon their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And no longer shall each man teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, . . . ; for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more" (Jer. 31:31-34). "And I will put the fear of me in their hearts, that they may not turn from me" (Jer. 32:40; cf. Ez. 37:26; 39:29).

Joel also speaks of the future outpouring of the Spirit on the whole community of God's people "before the great and terrible day of the Lord comes" (Joel 2:31): "And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall

prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young man shall see visions. Even upon the menservants and maidservants in those days, I will pour out my spirit" (Joel 2:28-29).

(Note: When Isaiah writes, "For with stammering lips and another tongue will he speak to this people" (28:11—King James Version), he is not writing of the future work of the Holy Spirit, or of speaking in "tongues." He is rather announcing the coming exile of Israel by a people that speaks a different language from that spoken by the Israelites. Cf. Is. 33:19 and Deut. 28:49f; Jer. 5:15; and also Ezek. 3:5f.)

These Old Testament references to and prophecies concerning the coming work of the Holy Spirit in salvation provide the background for John the Baptist's witness to Jesus that he would "baptize with the Holy Spirit" (Matt. 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; John 1:33). (The additional phrase "and with fire," found in Matthew and Luke, refers most probably to the judgment-character of Messiah's work, cf. Luke 3:9, 17.) John's witness implies that this "baptism" will effect an abiding transformation in the lives of all of Christ's disciples, a transformation to which his own baptism already pointed. In fact, Old Testament prophecy, including that of John the Baptist who as the last "Elijah" completed and focused it, announced the outpouring of the Spirit of God on all God's people as the final saving action of God to empower and equip them for obedient and triumphant service in the world.

According to the Synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke), Jesus not only commanded the apostles to baptize disciples into "the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Matt. 28:19), but also declared that the heavenly Father gives the Holy Spirit to those who ask him more readily than an earthly father gives good gifts to his children (Luke 11:13). And he promised that when they are brought to trial before synagogue councils or governors and kings, the Holy Spirit will guide them in what they are to say (Matt. 10:20; Mark 13:11; Luke 12:11-12).

In John's Gospel Jesus speaks more frequently and fully of the Spirit's activity in salvation. He is the agent of the disciples' "birth" into the Kingdom of God (3:5) Although he was not to be "given" until after Jesus' death and resurrection, subsequent to these central redemptive events *all* "believers" will receive him; and he will both satisfy their "thirst" and become a spring within them from which "shall flow rivers of living water" (7:37-39; cf. 16:7). After Jesus' departure, he will be given as the "other Counselor" to "be with" and "in" the disciples as "the Spirit of truth" (14:16-17), who "will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you" (vs. 26). He will "bear witness" of Christ (15:26), and will "convince the world of sin and of righteousness and of judgment" (16:8). He will "guide you into all the truth, . . . and he will declare to you the things that are to come. He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you" (vss. 13-14). No mention is made of "speaking in tongues" or of "gifts of the Spirit," but it is evident that the Holy Spirit will have the

central place in completing Christ's saving work in and through his disciples.

The Book of Acts speaks so frequently of the activity of the Holy Spirit that it has often been suggested that it might well be called "The Acts of the Holy Spirit." Here is testimony concerning fulfillment of the prophesy given by John the Baptist (renewed by Jesus just before his ascension: Acts 1:5; cf. 11:16) that Jesus would baptize with the Holy Spirit. Frequently recurring expressions are: "full of the Holy Spirit" and "filled with the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:4; 4:8, 31; 6:3, 5, 8; 7:55; 9:17; 11:24; 13:9—reminiscent of Luke's testimony concerning John the Baptist, Luke 1:15; Elizabeth, vs. 41; and Zacharias, vs. 67; and of that recurring expression in the Old Testament: "The Spirit of the Lord came upon . . .," Num. 24:2; Judges 3:10; 14:6; 15:14; I Sam. 16:13; etc.).

Fulfillment of John the Baptist's prophecy takes place on Pentecost (Acts 2), and whenever the Spirit "falls" on Christian believers (Acts 11:15-17). With it the disciples "receive power" and become the "witnesses" of Christ in the world (Acts 1:8). As the result of it the quality of life of the emerging Christian community is transformed; it becomes characterized by boldness in witnessing, joy and gladness, praise, and self-giving acts of love (Acts 2:42-47; etc.).

Moreover, the Holy Spirit becomes the guiding and controlling factor in the spreading of the early Christian mission. Philip is instructed by the Spirit to speak to the Ethiopian eunuch (8:29), and subsequently is removed to other spheres of activity (vs. 39). Peter is directed by the Spirit to go to the home of the Gentile Cornelius, a centurion at Caesarea (10:19; 11:12.) The Spirit instructs the church at Antioch to send Barnabas and Saul on a mission to Asia Minor (13:2-4). And Paul and his co-workers are guided by the Spirit to move beyond Asia Minor into the continent of Europe (16:6-10).

The Book of Acts does not give much light on how the Spirit's guidance was received in these matters. It may have been in ways similar to the Spirit's directing of the Old Testament prophets. In any event, Acts bears witness to certain "prophets," alongside of apostles and teachers (Acts 13:1; cpr. I Cor. 12:28-29; Eph. 2:20; 4:11). These seem to have engaged in foretelling (e.g., Agabus: Acts 11:27-28; 21:10-11) as well as proclamation (Acts 15:32; 19:6; 21:9).

Some matters worthy of special note are:

1. The gift and the subsequent working of the Holy Spirit in the believing community is the continuation of the earthly ministry of Christ, who from his exalted place at God's right hand baptizes with the Holy Spirit. The Spirit does not come or work independently; Christ the Lord gives the Spirit and works through him.

2. Peter proclaimed on Pentecost that the promise of the Spirit is to all who repent and are baptized into the name of Jesus Christ (2:38), and subsequently in Acts those who believe and are baptized do receive the Holy Spirit.

3. Mention is made of speaking in tongues on only three occasions: (a) the 120 on Pentecost Day (2:4-12) — the account is subject to

varying interpretations —; (b) the conversion of Cornelius, the Gentile (12:46); and (c) Paul's baptism of the first disciples in Ephesus (19:6) —which suggests that the phenomenon was reserved for special occasions in the advancing mission of the church.

4. A certain obscurity remains as to when the Spirit was received by the new members of the believing community. No explicit mention is made of the Spirit coming on the converts baptized on Pentecost. Cornelius and his household received the Spirit before they were baptized (10:44-48). The Samaritan converts were baptized by Philip, but did not receive the Holy Spirit until Peter and John came from Jerusalem and "laid their hands on them" (8:12-17). The disciples at Ephesus received the Spirit at the time they were baptized by Paul "in the name of the Lord Jesus" (19:6). Hence, in Acts there is no consistent pattern to the sequence: conversion, water baptism and reception of the Holy Spirit. Nevertheless, the receiving of the Holy Spirit is always associated with baptism into the name of Jesus Christ.

5. The Holy Spirit is always *gift*, and subsequent to Pentecost there is no "waiting" for the Spirit; the gift accompanies the initiation into the believing community. (The Samaritan episode is clearly atypical; the delay of the gift of the Spirit there had to do with the unfolding of the divine program of world evangelism, not with the spiritual state of the Samaritan believers. Cf. Section V, below.)

6. The indwelling of the Holy Spirit is not presented as a secret that needs to be taught those in whom the Spirit dwells. Not only were there (sometimes at least) immediate signs of the Spirit's presence, but he effected such transformation of lives that others were provoked to imitation (Ananias and Sapphira, Acts 5:1ff.). Furthermore, the assumption in Paul's question to the "disciples" in Ephesus is altogether clear: "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" (Acts 19:2). The Spirit's presence, Paul knew, was unmistakably experienced—experienced as the presence of God's power.

In the Gospels and Acts, from the testimony of John the Baptist to the Pentecost event with its subsequent effects on the life and spreading mission of the Church, the gift of the Holy Spirit is proclaimed as the great enabling act of God in Christ by which weak and sinful men became the redeemed community and the sanctified and powerful agents of Christ's mission in the world.

In the epistles, it is Paul who speaks most fully of the role of the Holy Spirit in our salvation. Paul's apostolic ministry was itself performed in the Holy Spirit. His gospel came to the Thessalonians "not only in word, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit with full conviction" (I Thess. 1:5); his preaching at Corinth was not done in his own strength, but "in demonstration of the Spirit and power" (I Cor. 2:4; cf. Rom. 15:16); the "wisdom of God" which he proclaimed had been "revealed to us through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God" (I Cor. 2:10). As Christ's co-worker and God's minister he labored among the Corinthians "in the Holy Spirit" (II Cor. 6:6), so that the Corinthian church was as it were "a letter from Christ . . . ,

written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God" (II Cor. 3: 2-3). To Paul was "revealed . . . by the Spirit" the "mystery of Christ" that the Gentiles are fellow-heirs with the Jews, fellow-members with them of the body, fellow-partakers with them of the promises (Eph. 3: 4-6); by the Spirit he knew that "in later times some will depart from the faith by giving heed to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons" (I Tim. 4:1). It was by the Spirit that he was able to counsel the churches (I Cor. 7:40); and he called the "word of God" which he proclaimed "the sword of the Spirit" (Eph. 6:17).

But Paul also had much to say about the Spirit's relationship to and activity within the believing community. God "sent forth" the Spirit ("the Spirit of our God": Rom. 8:9; I Cor. 3:16; 6:11; 7:40; and "the Spirit of his Son": Rom. 8:9; Gal. 4:6) into the hearts of believers "crying, Abba! Father!" (Rom. 8:15; Gal. 4:6); "in Christ" they have their "access in one Spirit to the Father" (Eph. 2:18). In Christ Jesus as the cornerstone believers are "built into a holy temple for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit" (Eph. 2:22). Because they are indwelt by the Holy Spirit of God they are severally "temples of the Holy Spirit" (I Cor. 6:19), and the church is "a temple of God" (I Cor. 3:16).

Believers receive the Spirit, not "by the works of the law," but by "hearing with faith" (Gal. 3:2). The indwelling Spirit is the "guarantee" of their inheritance (II Cor. 1:22; 5:5; Eph. 1:14) so that by the Spirit they are "sealed" unto their full salvation (II Cor. 1:22; Eph. 1:13; 4:30), having already now "the first fruits of the Spirit" (Rom. 8:23). They are "born according to the Spirit" (Gal. 4:29), "sanctified" by the Spirit (II Thess. 2:13; I Cor. 6:11) and "strengthened with might through his Spirit in the inner man" (Eph. 3:16). Their hearts are flooded by the love of God through the Spirit (Rom. 5:5); they experience joy in the Spirit (Rom. 14:17; I Thess. 1:6), are raised from the dead by the Spirit (Rom. 8:11), possess "the mind of Christ" by the Spirit (I Cor. 2:14-16), have faith in Christ Jesus "through the Spirit," and in that Spirit-given faith "wait for the hope of righteousness" and walk in love (Gal. 5:5-6, cf. Rom. 15:13). They "worship by the Spirit" (Phil. 3:3), "live by the Spirit" (Gal. 5:25), confess "Jesus is Lord" by the Holy Spirit (I Cor. 12:3), and "receive the gifts of the Spirit of God" by the Spirit (I Cor. 2:14). By the Spirit they "understand the gifts bestowed on us by God" (I Cor. 2:12), and they have the Spirit as a helper in their "weakness" in prayer in that "the Spirit himself intercedes for us with sighs too deep for words" (Rom. 8:26).

He who does not have "the Spirit of Christ" does not belong to Christ (Rom. 8:9); but "all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God" (Rom. 8:14). They are "in the Spirit" (Rom. 8:9), "live according to the Spirit" (Rom. 8:5), "walk . . . according to the Spirit" (Rom. 8:4), and "have the mind of the Spirit" (Rom. 8:5-6). The Spirit is for them "life and peace" (Rom. 8:6, cf. vs. 2, 10, 11, 13; Gal. 6:8), and "bears witness with their spirit that they are children of God, and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and fellow heirs with Christ" (Rom. 8:16-17). Living by the Spirit, they "put to death the deeds of the body" (Rom. 8:13) and are enabled to fulfill "the just requirement of the law" (Rom.

8:4), having been liberated from “the law of sin and death” by “the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus” (Rom. 8:2). The liberation that the law could not effect because of the “weakness of the flesh” is effected in them by the Spirit (Rom. 8:1-4) so that now “where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty” (II Cor. 3:17). Those who “walk by the Spirit . . . do not gratify the desires of the flesh” (Gal. 5:16), and those who “are led by the Spirit . . . are not under the law” (Gal. 5:18).

In the teaching of Paul, all that the believer is as a new man in Christ, all that he experiences as a redeemed man in Christ, all that he does in his new life in Christ—all is to be ascribed to the indwelling Holy Spirit. Paul can even speak of the indwelling Spirit as the supreme gift of God in Christ, as the sum of our salvation: “Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us . . . that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith” (Gal. 3:13f).

And in the epistles also, this reality of the indwelling Spirit is not a “mystery” that Paul must proclaim to an unknowing, unaware people. It is rather an experienced reality that must be understood in the context of the Gospel: “Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by hearing with faith?” (Gal. 3:2). That is why Paul can say, “You were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, which is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it . . .” (Eph. 1:13f; cf. 4:30; II Cor. 1:22; 5:5). It is the Spirit who causes us to recognize God as “Abba! Father!” who “bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God” (Rom. 8:15f).

The indwelling Spirit is power (I Cor. 2:4; 4:20; Eph. 3:16), life (Rom. 8:2; 13; II Cor. 3:6), leading (Rom. 8:14; Gal. 5:18), witnessing (Rom. 8:16), knowledge (I Cor. 2:11ff), teaching (I Cor. 2:13), birth (Gal. 4:28), “pouring into our hearts” the love of God (Rom. 5:5), freedom from bondage to “the desires of the flesh” (Gal. 5:16), etc. All these imply profound experience. The believer may need instruction regarding the role and work of the Holy Spirit in the salvation he has in Christ, but that instruction pertains to a work of the Spirit deeply experienced (although not necessarily as an ecstasy) and radical in its effect. Salvation is anchored in the objective work of Christ through whom we have the Spirit, but the Spirit actualizes that salvation in the lives and experiences of the redeemed. Where the experience of the Spirit’s work is yet absent, the Gospel of Jesus Christ has not yet come to fruition.

### The “Gifts” of the Spirit

But Paul has some specific matters to say concerning the work of the Spirit which need further attention. He speaks of *pneumatikoi*, *charismata*, *chares*, *dorea*, and *karpos*—all of which he ascribes to the Holy Spirit.

*Pneumatikoi* (usually translated “spiritual gifts”: the word is an adjective, but is used absolutely in I Cor. 12:1 and 14:1—once it is used absolutely to refer to all the redemptive benefits that flow to the Gentiles through the gospel, Rom. 15:27) are certain abilities or powers which the Spirit bestows on individual believers. Hence, Paul also calls them

“manifestations of the Spirit” (I Cor. 12:7). In I Corinthians 12 the apostle mentions the following: utterance of wisdom, utterance of knowledge, faith, gifts of healing, working of miracles, prophecy, distinguishing between spirits, various kinds of tongues, interpretation of tongues (vss. 8-10). Later in the same chapter he speaks of apostles, prophets, teachers, workers of miracles, healers, helpers, administrators, speakers in various kinds of tongues (vs. 28).

*Charismata* (usually translated either “gifts” or “free gifts”: the word is sometimes used to refer to the whole of salvation as God’s free gift, for example: Romans 5:15-16; 6:23), like the *pneumatikoi*, are abilities or powers which the Holy Spirit effects in individual believers. In I Corinthians 12 the word is used interchangeably with *pneumatikoi* (vss. 4, 9, 28, 30, 31). Elsewhere Paul says that the Corinthians “were enriched in him [Christ] with all speech and all knowledge . . . ; so that you are not lacking in any *charisma*” (I Cor. 1:5-7). Regarding celebrity he says: “Each has his own *charisma* from God, one of one kind and one of another” (I Cor. 7:7). Twice he writes to Timothy about “the *charisma* of God” that was “in” him; both are exhortations: (1) “Do not neglect the *charisma* you have, which was given you by prophetic utterance when the elders laid their hands upon you” (I Tim. 4:14); and (2) “Hence I remind you to rekindle the *charisma* of God that is within you through the laying on of my hands” (II Tim. 1:6). Apparently, in these two instances the *charisma* of God is the power to minister in the gospel, for in the second instance Paul continues: “For God did not give us a spirit of timidity but a spirit of power and love and self-control” (vs. 7). Thus the references in Paul’s letters to Timothy are similar to that which appears in Romans 12:6, where he writes: “Having *charismata* that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion of our faith; if service, in our serving; he who teaches, in his teaching; he who exhorts, in his exhortation; he who gives aid, with zeal; he who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness.” This passage in turn has links with I Corinthians 12, especially verses 28-30 (see above).

When Paul speaks of *charis* (usually translated “grace”) in contexts relevant to the present subject, he refers to special capacities, abilities, or ministries possessed by individual believers or churches through the gracious working of God. Paul himself was given the “grace” of apostleship (Rom. 1:5), and more particularly, the grace “to preach unto the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ” (Eph. 3:8; cf. vss. 2-7; Gal. 2:7-9). Again and again he appeals to this “grace” as the grounds of his apostolic authority in the gospel (Rom. 1:5; 12:3; 15:15; I Cor. 3:10; Eph. 3:2). But the “graces” differ from individual to individual: “But grace was given to each of us according to the measure of Christ’s gift. . . . And his gifts were that some should be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers” (Eph. 4:7, 11).

Finally, Paul speaks also of “the *karpōs* (fruit) of the Spirit.” This he says is “love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control” (Gal. 5:22-23). These are contrasted with “the works of the flesh” (vs. 19), and Paul says of them, with a touch of irony, “Against such there is no law” (vs. 23). His next words make clear how he relates the work of the Spirit to the believer’s relationship to Christ:

“And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires” (vs. 24, cpr. Rom. 8). And he adds: “If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit (vs. 25).

From the above it is clear that Paul's language, when speaking of the various workings of the Spirit in the lives of believers, is occasional. The words he employs fall short of being *termini technici*. He is concerned only to impress on his readers that the various workings of the Spirit in the lives of believers are of the nature of gifts freely, graciously, and sovereignly bestowed by God in Christ through the Holy Spirit. The several words employed do not in general designate distinctive categories of “gifts” (to use the most general term).

One distinction appears warranted, however. When Paul speaks of “the fruit (*karpos*) of the Spirit” he lists those things that the Spirit works in all those who are “of Christ,” in all who have “crucified the flesh with its passions and desires” (Gal. 5:22-24). But when he speaks of *pneumatikoi*, *charismata*, *charis* and *dorea* he consistently speaks of those workings of the Spirit which differ from individual to individual, either in kind or in degree. Here he has in mind those “gifts” of the Spirit which some believers receive, but not all—“one after this manner, and another after that.”

Because of the importance to the issues that have occasioned the present study, these matters call for further elucidation. The most relevant passages are Romans 12:3-8, Ephesians 4:1-16, and I Corinthians 12-14.

It is significant that in all three passages Paul speaks after-the-fact concerning the several *charismata* mentioned. That is to say, he does not lay it down as a rule, or as a promise, that the continuing presence of these very same *charismata* would characterize the whole New Testament era. He rather takes note of the fact that these (and perhaps others not mentioned) were present in the believing community of his day, and he seeks to guide the church how it ought to come to terms with them in all their diversity. *Hence no sure conclusion can be drawn from his words as to the normalcy of the continuance or recurrence of any particular charisma in the church beyond the apostolic era.* The believing community can only be open to the recognition of authentic *charismata* whenever and in whatever form they may appear within the life of the church, learning only from the apostle how to recognize them and how to deal with them when they are present.

It was not so much their presence as their *diversity* that gave rise to problems in the churches in Paul's day and moved him to write of them as he did. In all three instances it is to their diversity that he speaks, and to the potential for pride and disunity inherent in that diversity. (In Corinth this potential was already being realized.)

He reminds his readers that these *charismata*, and their diversity, are of God (Rom. 12:3), in Christ (Eph. 4:7ff), through the Holy Spirit (I Cor. 12:4ff). Twice he goes to some length to emphasize the unity of their source: “Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit: and there are varieties of service, and the same Lord; and there are varieties of working, but it is the same God who inspires them all in every one” (I Cor. 12:4-6; cf. vss. 8ff). “There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call, one

Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of us all, who is above all and through all in all" (Eph. 4:4-6).

And they have all been given for the same purpose: "For the equipment of the saints, for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ" (Eph. 4:12). In all three passages Paul employs centrally his famous metaphor of the "body" (his most characteristic use of it). He reminds his readers that together they are "one body" and mutually dependent on one another, and that the various *charismata* that are present in the church are for the sake of the well-being and effectiveness of the body.

These *charismata* are all "gifts," gifts of grace in Christ, and not personal achievements. They are "manifestations of the Spirit" (I Cor. 12:7) for the profit and benefit of the whole body (vs. 7; cf. 6:12; 10:23). As such they are peculiar to the believing community and belong to the order of redemption rather than of creation. Or put more precisely, they are powers worked by the Spirit in the redeemed community, rather than (to use Paul's phrase) in men "in the flesh."

The apostle does not distinguish between what we might call the "miraculous" and the "non-miraculous" *charismata*. And as far as the relative value of these several *charismata* is concerned, Paul seems to indicate something of his mind in the order chosen for his several lists:

<i>Ephesians 4</i>	<i>Romans 12:6-8</i>	<i>I Corinthians 12:8-10</i>	<i>I Corinthians 12:28</i>
apostles	prophecy	utterance of wisdom	apostles
prophets	service	utterance of	prophets
evangelists	teaching	knowledge	teachers
pastors and	exhorting	faith	workers of miracles
teachers	contributing	gifts of healing	healers
	giving aid	working of miracles	helpers
	showing mercy	prophecy	administrators
		distinguishing	kinds of tongues
		between spirits	
		kinds of tongues	
		interpretation of	
		tongues	

Of course, we cannot be sure just what considerations controlled the sequence within each of these lists. The ordering may have been quite casual in all instances, or it may have been affected in one or more cases by the particular situation in view at the time of writing. This may be true especially of the list in I Corinthians 12:8-10, since it varies most from the others. Moreover, the other three appear to reflect more closely the Pauline emphases found elsewhere. In any event, Paul values highest those *charismata* most useful for the edification of the church (I Cor. 14), and this is consistent with his insistence that the *charismata* have as their purpose the "upbuilding of the body."

Although there are differences in value, the diversity in itself causes no "schisms" in the body. In fact, it is from the diversity that the body attains its completeness and well-being: "For as in one body we have many members, and all the members do not have the same function, so

we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another" (Rom. 12:4-5). "If the whole body were an eye, where would be the hearing? If the whole body were an ear, where would be the sense of smell? . . . If all were a single organ, where would the body be? As it is, they are many parts, yet one body" (I Cor. 12:17-20). "From whom [Christ, the head] the whole body, joined and knit together by every joint with which it is supplied, when each part is working properly, makes bodily growth and upbuilds itself in love" (Eph. 4:16). The various *charismata* (*pneumatikoi*, *chares*, *dorea*) are distributed by Christ through the Holy Spirit, therefore, not to honor one believer above another, but for the welfare of the whole believing community.

In view of these things, Paul lays down certain instructions and warnings to the churches. To the believers at Rome he sends warning against pride: "For by the grace given to me I bid every one among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith which God has assigned him" (Rom. 12:3). To the Ephesians he writes: "I . . . beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all lowliness and meekness, with patience, forbearing one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Eph. 4:1-3).

To the church at Corinth, where factions of many kinds were rending the fellowship, he had to write more extensively reminding them that "no one speaking by the Spirit of God ever says, 'Jesus be cursed!' and no one can say 'Jesus is Lord' except by the Holy Spirit" (I Cor. 12:3); that "by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit" (vs. 13); that no believer may depreciate his own or another's *charisma* (vss. 14-30); that without love no *charisma* is of any worth (ch. 13); that each one ought to desire and seek those *charismata* which are most useful for the upbuilding of the body of Christ (ch. 14:1-25); and that the *charismata* are to be used *only for, and in such manner as will best serve, the edification of the church* (ch. 14:20-40).

But now as to the relative value of the *charismata* (*pneumatikoi*, *chares*, *dorea*) on the one hand and the "fruit (*karpos*) of the Spirit" on the other, there can be no question. The latter ought to be present in ever growing measure in all believers, and the *charismata* are distributed to the several members of Christ's body for the sake of working "the fruit" in all. Moreover, if one has ever so many of the *charismata*, and in whatever measure, but does not have "the fruit," especially love, he is nothing (I Cor. 13). And "the fruit" of the Spirit is not essentially ecstatic, but ethical: not explosive emotional or mystical experience, but: "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control" (Gal. 5:22-23)—not that which sets apart from the community but that which serves and unites the community.

In the light of all that Paul has to say about the *charismata*, therefore, it is clear that the apostle recognized that God in Christ had effected in the lives of believers by the Holy Spirit a "third work" (other than conversion and sanctification). He had also given certain "gifts" to members of the believing community. Their purpose is not for the honor

or prestige of the individual receiving them, but for the welfare and growth of "the body of Christ" — "For the equipment of the saints, for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ . . . in love." They are diverse, but because they are all from the one Spirit, and are all for the sake of the one body, none are to be depreciated. They are to be desired, but not for personal reasons, and those are to be most desired that are most useful for the upbuilding of the church. They are to be exercised, but only for the sake of the body, and in such manner as will best serve the body—only when exercised in love do they fulfill their purpose.

Whether the particular *charismata* mentioned by Paul were only for the apostolic age, or for the whole New Testament era, or for certain occasions within that era, or whether some were to cease while others continue, or whether the *charismata* of Paul's day were to be replaced by others as the needs of the church required—on all these questions Paul is silent. However, his general understanding of the purpose of the *charismata* strongly suggests that the presence of the particular *charismata* he acknowledged were occasioned by the needs of the time and therefore do not constitute a *normative catalogue* of Christ's gifts to the church for all time. To canonize Paul's several lists, or any of them, is to go beyond his teaching. It would appear that Paul expects that the church will always be gifted with *charismata*, but what the *charismata* of any time or place are to be must be left to the Christ who gives and the Holy Spirit who works. Believers are only to desire whatever *charismata* are needed in any given situation for the welfare of the body of Christ, leaving it to God to give as he will.

#### Exhortations Concerning the Spirit

Out of his understanding of the Holy Spirit's important role in the effectuation of salvation Paul addresses to his readers certain specific exhortations relative to the Spirit. To the Galatians he writes: "If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit" (5:25; cf. vs. 16); to the Ephesians: "Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God" (4:30); "Be filled with the Spirit" (5:18); "Pray at all times in the Spirit" (6:18); to the Thessalonians: "Do not quench the Spirit" (I Thess. 5:19); and to the Romans: "Live according to the Spirit" (8:13), be "led by the Spirit" (vs. 14).

Pentecostals and neo-Pentecostals tend to emphasize such exhortations to such an extent that other apostolic concerns are muted. Whether this tendency springs primarily from their religious experiences or is occasioned by the relative neglect of such exhortations by the confessional churches is difficult to answer. The charge of their neglect is frequently heard in charismatic literature, and no doubt with certain justification.

All of these exhortations are relatively straightforward, and are expressed with grammatical simplicity. Indeed, they are so simple that they are often tossed about, especially by charismatics, as if their meaning were transparent. That is far from the case, however. When one begins to ask: Just what did Paul have in mind with each of them? or: Just how does the believer carry out Paul's exhortations? he discovers how elusive they really are.

In Galatians Paul addresses himself to the question whether salvation is to be had by observance of the Old Testament legal regulations (especially as interpreted by the Judaizers of his day), or by union with Christ through faith—union with him in his crucifixion and resurrection (2:15-21). "Let me ask you only this," he writes: "Did you receive the Spirit by works of the law, or by hearing with faith?" (3:2). And again: "Does he who supplies the Spirit to you and works miracles among you do so by works of the law, or by hearing with faith?" (vs. 5). It is "through faith" he reminds them, that in Christ Jesus "you are all sons of God. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ" (3:26-27). Then he adds: "And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, 'Abba! Father!' So through God you are no longer a slave but a son . . ." (4:6-7). It is against this background that he says: "Walk by the Spirit, and do not gratify the desires of the flesh." "If you are led by the Spirit you are not under the law." For "the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such there is no law. And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit" (5:16ff). Speaking negatively, then, to "walk by the Spirit" (to be "led by the Spirit," vs. 18; to "sow unto the Spirit" 6:8) is not to live by "the flesh," or in "the flesh" to seek to obtain righteousness by observance of the law. But how is it to be understood positively? That is a more difficult matter.

The answer is surely not to be found in seeking special "guidance" from the Holy Spirit, a "guidance" which by-passes the necessity for wrestling toward moral decisions. (There is a tendency in neo-Pentecostalism to seek such "guidance" as the only sure way to know the Spirit's leading. Moral decision-making is suspect as giving too much room for the reassertion of the "mind of the flesh," as though the Spirit were incapable of illuminating and sanctifying the mind.) Paul points the way when he exemplifies the "fruit" of the Spirit (which are not achievements of the believer, but verily "fruit of the Spirit"): "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control." Let the Christian believer live by these, he counsels, not by mere law, for they are of the Spirit. By these—not by law—the "passions and desires of the flesh" are overcome. Paul's concern is with matters of morality, not with the tone of Christian experience—whether one lives in the atmosphere of a continual religious "high." And his appeal is to Spirit-wrought virtues which enable moral decision-making that is in accord with the will of God.

When Paul warns the Ephesians not to "grieve" the Holy Spirit (4:30), he does so again in the midst of a series of instructions concerning Christian morality. He writes: "Put off your old nature which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and put on the new nature created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness" (4:22-24). Here, to "grieve" the Holy Spirit is clearly to live after the fleshly lusts of the "old nature" (cf. Is. 63:10): "Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, with

all malice, and be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another as God in Christ forgave you" (vss. 31f). Contrariwise, to please the Holy Spirit is presumably to live according to the "new nature created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness."

Paul does not speak here of resisting the special "gifts" or "guidance" of the Spirit (as some neo-Pentecostals are prone to assume) but rather of matters of moral conduct. He is concerned that the Ephesian converts from paganism "walk in love" (5:1) in every human relationship. Although he does not here speak expressly of it, it is clear that he would have the Ephesians also live by "the fruit of the Spirit"—note his illustrative catalogue of its opposites: "bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander . . ., with all malice" (vs. 31).

It is against this same background in Ephesians that Paul adds: "Be filled with the Spirit" (5:18). Meanwhile he has urged on them: "Once you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord; walk as children of light . . . and try to learn what is pleasing to the Lord. Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them" (5:8-11). Then he adds: "Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, making the most of the time, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery; but be filled with the Spirit, addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs . . ." (vss. 15ff). To be "filled with the Spirit," therefore, belongs to the cluster of ideas: being "light in the Lord," "walking as children of light," "learning what is pleasing to the Lord," being "wise," and "understanding what the will of the Lord is." Most immediately it stands in contrast with getting "drunk with wine" which is "debauchery," and leads to "addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with all your heart"—the opposite of "debauchery." Hence it seems to refer to an elevated and exhilarated state of mind that expresses itself in communal singing of heartfelt praise to the Lord. But beyond that Paul does not elucidate; he does not further explain how the believer is to satisfy the terms of his exhortation.

Care must be taken, therefore, that we do not too easily supply out of our own subjective experience, tendency, or imagination what Paul leaves unspoken, such as that Paul means here that we should seek ecstatic experiences, or that Paul advocates here the exercise of special charismatic gifts. That Paul speaks of an openness to the Spirit that brings joy bursting forth in songs of praise goes without saying, but he is not here discussing priorities in the Christian life. He speaks rather of Christian alternatives to pagan "highs" experienced under the influence of fermented spirits.

Paul is equally terse when he calls on the Ephesians to "pray at all times in the Spirit" (6:18). He writes as if the intent of his words is well understood by his readers, yet the history of piety shows that, if it was, it did not remain so. Many have understood him to be calling for an intense emotional state, if not for ecstasy, as the ideal atmosphere of prayer. Many neo-Pentecostals assume that Paul here calls for praying in tongues—or at least that prayer in tongues is the most perfect way to

achieve what Paul had in mind. Nothing in the context supports these assumptions, however. Neither can appeal to Romans 8:26 (“but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with sighs too deep for words”) lend any support to these mystical interpretations of Paul’s intent. In the Romans passage Paul speaks only of those elements in our needs and longings which lie beyond the reach of our full comprehension or articulations; he is not laying down a guideline for prayer. We may better understand Paul’s apostolic counsel to the Ephesians to be a call to pray in the “faith, hope and love” that are of the Spirit.

It is also not immediately clear what Paul has in mind when he writes to the Thessalonians: “Do not quench the Spirit” (I Thess. 5:19). Both the terms of the exhortation and the context (a series of exhortations: “Rejoice always; pray constantly, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit; do not despise prophesying, but test everything; hold fast what is good, abstain from every form of evil”) suggest a resisting or restraining the work of the Spirit in the life of the individual believer and the church. But what that working is, or how the resisting is effected, or what the positive translation of the negative exhortation might be is not immediately clear. This should caution us against an easy and simplistic application of Paul’s exhortation, e.g., to non-participation in alleged revivals of “Pentecostal fire.”

Paul’s primary concern in the context is stated in the early part of chapter 5. Identifying his Christian brothers at Thessalonica as “sons of light, and sons of the day” (vs. 5), he urges them to “be sober, and put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation” (vs. 8—note his re-emphasis on his famous triad: faith, hope and love). He then reminds them that God has “destined us . . . to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us that whether we wake or sleep we might live with him” (vs. 9f.). For that reason they are to “encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing” (vs. 12). Then follows his own concluding series of exhortations. When in that series he urges his readers not to “quench the Spirit,” he is surely to be understood as having concern that Christian believers not resist those workings of the Spirit in the community that strengthen the “faith, hope and love” that are in Christ. These include mutual encouragement (vs. 11), submission to the admonitions of those who are “over you in the Lord” (vs. 12f), mutual admonition, mutual encouragement and mutual support (vs. 14). These are not to be resisted or restrained.

Perhaps most immediately Paul has in mind the “prophesying” of which he speaks in the next breath: “Do not despise prophesying.” What Paul means by “prophesying” can best be learned from I Corinthians 14 where he describes it as speaking “to men for their upbuilding and encouragement and consolation” (vs. 3). In contrast with speaking in tongues it is a speaking “with the mind” (vs. 19). Moreover, it is a speaking that can be and must be tested in and by the Spirit-filled community: “Test everything; hold fast what is good, abstain from every form of evil” (I Thess: 5:21f; cf. I Cor. 14:29). So both the despising

of prophesying and the refusal to test it, or to submit to the testing, is a "quenching of the Holy Spirit." (See further Section VII.)

When we turn to Paul's exhortation in Romans 8 we seem to find ourselves little better off. Here Paul calls on his readers to "live according to the Spirit," to be "led by the Spirit" (8:13-14). Paul has just said that God in Christ "condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the just requirements of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. For . . . those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit" (vss. 4f). And "you are not in the flesh, you are in the Spirit, if the Spirit of God really dwells in you" (vs. 9). He goes on to say that to have "the Spirit of Christ" is to have "Christ in you" (vs. 10; cf. Gal. 2:20; "It is no longer I that live, but Christ liveth in me"). Then come his words about "living according to the Spirit" and being "led by the Spirit." If we do live according to the Spirit we "put to death the deeds of the body" (vs. 13) and are "sons of God" (vs. 14), crying, "Abba! Father!" (vs. 15; cf. Gal. 4:6). And "the Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God" (vs. 16). The fact of the Spirit's indwelling is affirmed, and the effects of the Spirit's working, if we "live according to the Spirit" ("walk by the Spirit," "are led by the Spirit") are elucidated. But Paul does not explicitly clarify *how* believers are to walk according to the Spirit. Once again he seems to take for granted that this was a matter sufficiently well-known to his readers.

Nevertheless, close attention to Paul's developing argument sheds light on the matter. The key themes of his discussion have been on the one hand: law, sin and death; and on the other hand: grace, righteousness and life. The one complex of themes relates to the "old nature" (the man in Adam) who is of "the flesh"; the other complex of themes relates to the "new nature," the man "in Christ." The gospel is the offer of grace, righteousness and life to those under law, sin and death. What God has done in Christ provides the objective "work" on which the new possibilities offered in the gospel are grounded. It is faith that appropriates what the gospel offers; human efforts (the "works" of the "old nature") remain enmeshed in the complex of law, sin and death.

But in Romans the "righteousness" that is offered in the gospel is more than forgiveness ("justification" in the narrow sense); it is also being "dead to sin, but alive unto God in Christ Jesus" (6:11), being liberated from the "dominion" of sin (6:14). It is being "set free from sin" and becoming "slaves of righteousness" (6:18). This is the work of the Holy Spirit: "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set me free from the law of sin and of death" (8:2). He is "the Spirit of God" (8:9, 14) who "raised up Jesus from the dead" (8:11) and who is the author of our salvation. He is also the "Spirit of Christ" (8:9) by whom "Christ is in us" (8:10). Therefore the Spirit, in contrast to "the flesh," works in the believer a "mind" that is in accord with the will of God (8:4ff.).

What Paul means by this can probably be clarified from Galatians 5:16-26: the mind of the Spirit produces the "fruit" of the Spirit: "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-

control; against which there is no law" (vs. 24). The Spirit liberates the believer from the "mind of the flesh" and works in him "the mind of Christ." Hence when Paul exhorts to "live by the Spirit," be "led by the Spirit," he is not urging his readers to denigrate the physical, nor to follow impulses received in some ecstatic moment of intense religious experience (as some who overvalue ecstasy have assumed), but rather to heed those impulses that are in accord with the "fruit" of the Spirit, while rejecting those that are in accord with "the works of the flesh . . . immorality, impurity, licentiousness, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, anger, selfishness, dissension, party spirit, envy, drunkenness, carousing, and the like" (Gal. 5:19ff). Paul's concern once again is with the moral quality of the believer's life—with "righteousness."

Meanwhile, all these exhortations have in common the assumption of the powerful, dynamic presence of the Spirit working in the hearts of believers in such a way that salvation becomes a profound and joyous experience of peace with God, liberation from bondage to sin and death, power to work the works of God—faith, hope and love. Where these are not present the gospel has not yet been received as "the power of God unto salvation." "Any one who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him" (Rom. 8:9b).

Let the church ever be reminded that wherever the gospel has not been experienced as a powerful transforming reality in the heart, where the human spirit has not been moved by the Spirit to cry, "Abba! Father!" where Christian truth is merely assented to as a system or religious dogma—of that soul it cannot yet be said, "Salvation has come to this house" (Luke 19:9). But let those who are excessively pre-occupied with the Holy Spirit, who glory in (if not enter into a new bondage to) subjective religious experience—who thirst for ecstasy—let them forever remember that the gospel is the good news of that which God has done in Jesus Christ for our salvation: grace, righteousness and life.

The remaining canonical epistles add nothing essentially new to the Pauline teaching concerning the Spirit, *but they ascribe or assume no less*. He is the agent of revelation (Heb. 9:8; 10:15; I Pet. 1:11-12; II Pet. 1:21); the gospel of Jesus Christ was preached "by" (or "in") him (I Pet. 1:12); he "bears witness" of Christ to the believers (I Jn. 5:7ff); and God confirmed the reality of the salvation proclaimed by the primal witnesses to Christ "by signs and wonders and various miracles and by gifts (*merismoi*—distributions) of the Holy Spirit distributed according to his own will" (Heb. 2:4). Believers themselves are "partakers of the Holy Spirit" (Heb. 6:4); are "sanctified" by the Spirit (I Pet. 1:2); know that Christ abides in them "by the Spirit he gave them" (I Jn. 3:24; cf. 4:13); and are blessed in spite of persecutions, because "the spirit of glory and of God rests on them" (I Pet. 4:14). By their anointing with the Spirit they have knowledge of the truth (I Jn. 2:20-21; 27), and they are able to "distinguish the spirits" by the fact that the Spirit of God "confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh" (I Jn. 4:2). Beyond this, Jude exhorts his readers to "pray in the Holy Spirit" (vs. 20), and the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews warns of the punishment of him "who has spurned the Son of God, and profaned the blood

of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and outraged the Spirit of grace" (Heb. 10:29).

## B. The Holy Spirit in the Reformed Confessions

John Calvin left his imprint on the churches of the Reformed faith in his elaboration of the doctrine of the work of the Holy Spirit. In Book III of the *Institutes*, Calvin wrote:

Of the manner of participation in the grace of Jesus Christ, the fruits we derive from it, and the effects which follow it.

In Chapter 1 of Book III, Calvin emphasized the crucial role of the Holy Spirit in the application of the redemptive work of Christ. The title of Chapter 1 is:

That the things which have been mentioned above (i.e., in Books I & II) concerning Jesus Christ are made profitable to us by the secret operation of the Holy Spirit.

We may summarize this opening chapter as follows:

1. By the Holy Spirit, Christ unites us to himself, and communicates to us his graces.
2. In Christ the Mediator, we receive the fulness of the gift of the Holy Spirit.
3. Faith is the masterpiece of the Holy Spirit.

This important chapter ends with these words:

This is why Saint Paul magnifies the ministry of the Spirit (II Cor. 3:6-8), because it would be in vain for the preachers to proclaim the Gospel, if Jesus Christ the Sovereign Master, did not work from within to attract those who have been given to him by the Father (John 6:44). Therefore, as we have said that all the fulness of salvation is found in Jesus Christ, he also, in order to make us participate in it, baptizes us with the Holy Spirit and with fire (Luke 3:16); regenerating us in such a way that we become new creatures. Finally, he purifies us from all stains and impurities in order to consecrate us to God as holy temples. (Translated from the French edition of 1560.)

The official documents which have been handed down to us from the early days of the Reformation manifest Calvin's deep interest to give all the glory to God's Holy Spirit in the area of man's benefiting from the salvation accomplished by Christ. We shall consider first the *Belgic Confession* and the *Confession of La Rochelle* (known also as the Gallican Confession).

Even before it considers the application of Christ's work, the *Belgic Confession* mentions the Holy Spirit in several instances. For example, in Article 3 the Holy Spirit is set forth as the primary author of Scripture. As to the crucial matter of "Whence the Holy Scriptures derive their dignity and authority," we are told that we believe "all things contained in them, not so much because the church receives and approves them as such, but more especially because the Holy Spirit witnesses in our hearts that they are from God."

The same emphasis is found in the *Confession of La Rochelle*. Article 4 reads:

We recognize that these books are canonical and the most sure rule for our faith, not so much by the common agreement and consent of the church, but by the inward testimony and persuasion of the Holy Spirit, who makes us distinguish them from the other ecclesiastical books, which useful as they may be, cannot be the foundation for any article of faith.

Thus quite early in these Reformed creeds, the important work of the Holy Spirit is emphasized. The evangelical Christian places all his hope on the Bible's witness, and this hope is not the product of wishful thinking, but the result of the testimony of the Holy Spirit in his heart. When the doctrine of the Holy Trinity is confessed in Article 8 of the *Belgic Confession*, and explained in Article 9, we are informed that the "Holy Spirit is our Sanctifier, by his dwelling in our hearts." The indispensable work of the Holy Spirit in liberating man's will is taught in Article 14.

Coming specifically to the application of the work of Christ in the life of the Christian, both confessions (Articles 22) teach us:

We believe that, to attain the true knowledge of this great mystery, the Holy Spirit kindles in our hearts an upright faith, which embraces Jesus Christ with all his merits, appropriates him, and seeks nothing more besides him (*Belgic Confession*).

We believe that by this faith we are regenerated unto a new life, since we are by nature enslaved to sin. For we receive by faith the grace to live in holiness and in the fear of God by receiving the promise which is offered to us by the Gospel, namely that God will give us his Holy Spirit (*Gallican Confession*).

Article 24 of the *Belgic Confession* reiterates the biblical doctrine that true faith is wrought in man "by the hearing of the Word of God and the operation of the Holy Spirit." When the catholic church is defined in Article 27 of the same creed, we find an equal emphasis on the Lord Jesus Christ and the work of the Holy Spirit:

We believe and profess one catholic or universal church, which is a holy congregation of true Christian believers, all expecting their salvation in Jesus Christ, being washed by his blood, sanctified and sealed by the Holy Spirit.

The two confessions of faith reflect Calvin's insight into the nature of the two sacraments. We are told that they are:

visible signs and seals of an inward and invisible thing, by means whereof God works in us by the power of the Holy Spirit (*Belgic Confession*).

We recognize only two, common to all churches: the first, which is baptism, is given to us as a testimony of adoption, because in it [baptism] we are engrafted into the body of Christ, in order to be washed and cleansed by his blood, and then renewed in holiness of life by the Holy Spirit (*Gallican Confession*)

In setting forth the doctrine of communion, the *Belgic Confession* avoids the sacramentalism of Luther and the mere symbolism of Zwingli. This was accomplished by confessing the role of the Holy Spirit in making the sacrament a real communion between the believer, the church and Jesus Christ, the Lord. Article 35 states it this way:

Now, as it is certain and beyond all doubt that Jesus Christ has not enjoined to us the use of his sacraments in vain, so he works in us all that he represents to us by these signs, though the manner surpasses our understanding and cannot be comprehended by us, as the operations of the Holy Spirit are hidden and incomprehensible.

The *Heidelberg Catechism* and the *Catechism of Geneva* manifest the same emphasis on the role of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer. This is seen in the first answer of the Heidelberg Catechism. The believer confesses a beautiful and glorious confession which is not the result of auto-suggestion but echoes the work of the Holy Spirit in his heart: "Wherefore by his Holy Spirit he also assures me of eternal life, and makes me heartily willing and ready, henceforth to live unto him."

In the first part of the Heidelberg Catechism it is pointed out that regeneration is essential in order that we may do good, and that this is accomplished by the Spirit of God (Q. 8). Faith is wrought in the heart of the believer by the Holy Spirit (Q. 21). In the Geneva Catechism we are clearly taught that what has been accomplished for us does not become a part of us or in us except by the Holy Spirit. Section 14 of the Geneva Catechism states:

As the blood of Jesus Christ is that which purifies us, the Holy Spirit must water our consciences with that blood in order that we may be effectually cleansed. The Holy Spirit regenerates us and makes us new creatures, in such a way that through him we receive all the treasures and all the gifts which are offered to us in Jesus Christ.

Saving faith, according to the Geneva Catechism (Section 18) does not come from ourselves: "Scripture teaches us that it is a special gift of the Holy Spirit."

Since the Reformed Faith has avoided the Lutheran doctrine of the ubiquity of the body of Christ, how are we to think of the presence of Christ in the world today? The Heidelberg Catechism gives us this answer:

Christ is true man and true God: with respect to his human nature, he is no more on earth; but with respect to his Godhead, majesty, grace and Spirit, he is at no time absent from us (Q. 47).

In other words, the Lord Jesus Christ is present with us by the Holy Spirit. The Heidelberg Catechism emphasizes the importance of the ascension of Christ in such a way that the Holy Spirit becomes the One through whom we attain our goal: "He sends us his Spirit as an earnest, by whose power we seek the things that are above where Christ is" (Q. 49).

In Lord's Day 20 in which the Heidelberg Catechism deals specifically with the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, the believer not only confesses the

deity of the Holy Spirit, but speaks of the gift of the Spirit in these personal and intimate words: "that he is also given me, to make me by a true faith partaker of Christ and all his benefits, to comfort me, and to abide with me forever."

The same emphasis which the confessions gave to the Holy Spirit working faith in the hearts of God's people is found also in the catechisms, as we have already noticed. However, this does not take place apart from the preaching of the Word of God. In Question 65 of the Heidelberg Catechism we learn that saving faith comes from "the Holy Spirit, who works in our hearts by the preaching of the holy gospel, and confirms it by the use of the holy sacraments." The Geneva Catechism emphasizes again the unique importance of the work of the Holy Spirit in salvation.

We must receive the Word of God with complete assurance of conscience, as a truth which has come to us from heaven, submit to it with all meekness, loving it with a true and complete affection, and engraving it on our hearts in order to follow it and conform to it.

In order to show that the above mentioned matter is not within our power, the Geneva Catechism gives the following answer to the question: "Is all that within our power?"

"In no way; but it is God who works within us in this fashion by his Holy Spirit" (Sections 35-44).

The same catechism stresses the importance of the work of the Holy Spirit in the sacraments.

"It is the office of the Holy Spirit to seal the promises of God in our hearts. . . . You understand therefore that the power of the sacraments does not consist of the external element, but that it all proceeds from the Spirit of God? Yes. . . ." (Section 46).

It is very instructive that the Heidelberg Catechism emphasizes the equal importance of the blood of Christ and the action of the Holy Spirit. Notice this emphasis in Questions 72 and 73. In our participation with our fellow members of the church in the sacrament of communion, we do not only embrace all that Christ accomplished for us, but we also "become more and more united to his sacred body." How does this wonderful thing take place? The answer is: "By the Holy Spirit who dwells both in Christ and in us."

The third part of the Heidelberg Catechism which deals with gratitude, begins with an equal emphasis on Christ redeeming us "by his blood," and on the Holy Spirit renewing us after Christ's own image. When dealing with the seventh commandment, both the Heidelberg Catechism and the Geneva Catechism speak of our bodies as "temples of the Holy Spirit."

Why does God "want the ten commandments" to be "preached so strictly?" We are told in the Heidelberg Catechism that this is necessary to know our sinfulness, seek the remission of our sins, and that "we may constantly endeavor, and pray to God for the grace of the Holy Spirit" (Q. 115).

Why should Christians pray? To manifest their thankfulness to God? Yes, but more: "Because God will give his grace and Holy Spirit to those only who with hearty sighing unceasingly beg them of him and thank him for them" (Q. 116).

The *Canons of Dort* reflect the same emphasis on the indispensable role of the Holy Spirit in the salvation of the elect. In the First Head of Doctrine, article 7 (I. 7), we read that God effectually calls the elect "and draws them to his communion by his Word and Spirit." In the Second Head, article 8, the Holy Spirit is the giver of faith as well as of "all the other saving gifts." In Heads Three and Four, article 3, we are told that "without the regenerating grace of the Holy Spirit" all men "are neither able nor willing to return to God." Neither "the light of nature nor the law" can give us saving grace. But God does, "by the operation of the Holy Spirit through the word or ministry of reconciliation" (III & IV, 6).

Article 11 of the same Head of Doctrine speaks at length of the tremendous work of the Holy Spirit in the lives of the elect. "He not only causes the gospel to be externally preached to them and powerfully illuminates their minds by his Holy Spirit . . . but by the efficacy of the same regenerating Spirit he pervades the inmost recesses of man."

Almost every article of the Fifth Head of Doctrine which deals with perseverance, attributes the glorious and comforting reality to the work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the elect. As to those who deny this doctrine under the pretext that it creates indolence and is injurious to godliness, the answer is: "For these show that they do not know the power of divine grace and the working of the indwelling Holy Spirit."

A study of the Reformed confessions and catechisms which have come down to us from the early days of the Reformation brings to light a wonderful balance and genuine sensitivity to the work of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of believers. The concern of these Reformed symbolical documents was not theoretical but practical. They helped the persecuted believers to verbalize in biblical and confessional words the experience of those who have tasted the salvation of the Lord by the power and grace of the Holy Spirit. They continue to provide the church today necessary guidelines for elaboration of the biblical doctrine of the Holy Spirit within a milieu which has known the rise of neo-Pentecostalism. Not that the Reformers of the sixteenth century and their immediate successors have said the last word on the doctrine of the Holy Spirit in the symbolical books which they have left us. Progress in the understanding of the Christian faith is a continuing matter; but it will be an authentic progress only if it builds on the foundation left for us in the confessions of faith and the catechisms of the Reformation era.

The Christian Reformed Church—its members, officers and theologians—must continue to search the Scriptures together with a view to advancing the church's common understanding of the work of the Holy Spirit beyond that which is set forth in its confessions. But those of its members who are involved in the present "charismatic renewal" and who

are given to speaking of the "baptism in/with the Holy Spirit" as a kind of "second blessing" (or "third blessing") received by some believers in addition to and subsequent to conversion are reminded that the community of Reformed Christians, since the Reformation, have not found it necessary, in the light of Scripture, to speak confessionally in that manner. They are cautioned, in the light of this history, to examine their language carefully as they testify to the grace of God, that their confession, witness and proclamation be first of all in accord with the Scriptures and not controlled by the subjective experiences of a minority of their fellow believers, and that they continue to submit their own understanding of the Scripture and of their experience to the discernment of the whole Spirit-filled and Spirit-gifted community of faith.

That the life of the church today needs renewal very few would deny. Such renewal is to be found, however, in the rediscovery of the Christ-centeredness of Holy Scripture. This discovery will take place only through the grace of the Holy Spirit whose mission is the glory of Christ, the salvation and preservation of the believer, and the building up of the body of Christ unto the redemption of the whole creation.

#### V. BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT

Traditionally we have spoken of the work of the Holy Spirit in the Christian in terms of regeneration and sanctification. This limitation has been challenged by Pentecostal and neo-Pentecostal movements. They claim to experience still another blessing of the Holy Spirit, commonly called "the baptism in/with the Holy Spirit." They emphasize the baptism in the Holy Spirit as a second experience distinct from and subsequent to conversion which gives power for witness and which manifests itself through the special "gifts" of the Spirit.

The baptism in the Holy Spirit is the most distinctive (and often the most precious) doctrine to the Pentecostals. The desire for this Spirit-baptism sweeps every other doctrine into its vortex. The experience of this Spirit-baptism is described in different ways, but usually in superlatives. Those who claim to have experienced such a baptism refer to it as the most beautiful experience they have ever had. They speak of an extraordinary sense of God's reality and presence. They lay claim to a praise and adoration of God hitherto unknown to them. They testify of greater capacities to witness to the gospel; in all aspects of life they claim a deeper love, joy and peace. Moreover, they also testify of having received a number of special "gifts," in particular, the gift of speaking in tongues. The gift of tongues-speaking is believed to be sure proof of having had an authentic baptism of the Holy Spirit. There seems to be a general consensus that this Spirit-baptism occurred *within* their Christian life. They claim to have been believers before receiving the "baptism," and they interpret this baptism as something more (or beyond). This new and exciting life in the Spirit may occur after extended prayer and seeking. Christians are urged, therefore, to seek this baptism in the Holy Spirit and become empowered for service and witness.

The basic question is: Are there sound reasons for assuming this distinct and different act of the Spirit? The Pentecostals and some neo-

Pentecostals claim that Scripture requires this of us. The Bennetts, for example, state categorically: "The normative pattern in the New Testament was to accept Jesus, receive water baptism, and be baptized with the Holy Spirit" (*The Holy Spirit and You*, p. 34). Another writer summarizes the Pentecostal position as follows: "The basic dogma of Pentecostalism, the one that distinguishes it from other branches of Christianity, is the dogma of 'the baptism in the Holy Spirit.' Sometimes it is called 'the baptism of the Holy Spirit.' Whatever preposition is used, this term refers to a decisive, usually for the Christian a second, encounter with God. This encounter empowers the Christian for service to the Lord, it is claimed, and in a way that nothing else can. Without this a Christian is 'only saved.' With it, he is an effective servant of Christ" (Peter Doyle, *The Theology of Episcopalian Pentecostalism*, p. 2).

The Book of Acts is regarded as the main source for this doctrine of the baptism in the Holy Spirit. Five passages are recognized as particularly important. These texts are: 2:1-42; 8:4-25; 9:1-18; 10:11-18; 19:1-7.

The Pentecostal expression "baptism in/with the Holy Spirit" does not, however, occur in Scripture. Instead Scripture records the prophecy of John the Baptist that Jesus "will baptize with the Holy Spirit." This change from a verb to a noun is in itself probably unimportant, but it is important to note where the words are found. They are found either in the prophecy of John the Baptist concerning Jesus (Matt. 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; John 1:33), or in the promise of Jesus to his disciples (Acts 1:5; 11:16). In every instance these words point to the contrast between the baptism of John and the baptism of Jesus.

Does this prophecy that speaks of being baptized with the Holy Spirit establish a basic pattern that must be repeated in the life of every believer, viz., faith, water baptism, and then baptism with the Holy Spirit? Not at all. The prophecy points rather to the fulfillment of the Old Testament promise and the establishment of the new covenant. John the Baptist stands on the bridge between the old covenant and the new. He is the last of the Old Testament prophets, the messenger preparing the way, the Elijah who must come. Although he heralds the dawn of the messianic age, John the Baptist himself stands within the old covenant. His mission occurs prior to the fulfillment of the promise concerning the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and his baptism is only a baptism with water.

Jesus establishes the new covenant. Through his ministry the kingdom of God breaks in a new way into human history. During his earthly life the kingdom of God is present in his own person, and Jesus alone has had the Spirit poured out upon him (anointed with the Spirit *at his baptism*). By his life and death, Jesus opens the way so that all may enter the kingdom and live in the new age of the Spirit. After his glorification, Jesus gives the Spirit to all who believe in him (John 7:39).

Such is the meaning of Pentecost. Pentecost signals the beginning of that new age for people of all nations. No longer are the promises given primarily to one people but to the nations of the world. Jesus is now drawing all men to himself and thereby he is re-establishing the unity of

mankind (even Babel's divisions are overcome by the gift of tongues at Pentecost).

The Book of Acts presents these two themes of universalism and unity in a very graphic manner. Acts 1:8 states the theme when it points to the expansion of the church from Jerusalem to Samaria and to the end of the earth. As the church expands to Samaria and to the Gentile world, it is significant that at these points events are recorded that are similar to the events of Pentecost.

In this way the Book of Acts underscores the significance of these turning points in the mission of the church. The *universality* of the church and the *unity* of the church is seen in the description of the Samaritan converts who, although baptized by Philip, had to wait for the apostles before the Spirit was received by them (Acts 8:12-17). In the case of the first Gentile converts; the Spirit fell on them immediately, prior to being baptized (Acts 10:44-48). Although there are some baffling aspects to the incident at Ephesus, the event is a transition from John's baptism to Jesus' baptism (Acts 19:1-7). Thus Acts reveals that the new covenant is for all men; both Jew and Gentile alike participate in the new age of the Spirit. Those present at Pentecost have no advantage over those who enter the new covenant at a later point. All equally receive the Holy Spirit (Acts 10:47; 11:17).

Is there some pattern in all this to be repeated in the life of every believer? For example, as Jesus was born of the Spirit (Virgin Birth) and later empowered by the Spirit (baptism), so believers must be born of the Spirit (faith/conversion) and later empowered by the Spirit (Spirit/baptism)? Or since the disciples already believed during the earthly ministry of Jesus and only later received the baptism of the Spirit at Pentecost, so now in the life of every believer the occurrence of faith and the Baptism of the Holy Spirit are similarly distinct events. Is there such a pattern? By no means. The events of Jesus' life are unique precisely because they prepare the way for the establishment of the new covenant. And one should note that the faith of the disciples prior to Pentecost was not a faith that fully comprehended (cf. Mt. 16:16, 23; Jn. 2:22, etc.). Although the disciples had a special relationship to Jesus during his ministry, they did not fully enter the new age until Pentecost. We live after the establishment of the new covenant. And we can no more repeat the sequence of those events in Jesus' life and in the lives of the disciples than we can repeat the transition from John's baptism to Jesus' baptism. Those events occurred before the establishment of the new covenant. We live after the establishment, and now to be in the new covenant is to have received the baptism in the Holy Spirit.

But is there perhaps some precise sequence of events necessary for receiving the Holy Spirit? Can a normative pattern be derived from the conversions recorded in Acts? Apart from the demand of faith, there appears to be no fixed sequence. In several instances the gift of the Spirit seems to be related to or to follow upon water baptism. But in two of the five accounts in Acts, the sequence is faith, baptized with the Spirit, and then water baptism. Thus there is no normative sequence in Acts.

If then the Holy Spirit is given to all who enter the new age and is

the means by which they enter the kingdom, does it follow that there are no new experiences of the Holy Spirit in the lives of believers? Of course not. The Holy Spirit continues to reveal his presence in various ways and at times in a decisive manner. The congregation in Jerusalem, which had received the Spirit at Pentecost (or subsequently), experienced another decisive manifestation of the Spirit during a time of persecution (Acts 4:31). But this is called being "filled with the Holy Spirit." And the Apostle Paul can exhort Christians to "be filled with the Spirit" (Eph. 5:18). Thus being filled with the Spirit is a repeatable event. As believers live under the new covenant, they must seek to be continually filled with the Spirit.

Although not in agreement with the Pentecostal and neo-Pentecostal teaching on the Baptism in the Spirit, we like to state emphatically that every Christian should take seriously the work of the Holy Spirit. We are challenged to discover anew the meaning of the Spirit's work in the believer and the church. We gratefully acknowledge that the Pentecostals have focused attention on the Spirit, whose work has all too often been overlooked or ignored by the established churches. No renewal is really possible without acknowledging the Spirit: his nature, promises, action and gifts. We may not cease to recognize and pray for God's great gift, the Holy Spirit.

Those who have experienced what they call "the baptism in/with the Holy Spirit" show a remarkable change in their lives, eager to be vibrant Christians. We are grateful and praise God for any and every manifestation of newness in Christ Jesus. We question, however, the terminology that is used to describe their change. It confuses our people and leads to misunderstanding and (at times) division among fellow believers.

How then can their experience be described? John Calvin, the theologian of the Holy Spirit (as Warfield described him) has written some remarkable and noteworthy lines on the work of the Holy Spirit in the first and third Books of the *Institutes*. His ideas have perhaps not been adequately explored by the Reformed churches. Calvin's stress on "daily regeneration," for example, deserves our close attention (cf. Book III, ch. XV). The Holy Spirit introduces us to the enjoyment of Christ and all his benefits and restores us to newness. "This restoration, however, is not accomplished in a single moment, or day, or year; but by continual, and sometimes even tardy advances." Christians may experience periods of spiritual back-sliding. A renewed yielding to the Spirit causes a re-affirmation of the commitment to Christ made at an earlier time. Such renewal of Christian fervor should not be interpreted as "a baptism in/with the Spirit." It is a new filling of the Holy Spirit in a Christian life that beforehand has known only the beginning of the riches of Christ. The Apostle Paul exhorts all believers to be "filled with the Spirit" (Eph. 5:18). And it is possible to be a follower of Christ and yet to grieve the Spirit (Eph. 4:30) or to quench the Spirit (I Thess. 5:19). All true believers have the Spirit dwelling within them (cf. Rom. 8:9; I Cor. 12:13), but it is possible for believers not to continue in being filled with the Spirit. The call to daily repentance must be heard and answered in

our lives. Our hearts must be open to the full riches of union with Christ and be filled daily with his Spirit.

### Speaking in Tongues as Primary Evidence of Spirit-baptism.

According to Pentecostal and often also neo-Pentecostal teaching, speaking in tongues is thought to be the primary evidence of "the baptism in/with the Holy Spirit." It is commonly believed in Pentecostal circles that the baptism of believers is witnessed by the initial physical sign of speaking in tongues. This tongues-speaking is to them a highly desirable and very valuable kind of evidence for Spirit-baptism. Believers are urged to pray for it and develop a deep-felt desire for this unique manifestation of the Spirit's presence and power.

We wish to point out that in the book of Acts speaking in tongues is mentioned only on three occasions: namely, at Pentecost (2:4), at the conversion of Cornelius (10:46), and at the establishment of the church in Ephesus (19:6). The paucity of such incidents is noteworthy. There are nine instances in Acts where people are described as Spirit-filled where no mention is made of speaking in tongues (4:8, 31; 6:3, 5; 7:55; 9:17; 11:24; 13:9, 52). There are twenty-one instances in Acts where people are described as coming to salvation but are not said to have spoken in tongues (2:41; 3:7-9; 4:4; 5:14; 6:7; 8:36; 9:42; 11:21; 13:12; 43, 48; 14:1, 21; 16:14, 34; 17:4, 11-12, 34; 18:4, 8; 28:24). We do not find ample evidence, therefore, to say that tongues-speaking is an indispensable evidence that one has received the Holy Spirit.

The primary section in the New Testament that deals with speaking in tongues is I Corinthians 12-14. To insist that tongue-speaking is a necessary proof that one has been baptized in the Spirit is to overlook Paul's clear statement in I Corinthians 12:13: "For by one Spirit we are all baptized into one body." Only some of the Corinthians spoke in tongues (cf. I Cor. 12:8-10). Yet all of them, Paul declares, were baptized by one Spirit. It is unwarranted, therefore, to teach and insist that speaking in tongues is an indispensable sign of having received the Spirit.

The meaning of speaking in tongues will be discussed in a different section of this report. We wish only to emphasize here that the New Testament does not support the Pentecostal claims about tongues-speaking as a necessary evidence of Spirit-baptism.

## VI. BAPTISM AND "BELIEVER'S BAPTISM"

Some members of our churches who have had the experience called "baptism in the Spirit" have subsequently desired to receive "believer's baptism." Since they are members of a Christian church in the Reformed tradition, their desire is a desire for *rebaptism* and as such necessarily raises questions concerning the validity of infant baptism and the understanding of the covenant.

It is instructive to note that not all neo-Pentecostals feel this compulsion for rebaptism. Those whose associations are with the Catholic neo-Pentecostal movement are a prime example of this fact. Since Roman Catholics hold firmly to a doctrine of infant baptism, they are compelled to interpret "baptism in the Spirit" differently than do those whose the-

ology teaches only believer's baptism. The Catholic neo-Pentecostals are presently interpreting "baptism in the Spirit" in terms of their doctrine of confirmation, i.e., that this is a releasing of the power of the Spirit given one in infant baptism.

The above example is important because it underscores the fact that this experience is open to more than one doctrinal interpretation. Those who assume that the neo-Pentecostal experience requires rebaptism as a necessary accompaniment, should recognize that they have accepted a *Baptist* understanding of baptism. Although they may claim that this is the clear and obvious teaching of Scripture revealed to them by the Holy Spirit, they should be aware that not all neo-Pentecostals agree, that the Reformed churches certainly do not agree, and that in fact a large majority of Christians throughout the ages have not agreed.

However, since this issue has been raised by members of our churches, we think it is necessary to say a few things about baptism. Our statement will be brief and should not be construed as a complete statement on this matter. Because of the present turmoil in Protestantism and because our people are increasingly exposed to a wide variety of doctrinal opinions, this may be a good time for the church or its teachers to issue again a thorough presentation of the doctrine of baptism. But we do not consider this our task. Instead, we shall point to a few perspectives that are important for a Reformed understanding of baptism.

The desire for "believer's baptism" is prompted usually by what the person sees as "the clear and obvious pattern of Scripture." The demand of Scripture is always "believe and be baptized." Thus, they say, the prerequisites for baptism are repentance and faith. Such conscious acts are the acts of an adult and not of an infant. It is only when one consciously repents and claims the promises in faith that baptism can have its full meaning. Hence they claim that the pattern of Scripture requires "believer's baptism."

No one disputes the fact that the pattern of repentance, faith, and baptism is clearly present in the New Testament. The only question is whether this is an exclusive pattern which must now be duplicated in the life of every individual believer. In the missionary situation in which the New Testament is written, the pattern of *adult conversion* is predominant. Before an adult can be accepted as a member of the people of God, he must first repent and believe. Only then can he receive the sign which declares that the promises which God guarantees to his people apply also to him. And that is still the case today. Adults existing outside the New Testament people of God (the body of Christ) can enter only by way of repentance and faith, and thus be entitled to the promises and their signs which God gives to his people.

But does God consider as members of his household only those persons who have consciously repented and believed? Does God deal in grace only with the mature individual? Or does God, still in the New Testament era as in the Old, deal graciously through the corporate relationships in which we exist, especially through that of the family? From our reading of the Old and New Testament we find it impossible to assert that parents who enter the body of Christ through faith do so

without their children. It is our firm conviction that God still works corporately in the New Testament era.

I Corinthians 7:14 can be understood in no other way: "Otherwise, your children would be unclean, but as it is they are holy." Here the apostle Paul declares that children who are born of a believing parent are holy. This does not mean that they are without sin. The term "holy" is covenant language and designates one as a member of the people of God.

Perhaps ancient Jewish practice may help to clarify this. When a Gentile became a Jew (a proselyte), he and his children had to be baptized first and then circumcized. The question was asked whether a child who was conceived before his Gentile mother became a proselyte but who was born after the mother changed religion should be considered to be a Gentile or a Jew. In other words, should that child be baptized first (proselyte baptism as a Gentile) and then circumcized? The answer was given in the negative because that child was "holy," i.e. born in holiness. He was thus a member of the people of God by virtue of his birth from a believing mother and was directly entitled to the sign of the people of God (i.e. circumcision as a Jew without prior baptism).

In I Corinthians 7:14, the apostle Paul is making the same claim for children born of a believing parent. Such children are members of God's people, i.e. they are holy. Although Paul is not speaking directly concerning baptism in this passage, what he says lays the only basis that there is for receiving baptism. One must be holy, i.e. a member of the people of God. An unbelieving adult becomes such only through repentance and faith; a child born of a believing parent is considered to be such by virtue of his birth.

The same perspective is seen in the use of "household" which is mentioned in connection with baptism (cf. I Cor. 1:16; Acts 16:15, 33; 18:8; 11:14). Although it is impossible to prove the presence of infants or minor children in each of these instances, it is equally impossible to prove their absence in each of these instances. But that is unimportant. The simple fact that the New Testament continues to use the term "house" or "household," which is a corporate and not an individualistic category, indicates that the pattern of God's dealing with his people has not changed. If the New Testament authors had wished to declare that there is now a drastic shift in the way God deals graciously with men (i.e. individualistically and no longer corporately), they would not have continued to use the term "household." For that term had received its meaning already in the Old Testament, and there it included all members of the corporate unit including infants (cf. Genesis 17:23ff; Gen. 45:18; I Sam. 22:16ff). The household is a unity in the sight of God. The faith of those who represent the household (viz., father and/or mother) embraces the children.

This corporate dimension of family life which the Bible teaches and honors is of immense significance for understanding infant baptism. For the objections that the infant cannot present itself, cannot consciously repent and believe, and that consequently baptism is not a declaration on the part of the infant which testifies to an actual inward change, are

all objections which stem from a highly individualistic understanding of the sacrament. As such they are quite beside the point. For the sacrament of baptism is not primarily an arrangement between God and separate individuals. It is rather an arrangement between God and his covenant people. The sacrament is a symbolic presentation of the promises of God (forgiveness, cleansing, new life) given to those who are members of the New Testament people of God. The sacrament is not first of all a guaranteed promise of what has happened or will happen to a particular person (neither is it an evidence of what has happened); rather, it is a guaranteed promise of what God has done and will do for his household. And at every administration of the sacrament, God's household is reminded of God's promises and is called to appropriate the reality of that which has been promised in baptism by living each day in faith. God's people are reminded that their baptism stands continuously "as an appeal to God for a clear conscience through the resurrection of Jesus Christ" (I Peter 3:21). As such, and not in any magical way, it saves them.

From this perspective the situation of the adult baptized after his conversion and that of the baptized infant is essentially the same. Both receive the sacrament because they are members of God's household. Both are recipients of the same promises because they belong to the same household, and both are called (the adult immediately and the child as he matures) to appropriate by faith what is given/promised in baptism. In neither case does baptism save the recipient automatically. Individuals are saved only as they live as faithful (believing) members of God's household.

Although the desire for believer's baptism (with its implicit rejection of infant baptism) is sincerely motivated by the belief that it is demanded by Scripture, it is our judgment that this desire stems from a reading of Scripture which fails to take into account the continuing corporate workings of God's grace in the New Testament era. In addition, it stems from the belief that there is only one pattern of Christian experience described in the New Testament, which must be followed by all. Thus, for example, the fact that Jesus was baptized as an adult is seen as proof that we must be. But such an interpretation represents a failure described elsewhere in this report (Section V), the failure to read the Scriptures as a record of the history of salvation. In particular, it is the failure to understand that Jesus lived in a unique stage of that history and his life brought into being the new era. Hence the stages of our Christian experience need not, and in fact cannot, parallel his, because all of us enter the history of salvation at a significantly different point.

In conclusion, the rejection of infant baptism and the desire for "believer's baptism" is based not so much on an understanding of this text or that; rather, it is rooted in a basic perspective on Christian experience and the purpose of Scripture. We call this basic perspective "individualism," an individualism familiar to us in the past as a prominent ingredient of American fundamentalism and present today in many forms of neo-Pentecostalism. We would therefore encourage our pastors to

emphasize again the corporate dimensions of God's grace and our Christian experience, as well as the history-of-salvation perspective in the reading and understanding of Scripture.

## VII. THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Central to the experience and practice of neo-Pentecostalism are the gifts of the Holy Spirit. The entire movement is sometimes identified with one of these gifts; viz., speaking in tongues, or glossolalia. Neo-Pentecostalism is also frequently identified as the "charismatic movement"—the *charismata* being gifts of grace. It should be noted that the book of Acts never uses the word *charisma* and that when Peter on the day of Pentecost promises the gift of the Holy Spirit (i.e., the gift which consists of the Holy Spirit himself and not, as is sometimes assumed, the gift of tongues), he uses the more general Greek word for gift, *dorea* (Acts 2:38; cf. 8:20; 10:45; 11:17).

The gifts of the Holy Spirit, or spiritual gifts, should be distinguished from spiritual fruit. Spiritual fruit is also the result of the Spirit's indwelling in the believer, but unlike spiritual gifts, the fruit of the Holy Spirit is essential to the life of faith. Every true believer has the Holy Spirit in his heart. This presence is a gift from God as well as a benefit of the accomplished work of Jesus Christ. From this presence of the Holy Spirit follows the fruit which authenticates the Christian life (Gal. 5:22). This pluriform fruit does not necessarily appear dramatically or suddenly in a believer, but it grows and matures as does fruit. Without the fruit of the Spirit, and especially without the fruit and way of love (I Cor. 13), the gifts of the Holy Spirit are useless. The fruit of the Holy Spirit is the result of that regenerating and sanctifying work of the Spirit in the individual believer which joins the believer to the body of Christ. The gifts of the Holy Spirit are the result of the Spirit's pentecostal outpouring upon the body of Christ, as a result of which individual believers are gifted for the enrichment and empowering of the body.

What are the gifts?

As has already been noted in this report, the New Testament records several lists of gifts. In Romans 12:6-8, the apostle lists the following: prophecy, service, teaching, exhortation, contribution, giving aid, acts of mercy. In I Corinthians 12:4-11 he lists: utterance of wisdom, utterance of knowledge, faith, gifts of healing, working of miracles, prophecy, distinguishing between spirits, various kinds of tongues, interpretation of tongues. In I Corinthians 12:28-30 he lists the following and assigns an order to some: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then workers of miracles, healers, helpers, administrators, speakers in various kinds of tongues and interpreters of tongues. In I Corinthians 13:1-3 he lists these: tongues of men and of angels, prophetic powers, understanding of mysteries, knowledge, faith, contribution and sacrifice. In Ephesians 4:7-22 we find these listed: apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers. In I Peter 4:11 two are mentioned: speaking and service.

Two things are immediately evident: sometimes the listing is in terms of the gifts themselves, and sometimes in terms of the gifted persons. Secondly, the lists are not given in any particular order of value, except where indicated in I Corinthians 12:28-30. It is hazardous, therefore, to begin to evaluate the gifts according to their relative merits, except where Scripture gives warrant for this. And even if we were to assign relative values to them and find one or two which are less valuable, that would not therefore mean we should minimize these or any other gifts, since their source and distribution is the work of none other than the Holy Spirit. None of God's gifts may be despised or downgraded.

The variety of gifts mentioned in the Scriptures and the various differences of the lists indicate also that there was not in New Testament times an unchanging or fixed catalogue of gifts. It may well be, therefore, that since the giver of the gifts is the Holy Spirit and he dispenses the gifts according to his sovereign good pleasure, there are additional gifts which may surface from time to time in the church, according to the need of the hour. The gifts enable the church to perform its task, and though the central tasks of the church remain the same, time and circumstance may call for additional gifts while some of the traditional gifts fade because there is, in the mind of Christ, no immediate need for them. The virtual absence of the gift of tongues for long periods in the history of the church may well be a case in point.

Are the gifts of the Spirit still present today?

Among Pentecostals, neo-Pentecostals and non-Pentecostals alike, it is common practice to divide the gifts of the Holy Spirit into spectacular and non-spectacular gifts, or extraordinary and ordinary gifts. It can easily be seen that the abilities to teach, to rule, to give mercy and like gifts are abilities widely present in the church, and no one questions their validity or necessity. Other gifts, such as speaking in tongues and healing, have been more controversial, less widely present and are considered more dramatic and spectacular. Their validity is often questioned. We should make certain, however, that we question them for good reason. If the Scriptures do not distinguish between "more" or "less" spectacular, may we arbitrarily introduce such a distinction and rule out the use of some of these gifts for today's church and not others?

It is of the more spectacular kind of gifts that it has long been common to say in Reformed theology that they ceased to function with the death of the apostolic circle and the completion of the canon of Scripture. In line with this conviction, it is said that God's special revelation in Jesus Christ and the Scriptures is complete and finished and awaits the final revelation of Jesus Christ in his second coming. The life of Christ from his incarnation to his ascension, as well as the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, were *einmalig* (once for all), and this includes the miraculous signs that attended Christ's ministry and Pentecost. Just as we do not look for a repetition of the events that secured our salvation, we do not look for a repetition of the accompanying miracles.

This argument focuses especially on the revelatory dimension of the work of Christ and the Spirit. According to this argument, Christ came

to announce and initiate the kingdom of God and enforced his proclamation with signs and miracles meant to demonstrate his authority as King and the nature of his kingdom. Now that Christ's kingdom has been initiated, its nature demonstrated, and the King ascended to royal power, it is the task of the church to proclaim the kingdom and to obey the King. We may not expect a repetition of the kind of signs and miracles that accompanied the kingdom's introduction.

The argument continues to say that miracles were seen not only in the ministry of our Lord, but also accompanied the ministry of the apostles and the apostolic circle. In addition, the written revelation of God, the New Testament, still needed to be written after the ascension of Christ. These facts do not negate the contention that Jesus Christ was God's final revelation, because the apostles and their work were part of that revelatory event (John 14:26; 16:13). It was necessary that the message of the birth, death and resurrection of Christ be preserved and interpreted in a written word. In addition, the initial expansion of the church took place in a hostile Jewish and pagan environment, necessitating confirmation of the message and authentication of the messengers by means of signs and wonders. Once the church was established and the Scriptures were completed and the rule (canon) for faith and life closed, the need for further signs and miracles ceased. The Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the only and sufficient means of making known to us the mighty acts of God.

It is arguments such as these that have led the church in the past to disavow the continued need for and existence of some of the more spectacular gifts. This view has been held and defended by theologians of great eminence and ability. As long as they judged the gifts to be virtually absent from the church, these arguments appeared to explain this absence. The rise of Pentecostalism and neo-Pentecostalism, however, has occasioned a new look at the Scriptures with respect to the more controversial gifts of the Holy Spirit. Such a study makes it clear that Scripture itself does not demand the thesis that these gifts belonged only to the apostles or their age, or that their purpose was solely to function as signs (see our discussion of the gifts).

Whereas the traditional argument places great emphasis on the thought that the gifts authenticated the apostles, we would add that the gifts also authenticated the gospel, whether preached by an apostle (Acts 3:6; 10:46) or by a deacon-evangelist (Acts 6:8). Furthermore, the gifts, as listed for example in I Corinthians 12, are not for the purpose of authentication but for the building up of the body of Christ. When we see in the New Testament that in a hostile Jewish and pagan environment the Lord granted "spectacular" gifts, we may well ask whether situations cannot exist today in which the more "normal" means of communicating the gospel are ineffective or badly used and gifts are given to demonstrate in a special way that the kingdom of God remains a kingdom not of talk but of power (I Cor. 4:20). We do well to maintain a strong emphasis on the necessity of the Spirit's work in regenerating the hearts of the elect, without which no one shall see the kingdom of God (John 3:5). At the same time we do well not to impoverish our citizenship in that kingdom by asserting that the same Spirit who

led us into that kingdom cannot or does not grant the same gifts to us as he did to believers of the first century.

We may not discredit the sufficiency of Scripture (II Tim. 3:15, 16; II Peter 1:18-21) or the finality of God's revelation in Jesus Christ (Heb. 1:2). On the other hand, we affirm that there is nothing in Scripture which compels us to believe that the Spirit's sovereign disposition of his "more spectacular" gifts is impossible today or that these gifts were meant only for the first century. When, therefore, one or more of the first century gifts are claimed today, we may not lightly dismiss this, but must search the Scripture to see whether these things are so.

In addition, there is great need today for a gifted church, a church which shares the anointing of Christ and all his benefits. As the Apostle Paul indicates in I Corinthians 13:8, there will be a day when prophecies and knowledge will pass away and tongues will cease. That day will come when "the perfect" has come, when we see face to face and understand fully (I Cor. 13:10-12). For the church on earth that day has not yet come.

#### A variety of gifts

It is of some significance to note that Paul uses four parallel expressions which all mean the same thing (cf. Section IV, above). In I Corinthians 12:4-7 he emphasizes the source of the gifts by saying that the same Spirit, the same Lord, and the same God give varieties of *gifts, service, workings* and *manifestations*. Not every one receives the same gifts, but the Spirit "apportions to each one individually as he wills." Some Pentecostals and neo-Pentecostals (but not all) teach that especially the gift of tongues is for every believer, and their literature contains a variety of descriptions on how that particular gift may be received. But Paul teaches specifically that the Spirit apportions as he wills (I Cor. 12:11; cf. Heb. 2:4). He even specifically denies that all will speak in tongues (I Cor. 12:30).

It is sometimes countered that in I Corinthians 12 Paul is not speaking of the gifts as such, but more specifically of the *use* of the gifts in the public gathering of the church. We take exception to this view. In I Corinthians 12 the apostle begins a general discussion regarding the Spirit's manifestations, not just about the church when it meets together. He describes the variety of gifts in which the Spirit manifests himself and emphasizes that the Spirit deals sovereignly with each individual (vss. 4-11) whether in or out of a worship meeting. Nowhere does he say that every believer ought to have or may expect to have every gift described, or that every believer ought to have at least the gift of tongues. The apostle then goes on to explain that it is necessary for the proper functioning of the body of Christ that every believer participate in the Spirit (vs. 13), but that the specific gift or manifestation given to individuals differ (vs. 12ff). He is clearly speaking of the body of Christ wherever and however it functions. To limit the application of I Corinthians 12 to the use of gifts in communal worship is to exhaust the meaning of the body of Christ in only one of its aspects. In I Corinthians 13 Paul writes his celebrated description of the more excellent way of love, a way which no one would wish to limit to the public

gathering of believers in worship. It is not until I Corinthians 14 that the apostle gives direction for the use of some gifts in worship; viz., the gifts of tongues and prophecy.

The sovereign disposition of the gifts by the Spirit, however, does not mean that the believers should be passive. Paul says in I Corinthians 14:1 that the Corinthians should "earnestly desire the spiritual gifts, especially that you may prophecy." It would appear, therefore, that since spiritual gifts are given for the "the common good" (I Cor. 12:7), every believer ought to desire spiritual gifts in order to contribute to the church as an active and working member of the body. The assumption of the apostle is that every believer will contribute to the church and will have, therefore, some manifestation of the Spirit. The desire to have a gift is met by the sovereign good will of the Spirit. But it is the Spirit who decides what gift or gifts a believer will receive, so that the body of Christ will not be all hands or all feet but "many parts, yet one body" (I Cor. 12:20).

In this connection we would point out that excessive emphasis on one particular gift has led some believers in our day to furiously seek after that gift in the belief that without it one cannot have the assurance that he is filled with the Spirit. The result of such furious pursuit may well be that if something is received, it is an *imitation* of a real gift, or if nothing is received, the believer may become spiritually disheartened and lose even the precious assurance that he is a child of God. Such seeking after a particular gift may become an obsession which makes it impossible for a believer to live a life of joyful trust in the Lord, thus canceling also the effectiveness of his daily witness and share in the work of the body. In addition, we warn against the legalistic requirements which are sometimes listed as necessary for receiving a particular gift. Not only is this, again, a denial of the sovereign good pleasure of the Spirit, but it is another form of the Galatian error which Paul called "another Gospel" (Gal. 1:6, 7), and which he countered by teaching: "For freedom Christ has set us free: stand fast therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery" (Gal. 5:1).

According to the picture of the church drawn in I Corinthians 12, when one member has a particular gift, all the members benefit, since the body is one. It is the inescapable conclusion of Romans 12:3-8, I Corinthians 12, Ephesians 4:7ff and I Peter 4:10 that "Believers, all and every one, as members of Christ, are partakers of him and of all his treasures and gifts; (and) that every one must know himself bound to employ his gifts readily and cheerfully for the advantage and salvation of other members" (Lord's Day XXI). In the light of Scripture and the confessions it is clear that when spiritual gifts become occasion for strife and division within the church, there is either lack of recognition of these gifts or an abuse of the gifts—or both. A careful reading of Romans 12:3-8 and I Corinthians 12:14-26, and a believing obedience to these inspired instructions, should exclude both spiritual pride by those spiritually gifted and indifference to the gifts given the church whereby it may powerfully serve the Lord.

### Some gifts described

It is beyond the scope of this report to discuss at length every spiritual gift mentioned in the Scriptures. Some of the gifts, however, are very much a part of the neo-Pentecostal controversy and these we now identify and describe. It should be noted that among Pentecostals and neo-Pentecostals there is a wide variety of opinion regarding the nature of the gifts. The literature on the subject is large and growing rapidly; each author appears to derive as much knowledge from his or her personal and observed experiences as from the Scriptures. Both interpretation of Scripture and personal experiences vary widely. There is to our knowledge no single author either within or outside neo-Pentecostalism who is widely recognized as having a commonly accepted interpretation. There is, in fact, great need to "discern the spirits" in this respect.

We wish to say also that our comments and descriptions of the spiritual gifts should not be taken as either final or definitive, but as a contribution to the discussion and, hopefully, as an incentive to further study.

The gifts on which we focus are the nine gifts described by Paul in I Corinthians 12:4-11. At the outset, it appears there is both overlapping and connection between the gifts, which makes precise definition and description difficult. For convenience sake, we have grouped the gifts in three series of three gifts each.

### *Gifts of Speech: Tongues, Interpretation of Tongues, Prophecy*

#### Speaking in Tongues:

Much of the controversy surrounding neo-Pentecostalism ranges around the gift of tongues. It is frequently a strongly-held belief that speaking in tongues is the initial evidence of Spirit baptism and, conversely, that no one is Spirit-baptized who has not spoken in tongues. In some Pentecostal churches this is a distinctive point of doctrine. We have already pointed out that this teaching is denied by the specific statements of Scripture in I Corinthians 12.

The fact remains, however, that the gift of speaking in tongues is clearly reported in Scripture and that it was a gift given to the company of 120 believers on the day of Pentecost (Acts 1:15; 2:4), to the household of Cornelius (Acts 10:46) and the group of Ephesian believers (Acts 19:6). In each of these events, a result of the Spirit's coming upon those in the group was speaking in tongues. The result of the Spirit's infilling on other occasions was that the friends of Peter and John (Acts 4:23) "spoke the word of God with boldness" (Acts 4:31), that believers praised and extolled God (Acts 10:46) and prophesied (Acts 19:6). In the case of the apostle Paul, we are told that Ananias came to him, "That you may regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit" (Acts 9:17). Paul's first public act thereafter is to proclaim Jesus in the synagogues of Damascus. From Paul's first letter to the Corinthians, we learn that he also practiced speaking in tongues (14:18), but no mention is made of this in Acts.

The gift of speaking in tongues is the ability to speak in sounds and

utterances previously unknown to the speaker. Whether the gift was the same on the day of Pentecost and later instances in the Book of Acts as it was in the church of Corinth is often debated. The fact is that phenomena occurred which Scripture calls by the same name. The apostle recognizes "various kinds of tongues" (I Cor. 12:10). Again, in our day, believers report that they have received this gift.

Linguistic studies indicate that contemporary tongues speech does not violate the mother tongue of the speaker in terms of the kinds and patterns of sounds that are used. Such tongues speech as has been recorded and analyzed is not, according to linguists, language in any conventional sense. On the other hand, there are scattered reports that tongues speakers have communicated to someone in that person's native language, which the tongues speaker has never learned or heard. This controversy over whether or not tongues speech is language reminds us of the old controversy of whether what happened on the day of Pentecost was a miracle of speech or of hearing—or both.

The results of linguistic studies are valuable and useful as an aid to our understanding and we are grateful for them. However, our final judgment may not be based solely on the limited range of phenomena that are subject to scientific investigation. Sufficient room must be left for the mystery of the Spirit's sovereign manifestations. It may be of some significance in this connection that Paul speaks of "various kinds of tongues" and says, "If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels . . ." (I Cor. 13:1).

The purpose of speaking in tongues does not appear to be communication to men, but communication of praise and prayer to God. The first use of tongues on the day of Pentecost causes the hearers to be perplexed and filled with wonder and amazement, "Because we hear them telling in our own tongues the mighty works of God" (Acts 2:11). Repentance and faith are the result, however, only after Peter preaches the gospel in intelligible language (Acts 2:14-42). Paul says that the person who speaks in a tongue speaks to God (I Cor. 14:2) and that speaking in tongues may also serve as a sign for unbelievers (I Cor. 14:20). In connection with the sign value of tongues, it should be pointed out that it is reported that many Jews are being converted today in so-called charismatic meetings where tongues-speaking is practiced.

Paul does not discourage speaking in tongues (I Cor. 14:5) and thanks God that he speaks in tongues more than the Corinthians (I Cor. 14:5). But he severely limits and regulates the public use of tongues-speaking (I Cor. 14 *passim*). We receive some further insight into the nature of tongues-speaking when he says that in it "the mind is unfruitful" (I Cor. 14:14). We do not take this to mean, however, that the speaker is merely a passive tool through whom the Spirit is speaking—an assumption all too easily made by some glossolalogs. The speaker is in control of the gift, uses it to give thanks to God and to edify himself and should be able to hold his tongues-speaking in a public meeting and reserve its use for private devotions (I Cor. 14 *passim*). Phrases such as, "I'm just an empty shell," fail to do justice to the whole person made in God's image and the accountability that goes along with that.

Modern testimony regarding tongues-speaking is that it is a spiritually

edifying experience which gives great rest and peace of heart. The initial experience may come in the company of other tongues speakers, or it may come in the privacy of the prayer closet. It is a popular misconception that it is necessarily a very emotional experience. Frequently the gifted person will make praying in tongues a part of his devotional life, along with Bible reading and regular prayer.

We believe that where speaking in tongues is initially a spontaneous experience, the recipient of this gift should accept it in thanksgiving and practice it both in love and according to biblical regulations. And although we do not wish to bind the Holy Spirit, we would strongly discourage tongues as "learned behavior" in which a person is coached at length, often under strong pressures and emotional duress, and asked to produce a kind of babbling or endlessly repeat "Thank you, Jesus" in order to "get the gift going." As most neo-Pentecostals realize, tongues-speaking appears in the Mormon religion and is not unknown in other non-Christian religions. This alone should tell us that glossolalia can be a spurious experience, and not a gift from God the Holy Spirit.

We also agree that tongues can be "another gospel" when the balance of Scripture is not observed, the emphasis of the Bible on a life of wholehearted, intelligent service to Jesus as Lord is under-emphasized, and experience becomes the norm for the Christian life and the interpretation of Scripture. Some overly zealous neo-Pentecostals have fallen prey to the temptation to equate the biblical injunction to be filled with the Spirit with "you must speak in tongues." Another example of such excess is when our Lord's declaration, "God is Spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth" (John 4:25), is taken to mean that we must worship God in tongues and in Christ. Such excesses can only lead to heresy and dissension and rob the church of its central message: Jesus and him crucified.

We would also call attention to the express statement of Paul, "Do not forbid speaking in tongues" (I Cor. 14:39).

#### Interpretation of Tongues:

The Apostle Paul counsels that he who prays in tongues edifies himself (I Cor. 14:9), and that if tongues are to be used in a setting of public worship, the tongues speaker should pray for the gift of interpretation (I Cor. 14:13). The gift of interpretation is the Spirit-given ability to convey one's own or someone else's tongues into known language, so that all who are present may be edified (I Cor. 14:5).

Today, it is frequently found that the interpretation consists of phrases from the Psalms and other doxological expressions from the Scriptures—which fits well with the nature of tongues as primarily prayer and praise. We find no evidence in Scripture for specific messages to individuals first spoken in tongues and then interpreted.

#### Prophecy:

In the minds of many people today prophecy necessarily means predicting the future. Among adherents of neo-Pentecostalism this is also a frequently held belief. The Scriptures show us otherwise. The Old Testament prophets spoke the word of God in application to national or

individual situations. They exposed evil conditions, interpreted Scripture, pronounced the judgments of the Lord, brought words of hope and comfort—in short, they spoke the mind of the Lord. As a part of that task, they also foretold the plan of God. So we find that after the birth of John the Baptist, his father Zechariah “was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied.” The old prophecy that follows consists to a large extent of echoes from the Old Testament. It is a prophecy that blesses God, edifies the hearers, and prepares their hearts for the coming Christ (Luke 1:67ff).

So too we find that the opinion of some of the Jews was that Jesus was “one of the prophets” (Mark 7:28). At this point in his ministry Jesus had done, as far as is known to us, little “predictive prophecy.” He spoke authoritatively and interpreted the Word of God.

In Acts 21 we hear of Philip’s four daughters, who prophesied (vs. 9), and of Agabus, “a prophet” (vs. 10). Agabus has a message from the Holy Spirit for Paul. Paul will be given into the hands of the Gentiles by the Jews in Jerusalem. (Note, however, that Agabus comes from Judea to deliver his message and that there was considerable unrest in Jerusalem about Paul’s preaching (vss. 20-22), a fact with which Agabus was undoubtedly acquainted.) Nor is this the first time Paul is told what will happen to him in Jerusalem. Already earlier he had said, “And now, behold, I am going to Jerusalem, bound in the Spirit, not knowing what shall befall me there; except that the Holy Spirit testifies to me in every city that imprisonment and afflictions await me” (Acts 20:22, 23). Nevertheless, we have in the case of Agabus an instance of predictive prophecy by someone so gifted (cf. Acts 11:28). Agabus’ message does not tell Paul what to do. Some of the people around Paul interpret the prophecy as a warning that he should not go to Jerusalem. Paul, however, is “ready not only to be imprisoned but even to die at Jerusalem” (Acts 21:12-13), and goes his way.

In I Corinthians 14, Paul describes the desired effects of prophecy as the upbuilding, encouragement and consolation of the bearers. The prophets are subject to each other, their words are to be tested. Their message may take the form of a revelation. The purpose of prophecy is again described, this time as “learning and encouragement.” It is evident that Paul places great value on prophecy. He advises the Corinthians to seek especially the gift of prophecy. The prophet is greater than the tongues speaker, because the former edifies the church, whereas the latter edifies himself. It is significant to note that this is the case only when there is no interpretation of tongues. When there is interpretation, prophecy and tongues-speaking are of equal value to the church (I Cor. 14:1-5). All this would indicate that the gift of prophecy is not so much the foretelling of events as the forthtelling of God’s word as it has come to us in the Scriptures and in Jesus Christ. We should affirm, therefore, that preaching is prophecy—or, more fully, the proclamation of God’s word by a Spirit-filled believer, in which the word is so spoken and applied that the hearers are taught, encouraged, edified and comforted is prophecy.

This is especially so in the light of the biblical conviction that, “In many and various ways God spoke of old to our fathers by the prophets;

but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son" (Hebrews 1:1-2). Jesus Christ is the conclusive Word of God. Every prophecy today, as in Paul's day, is subject not only to the other prophets, but ultimately to the Scriptures. No prophecy can deny what Scripture teaches, for God cannot contradict himself. Since the words of the prophets are subject to testing, they do not have the measure of inspiration, infallibility and authority that Scripture has. The sufficiency, uniqueness and normativity of Scripture needs to be fully maintained.

Much is made among Pentecostals and neo-Pentecostals of the spontaneity that is supposed to be the hallmark of a spiritual gift. The well prepared sermon which is based on careful study of text in its original languages and which takes into account the best exegetical principles cannot be prophecy, according to this view, though it may contain prophecy when the speaker departs from his prepared manuscript and "is led" to make more spontaneous remarks. We do not believe, however, that such a distinction between "prepared prophecy" and "compelled prophecy" is a scriptural distinction. "Prepared prophecy" may be equally compelled as previously unrehearsed remarks.

Moreover, the frequently stated or implied definition of prophecy as "supernatural speech in known language from the Spirit and not from the intellect" contradicts everything we know about the prophets from the Bible, and does not honor the biblical teaching that our minds are subject to (not cancelled out by) Christ. If the aforementioned definition of prophecy were correct, the result would be at least equal to the authority of Scripture, and therefore not in need of testing. Nor could it be said by Paul, as he does, that our prophecy is imperfect (I Cor. 13:9).

On the other hand, we caution against a too facile identification of preaching and prophecy. For preaching to be prophetic, it must stand the test of fidelity to Scripture and compelling application to and insight into the contemporary needs of the people of God. Such prophetic preaching is, indeed, much to be desired today.

The preponderant emphasis on prophecy as forthtelling need not exclude altogether, however, the possibility of prophecy as foretelling such as in the case of Agabus. Any utterance, however, must be subject to the full range of biblical teaching as well as to communal scrutiny (I Cor. 14:32) and the inner assent of those to whom this prophecy is directed. To allow for this may appear to be opening the door to all kinds of aberrations and excesses. Indeed, there are people who have made this kind of thing their claim to fame. Naive believers may easily be taken in by supposed direction from the Lord for a certain course of action, such as happened to the Thessalonians (II Thess. 2:2). However, sufficient guidelines and limitations are given in the Scriptures (e.g., Deut. 18:20-22; Jer. 32:6-9; I Cor. 14 and I John 4:1-6) so that the people of God who are truly willing to follow the way of the Lord as revealed in Scripture may be confident that they will discover that "God is not a God of confusion, but of peace" (I Cor. 14:32).

We would also call attention to the words of the Apostle Paul that even though "our prophecy is imperfect" (I Cor. 13:9), he says, "So, my brethren, earnestly desire to prophecy" (I Cor. 14:39) and, "Do

not quench the Spirit, do not despise prophesying, but test everything" (I Thess. 5:19). In addition, we would urge the church to continue diligently to search the Scriptures and to be always on guard against false prophecy.

#### GIFTS OF POWER: *Healing, Miracles, Faith.*

##### Healing:

Next to speaking in tongues, this is probably the most frequent topic of controversy. Whereas Paul lists healing as a specific gift given to some, James assigns to the elders of the church the task of praying for the sick, "and the prayer of faith will save the sick man and the Lord will raise him up" (James 5:13-18). It has long been the practice of our churches to pray for the sick. It is the regular task of our pastors to visit the sick and to pray with and for them. Every church can testify of answers to such prayer. Sometimes, such healing is by means of the God-given skills of physicians and "miracle" drugs. At other times, the medical profession has had to confess that a healing has taken place which is beyond its skill and understanding. In every case, thanksgiving and praise belong to God.

Our Lord devoted much compassion and energy to the healing of the sick. The apostles, too, had a ministry of healing. The purpose of these healing miracles is often overlooked today. The author of the book of Hebrews states that they are God's witness to the gospel (Hebrews 2:4). The apostle John calls Christ's miracles "signs." They attest to the nature of the kingdom Christ came to bring and the deity of the King. In the disputed ending of the Gospel of Mark we read that following the ascension of Christ, the disciples "went forth and preached everywhere, while the Lord worked with them and confirmed the message by signs that attended it." It should be noted that not only healing, but the gifts of the Spirit in general have this "sign" character (Heb. 2:4). Wherever divine healing is promoted for its own sake, therefore, and not as a confirmation of the gospel of salvation and a manifestation of the kingdom of God, we have a distortion of the teaching of Scripture.

In fact, healings, miracles and exorcism may even be done under the power of Satan, as Jesus Himself testifies when he says, "Not every one who says to me, 'Lord, Lord' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. On that day many will say to me, 'Lord Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do mighty works in your name?' And then I will declare to them, I never knew you; depart from me, you evildoers'" (Matt. 7:21-23). So too the coming of the anti-christ will be marked by "pretended signs and wonders" (II Thess. 2:9). These warnings alert us to the possibility of demonic healing, magical healing and mediumistic healing. A few years ago we might have dismissed this as medieval superstition and psychological manipulation. The phenomenal rise of the occult and Satan worship have robbed us of the luxury of dismissing these things so lightly and should lead us to take with renewed seriousness the spiritual hierarchy of evil headed by Satan to

which frequent reference is made in Scripture (e.g., John 14:30; Eph. 2:2; 6:2; II Cor. 11:14; Col. 1:13; I Tim. 3:7; II Tim. 2:26; I Peter 5:8; I John 3:8; Rev. 2:9, 13 and 3:9).

It is not within our mandate to discuss the occult. We simply warn that healing and the occult may in certain instances be related and that such occult healing may be camouflaged under the guise of the gospel. Jesus' warning is much to the point: "False Christs and false prophets will arise and show signs and wonders, to lead astray, if possible, the elect. But take heed; I have told you all things beforehand" (Mark 13:22). These warnings, however, ought not to dissuade us from taking seriously the teaching of Scripture regarding divine healing, or the testimony of those who witness to being so healed.

The witness of James 5 is that divine healing may take place in the context of divine forgiveness—a pattern that is evident in the ministry of Christ as well. In some instances in Christ's ministry, he attributes the healing to the faith of the person healed (Mark 5:34) or the faith of the person who brings the need to Jesus' attention (Mark 7:29). At other times, no mention is made of faith at all (Mark 8:22ff). On the occasion of the healing of the boy with a dumb spirit, the boy's father says to Jesus, "If you can do anything . . . help us." And Jesus replies, "If you can! All things are possible to him who believes." To which the father responds, "I believe, help my unbelief" (Mark 9). In connection with this same healing, Jesus stresses the necessity of prayer.

It would appear that faith, forgiveness and prayer play an important role in the lives of those who receive the Lord's healing. At the same time, such healing can occur without the presence of any of these—precisely because such healing is a sign pointing to the power of God both to heal and to save. While James 5 posits a relation between sin and sickness, it is clear that not all instances of sickness are related to the sin of the person afflicted (John 9:3). Rather, we should say that sickness entered the world as a result of sin. Sickness is also a part of the curse of the law (Deut. 18:15-22, 27-29, 35, 58-61). But "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law having become a curse for us" (Gal. 3:13). Other Scripture passages testify that sickness can be ascribed to the oppressive powers of Satan (Luke 13:16; Acts 10:38; II Cor. 12:7). Satan, however, always works within the permissive will of God (e.g., Job). It may also be the love of God who uses illness to discipline his children in order to yield in them, "the peaceful fruit of righteousness" (Heb. 12:11).

It is a common belief of neo-Pentecostals that all sickness is from the devil and that God does not want sickness. We would respond that adversity may come from the hand of the Lord to chasten us and keep us humble and dependent upon him. It is true that in the paradise that was and in the paradise that is to come, spiritual, moral, mental and physical wholeness go together. Where the spiritual and moral realm are in disobedience to the Lord, the *shalom* of life is gone and physical illness may follow (I Cor. 11:30). For the people of God, however, this is the Lord's chastening and not the devil's doing: "But when we are judged by the Lord, we are chastened so that we may not be condemned along with the world" (I Cor. 11:32).

God is a God of healing: "I am the Lord, your healer" (Ex. 15:26) and "I will take sickness away from the midst of you" (Ex. 23:25). Psalm 103 places forgiveness and healing side by side (vs. 3). The ministry of our Lord, of the apostles, and the teaching of James 5 show that these are not promises restricted to the Old Testament.

On the other hand, Paul had to be content to keep his thorn in the flesh so that God's strength could be perfected in Paul's weakness (II Cor. 12:9). Timothy had a digestive problem and Paul recommends a common remedy by suggesting "a little wine for the sake of your stomach and your frequent ailments" (I Tim. 5:23). In Philippians 2:25-30 we are told of Epaphroditus, a fellow worker with Paul, who had been seriously ill and "near to death." The impression is left that Epaphroditus recovered following a lengthy illness and without recourse to a miracle of instant healing.

In the light of all this we would warn against the possible errors involved when healing is always made to depend on the sick person's faith, when healing becomes identified with a healer instead of with Christ, and when laying on of hands is always insisted upon. In addition, we find that overemphasis on divine healing can involve an impatient desire to usher in the perfected kingdom of God. We are saved in hope and must wait with eager longing for the glory that is to come, the redemption of our bodies (Romans 8:18-25). The kingdom of God does break through here and now, but not in its fulness.

We conclude that we should accept in praise and thanksgiving to God the advances of modern medicine as well as the direct intervention of the Spirit in healing as gifts from God, meant to lead us to repentance (Rom. 2:4) and to demonstrate to us the perfection of his kingdom, the truth of the gospel and the glory of his Name. Believers ought diligently to pray for healing for each other and themselves, elders in particular ought to pray for the sick, and all should pray believing that the Lord who sent the Spirit is still the Lord whose power can astonish us beyond measure and who does all things well (Mark 7:37). At the same time, the threat of the occult, the warnings of our Lord, and the still partial unfolding of God's kingdom, should spur us on to hold fast the word of life and not to believe the lies of the kingdom of darkness, even when they come under the guise of the gospel.

#### Miracles:

Much of what has been said of healing can also be said of miracles. Examples of miracles abound in both the Old and New Testaments; the exodus out of Egypt, the forty years of wandering in the wilderness and the entrance into the promised land, the ministries of Elijah and Elisha are all periods in which many miracles are recorded. The ministry of our Lord was marked by numerous miracles such as the turning of water into wine, the feeding of the five thousand, the miraculous catch of fish and the stilling of the storm. During the time of the apostles, also, miracles are recorded. Peter and John are set free from prison by an angel and Paul struck Elymas the magician with temporary blindness. In the wider apostolic circle, too, miracles are recorded: "Stephen,

full of grace and power did great wonders and signs among the people" (Acts 6:8).

In this connection, we wish to emphasize the biblical teaching that miracles are signs and that they should not be and may not be sought for their own sake. It is particularly John's Gospel which stresses the sign character of the miracles (including healing). These signs come from God and point men to God (3:2; 9:16) and may result in faith (2:11; 2:23; 20:30f). Such faith is acceptable to God (10:37; 14:11), but it is clearly an inferior kind of faith. Indeed, Jesus repudiates faith that rests primarily on signs (4:48). The signs are in the first instance valuable as establishing that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and may thus serve to confirm the superior kind of faith which is awakened by the spoken or written word. The signs elicit praise for God (Luke 9:34) and manifest the glory of God (John 2:11).

When the Pharisees wish to test Jesus and ask him for a sign, Jesus answers, "An evil and adulterous generation seeks for a sign, but no sign shall be given to it except the sign of Jonah" (Matt. 16:4; Luke 11:29f), indicating his death and resurrection. Jesus tells the parable of the rich man and Lazarus to emphasize the necessity of repentance on the basis of the written word: "If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be convinced if some one should rise from the dead" (Luke 16:31). To those who already believe or to those who are weak in faith the signs confirm the spoken and written word and strengthen faith. But nowhere does the New Testament encourage us to seek for or yearn after signs.

The task and emphasis of the church is the proclamation of the good news (Luke 14:23), and discipleship (Luke 14:25-34). The Scriptures have been given us as the written witness "that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in his name" (John 20:31). Jesus pronounces a special blessing on those "who have not seen and yet believe" (John 20:24). Paul says that "Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified" (I Cor. 1:22, 23).

It is a concession to our weakness that God grants signs, and even then they may be misunderstood. Nicodemus said to Jesus, "We know you are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do, unless God is with him" (John 3:2). Yet the signs were insufficient because Jesus has to say to Nicodemus, "But you do not receive our testimony" (John 3:11). Jesus healed ten lepers, but only one understood the sign and returned to give praise and thanksgiving. Upon this one Jesus pronounces the benediction, "Your faith has saved you" (Luke 17:11-19).

We should, therefore, reject those who come with promises of "miracle revivals" instead of with the preaching of the cross. On the other hand, nothing in Scripture forbids us to believe that the Lord may work signs and miracles in our day. This is still the New Testament era, the Holy Spirit is still sovereign in the church and may strengthen faith in whatever way he chooses. He who is at work within us is able to do far more abundantly than all we ask or think—not for the glory of men or a cause identified with human effort, but to the glory of God

(Eph. 3:20, 21). Only, let the priorities and emphases of Scripture not be violated.

#### Faith:

Faith is listed as one of the spiritual gifts in I Corinthians 12. This kind of faith may well be the kind of faith which trusts God to heal and perform miracles and may therefore be closely related to the other spiritual gifts. This faith should be distinguished from the faith by which alone a man is righteous before God (Rom. 1:16, 17). Paul describes faith that is a spiritual gift as the kind of faith that removes mountains (I Cor. 13:2; cf. Matt. 7:20). Daniel's courage in the lion's den and Peter's act of walking on water may be example of this kind of faith. As a spiritual gift, it cannot be expected that every believer has this kind of faith, though all may pray for it. Many pastors will be able to testify of believers in their congregations who in the face of very adverse circumstances are able to praise and extol God and see his hand in every part of their lives. These believers, too, may have received this kind of faith.

#### GIFTS OF UNDERSTANDING: *Utterance of Wisdom, Utterance of Knowledge, Distinguishing Between Spirits*

##### Utterance of Wisdom:

Christ promised his disciples that he would give them "a mouth and wisdom, which none of your adversaries will be able to withstand or contradict" (Luke 21:15). So we find that when Peter and John are brought before the Sanhedrin to give account of themselves after the healing of the man born blind (Acts 3:1-10), they give a good defense of themselves. We read that the Sanhedrin saw "the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated, common men, (and) wondered; and they recognized that they had been with Jesus" (Acts 4:13; cf. Acts 6:8-10).

The utterance of wisdom, then is the Spirit-given ability "wisely to manage the gospel in its administration unto the advantage and furtherance of the truth" (John Owen). So Peter, speaking of Paul's epistles, says that they were written "according to the wisdom given him" (I Peter 3:15). Paul writes that in Christ "are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (Col. 2:3). We conclude, therefore, that the utterance of wisdom is to give the mind of Christ, especially in defense of the gospel so that the hearers are convinced of the truth expressed, or harden their hearts against it.

It should be obvious that this in no way relieves the church and individual believers from responsible Bible study and exegesis. It is a comforting thought, however, that especially in times of persecution and great opposition to the gospel, those who are called upon to give account of their faith, may pray for this gift and be sure that the Lord will not forsake them (cf. James 1:5).

##### Utterance of Knowledge:

As is the case with the "utterance of wisdom," the New Testament

does not define what the "utterance of knowledge" is. We therefore need to tread carefully in speaking of it.

It is necessary for every believer to have a measure of knowledge of the revelation of God, especially as that revelation has come to us in the person and work of Jesus Christ. We usually call this a saving knowledge of the gospel, which is another way of describing faith. This knowledge must be confessed or uttered in words by every believer (Rom. 10: 10). The "utterance of knowledge," however, is a spiritual gift and as such is granted to some but not to all believers.

Paul may be claiming the gift of knowledge when he writes in Ephesians 3:

"When you read this you can perceive my insight into the mystery of Christ, which was not made known to the sons of men in other generations as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; that is, how the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel. Of this gospel I was made a minister according to the gift of God's grace which was given me by the working of his power."

No one today will have this gift in the same way or in the same measure or for the same reason the apostles had it; viz., to reveal and explain the plan of God as it had come to expression in Jesus Christ. This revelation, explanation and knowledge is sufficiently and infallibly contained in Scripture. The "utterance of knowledge" in the church, we suggest, is a heightened insight and understanding of the Scriptures and the ability to communicate this to others in teaching. As such it is a gift always needed in the church and no one should assume the ministry without it. Again, this gift does not preclude the necessity of careful and diligent exegesis of the Scriptures. But careful and diligent study of the Scriptures should accompany this gift if it is to be used for the building up of the household of God.

In Pentecostal and neo-Pentecostal literature, the utterance of knowledge is seen by some as a teaching gift (Donald Gee). Others associate it with divine guidance. Dennis and Rita Bennet, for example, define it as "the supernatural revelation of facts past, present or future, which were *not learned through the efforts of the natural mind*" (emphasis theirs). Siegfried Grossman defines this gift as "the charismatic application of God's Word to a current situation." In most of the literature, utterance of wisdom and utterance of knowledge are closely associated. The Bennets say, for example, "The 'word of knowledge' is supernaturally revealed information, but the 'word of wisdom' tells how to *apply* the information."

We would emphasize again that our description of this gift is no more than a suggestion. When Paul mentioned it in I Corinthians he must have known exactly what he meant by it and, we assume, his readers did also. We, however, cannot know this with such certainty, and therefore we challenge the easy claims which are made relative to this gift.

#### Discerning of Spirits:

The Apostle John writes, "Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but

test the spirits to see whether they are of God; for many false prophets have gone out into the world. By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit which confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh . . . of God, and every spirit which does not confess Jesus is not of God . . . Whoever knows God listens to us, and he who is not of God does not listen to us. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error" (I John 4:1-3, 6).

Because of the danger of false prophecy and because Satan is ever the great imitator, there is always need for the church to be gifted in "distinguishing between spirits." Since such discernment is listed among the gifts of the Spirit, it follows that from time to time individuals within the church are given ability to discern above that of their fellow-members. Such ability may well be connected with utterances of knowledge and wisdom. In addition, Paul points to a kind of communal discernment (I Cor. 14:29, 33).

The test of a spirit as given in the above quotation from I John cannot be applied naively or simplistically. Jesus foresees that not all who say, "Lord, Lord" will enter his kingdom, "but every one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven." Our Lord applies this especially to those who claim to possess spiritual gifts and have used them in his name (Matt. 7:21-23). Obedience to the will of God as we know it from Scripture, therefore, is another test (cf. I John 3:10).

Although there is always need for discerning of spirits, this is especially so today when we are being bombarded on every side with an explosion of literature on the person and work of the Holy Spirit as well as on the occult. We should, therefore, pray for the gift of discernment and add an obedient ear to the Scripture.

Part of the church's arsenal for discerning spirits is the work of the theologian to defend the church from error. We see the Apostle Paul doing this in his painstaking exegesis of the Old Testament against the Judaizers in Galatia. There is an unfortunate tendency in neo-Pentecostalism to dismiss theology as "man's words" and to accept as nearly divine the oral and written testimonies of experiences by those who claim a special Spirit baptism and the gift of tongues. The church must maintain, in the face of this, that experiences must always be subject to and tested by the total witness of the Scriptures as none other than the words of the Holy Spirit himself (Heb. 3:7a). For this we require the effort of faithful biblical scholars as much as the insight of the simple Christian.

The excesses of the neo-Pentecostal movement alone should teach us to be wary of elevating experience above scriptural discernment. Such excesses may be found in the unbiblical use of tongues, in the fellowship not based on truth, in denial of the unity between Old and New Testaments (e.g. the question of baptism), in the claim that the Bible is no longer necessary for the Spirit-baptized Christian (based on I John 2:27), in denial of the sovereignty of God, in refusal to heed a plain teaching of Scripture on moral questions (out of fear for legalism or because the Spirit has not yet "spoken") and even in a wrong view of the Trinity such as is found among the "Jesus Only" Pentecostals. We emphasize that these are excesses and that they are not essential charac-

teristics of neo-Pentecostalism. Nevertheless they are present and are often uncritically accepted, and as such are evidence of the great need for spiritual discernment. While we do not wish in any way to deny that the Christian faith needs to be experienced in all its riches, we would warn the church to be on its guard, lest experiences are elevated above Scripture and we become trapped in the snares of Satan.

In concluding this section of our report, we call attention to two matters which appear to be related to the gifts of the Holy Spirit: guidance and exorcism.

#### Guidance:

The Scriptures are rich in promises for daily guidance by the Lord. The Psalmist, for example, prays

Make me to know thy way, O LORD;  
 teach me thy paths.  
 Lead me in thy truth, and teach me,  
 for thou art the God of my salvation  
 for thee I wait all the day long. (Psalm 25:4, 5)

and, as if in answer, confesses,

Good and upright is the LORD;  
 therefore he instructs sinners in the way.  
 He leads the humble in what is right,  
 and teaches the humble his way.  
 All the paths of the LORD are steadfast love and faithfulness,  
 for those who keep his covenant and testimonies. (vs. 8-10)

Isaiah says,

If you take away from the midst of you the yoke,  
 the pointing of the finger, and speaking wickedness;  
 if you pour yourself out for the hungry  
 and satisfy the desire of the afflicted,  
 then shall your light rise in the darkness  
 and your gloom be as the noonday.  
 And the LORD will guide you continually. . . . (Isaiah 58:9-11).

The prayer of Paul for the Colossians is "that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, to lead a life worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God" (Col. 1:9-10). The well-known words of Paul in Romans 12:2 present the two aspects, which invariably go together: "Do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may prove what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect." In other words, the daily practice of righteousness and knowing the will of God go together. We may not expect the Lord to lead us while we openly defy his commandments. As the Psalmist says, "He leads me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake" (Psalm 23:3).

Prayers for guidance by the Holy Spirit are a regular part of congregational prayers from the pulpit and at the opening of our ecclesiastical assemblies. In declining or accepting calls, our ministers will often use language such as, "I have (not) been led to accept your call." We

acknowledge, therefore, the need and reality of God's guidance in our individual and communal activities.

Among neo-Pentecostals there is frequently a heightened awareness of guidance, usually called "divine guidance" or the "guidance of the Holy Spirit." Expressions such as "the Holy Spirit told me" or "I have been led" are common. Sometimes the biblical terminology of "waiting upon the Lord" is used in seeking guidance (Psalm 27:14; Isaiah 40:31). We do not take exception to these things, but commend our neo-Pentecostal brethren for their desire to be led by God in all their decisions.

However, there are features of the way in which guidance is sought or the way in which guidance is claimed to which we do take exception. It is especially the claim or search for *special* guidance that is questionable. For some neo-Pentecostals, at least, the normal processes of decision-making are felt to be insufficient and "spiritual" or "supernatural" guidance is sought. The Bible is opened at random, for example, in the expectation that the first verse upon which the eye falls will give definitive information upon which to base the decision to be made. Or one waits for "inner light" or an "inner voice" or a message spoken by way of "prophecy" or tongues in a meeting. A supposed hallmark of the best guidance is often that it must be spontaneous as opposed to deliberated or thought out.

Not only can such guidance involve an almost magical use of Scripture, but it introduces an unwarranted dichotomy between what is "spiritual" or "supernatural" and what is natural or guided by the ordinary processes of the heart and mind. Whether consciously or not, this downgrades Scripture and calls into question the teaching of Paul that, "All scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for proof, for correction and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work" (II Tim. 3:16). At its worst, this seeking after special guidance denies the radical transformation which the Holy Spirit works in regeneration (John 3) and by which we are declared to have "put on the new nature, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator" (Col. 3:10), which new nature is "created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness" (Eph. 4:24).

The guidance of God, we suggest, comes by way of his gracious providences and by way of using regenerated hearts and minds by which discernment is taught according to the will of God, i.e., his commandments (Rom. 12:1, 2). Prayer will play an important role in biblical guidance (James 1:5) as will the advice of trustworthy fellow believers (Prov. 12:15; 19:20) and of the church (Acts 15:1-29).

We do not wish to deny that guidance may come, from time to time in unusual ways. But we would emphasize that normative and sufficient guidance are given us by the Spirit-inspired Scriptures and the renewed image of the Spirit-filled and Spirit-regenerated believer. Wherever unusual guidance appears to be given, it would still have to be in accordance with the teaching of Scripture, for God does not contradict himself, and Satan can deceive us by appearing as an angel of light (II Cor. 11:14). We regret to say that some have been so deceived and have claimed divine guidance for decisions directly contrary to the

commandments of God. What is worse, such deception is then credited to God and the person who has been misled disclaims all responsibility, because "the Holy Spirit led me!"

In concluding this admittedly summary statement on guidance, we would point to the biblical teaching on wisdom, from which we learn that the fear (love and obedience) of God is the beginning of wisdom (Psalm 111:10; Prov. 1:7; 9:10), that the seat of wisdom is the heart or mind (I Kings 3:9, 12) and that wisdom is not a matter of abstract theorizing but of practical daily living (Proverbs). Wisdom that is not guided by the revelation of Jesus Christ, in whom are hid all knowledge and wisdom (Col. 2:3), is foolishness at best (I Cor. 1:18, 19) and demonic at its worst (James 3:15). "But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, without uncertainty or insincerity" (James 3:17). The people of God must find the source of life in all its abundance in Christ Jesus, "Whom God made our wisdom, our righteousness and sanctification and redemption" (I Cor. 1:30).

#### Exorcism:

The ministry of our Lord was marked not only by numerous healings and miracles, but also by frequent contact with "unclean" or evil spirits. Among the numerous examples of Jesus' opposition to the power of Satan, we note two. Following his baptism, Jesus is led "by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil" (Matt. 4:1). Of these temptations, three are told us. Each time, Jesus defeats Satan's designs by making reference to Scripture and saying, "It is written" thus demonstrating the power of God's word over Satan (Matt. 4:1-11). In another instance, Jesus meets the man known as the Gadarene Demoniac (Mark 5:20). The man is possessed by a legion of demons who torment him so that he is forced to live among the tombs. The demon(s) cries out to Jesus, "What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I adjure you by God, do not torment me." Jesus, however, exorcises the demon(s) and allows them to enter a herd of swine, who plummet to their death into the sea.

When Jesus sent out the seventy, he "gave them power and authority over all demons and to cure diseases" (Luke 9:1). Already during the ministry of Christ, his name is used to cast out devils by persons other than his disciples (Mark 9:38-41). The Gospels distinguish between ordinary illness and demon possession (e.g. Matt. 4:24) and similarly between healings and exorcism. On the basis of the Gospels, we cannot deny the reality of Satan and of spiritual beings hostile to God and to men.

The ministry of Jesus is an eschatological event—it ushers in the last days and the eventual defeat of the kingdom of darkness. It is during Jesus' ministry, therefore, that the demonic world attacked with unprecedented force and vigor. But everywhere, the demons must retreat before the divine majesty and power of Christ (Mark 3:22-27). If no further reports of demon possession and exorcism were found in the New Testament, we might conclude that the demonic world suffered a complete and definitive defeat at the hands of Christ. But demonic

activity and exorcism continue after Pentecost (Acts 19:11-20). Demon possession has been reported throughout the history of the church, especially in places where the gospel was making initial inroads into pagan areas.

Again in our day and in the western world, there are reports of demon possession and exorcism. We express great reservation about some of these reports and the indecent eagerness with which some gospel practitioners "diagnose" cases of demon possession, when the difficulties are cases of hardened sinfulness, character weakness, natural resistance to the gospel, self-induced fears, mental illness or diseases such as diabetes ("sugar demon"). All of these are serious and the Christian counselor, minister or physician must and can deal with them according to biblical insight.

We find there are two things common to cases of demon possession that are described in Scripture in any detail: the affected person is helpless to deal with it and the demon(s) speak independently of the person's volition. In such cases, prayer and a believing command of exorcism in the name of the Lord Jesus relieves the sufferer and casts out the demon(s). Sane Christians who have met with demon possession have also noted that whenever there is doubt whether or not one deals with a genuine instance of demon possession, there will be immediate and sometimes violent opposition to the mention of the name of Christ.

We believe that as the last days draw to their close, there may be a noticeable increase in demon possession. We caution against the too hasty assumption that most cases of moral lapse and resistance to the gospel are instances of demon possession, but we call upon the church to exorcise such cases of true demon possession as may come to its attention with unerring fidelity to Christ and the Scriptures.

The entire subject of demon possession and exorcism leads into consideration of the occult, which is beyond our mandate. We hope, therefore, that the above brief consideration is sufficient to lead the church into greater awareness and some insight into these things.

#### VIII. NEO-PENTECOSTAL HERMENEUTIC, INDIVIDUALISM AND EXTRA-ECCLESIAL KOINONIA

In our study of neo-Pentecostalism "in the light of the biblical teaching on the Holy Spirit," we encountered, in the available literature and/or in real situations in the life of the Christian Reformed Church, several related matters which demand our attention: 1. neo-Pentecostal hermeneutic\*, 2. a tendency toward individualism, and 3. a widespread practice of extra-ecclesial *koinonia*. These related matters are generally not discussed in the available literature. They may serve as clues, however, to help us identify and delineate the perspective within which, consciously or unconsciously, neo-Pentecostalism operates. Because they are integrally related, No. 1 and No. 2 will be discussed simultaneously; No. 3, extra-ecclesial *koinonia*, will be treated separately.

\* By "hermeneutic" we mean the perspective and the interpretive principles involved in the interpretation of the Bible.

### A. *Hermeneutic and Individualism.*

We have noted already in our report our appreciation for the frequently reiterated emphasis on the Bible in neo-Pentecostal literature. The neo-Pentecostal testifies that the experience of "baptism with/in the Holy Spirit" stimulates one to go back to the Bible, to immerse himself in the Bible, to "read, learn, mark and inwardly digest" the Bible. For neo-Pentecostals the Bible is an exciting book. For this the church can only be grateful. When one examines how the Bible functions among the neo-Pentecostals, however, his enthusiasm for their insistence upon the necessity and importance of the Bible is dampened somewhat. Neo-Pentecostal interpretations of specific sections of the Bible frequently reflect a private or individualistic reading. A good illustration of the technique of Bible interpretation found among neo-Pentecostals can be found in Dennis and Rita Bennett's, *The Holy Spirit and You* (Plainfield, New Jersey, Logos International, 1971, p. 199).

Therefore, spend part of your time reading the Bible just waiting for the Holy Spirit to speak to you from its pages. When you do this, be prepared for some surprising insights, and some unexpected interpretations! The Holy Spirit can use the Scripture very freely and allegorically when he chooses. You may see a factual description of some aspect of the Temple, or an unlikely spot in a long list of names, may suddenly strike you with spiritual significance. When you try to share it with someone else, they may look at you blankly—but don't be disheartened by that. *That* little morsel was for you! The Rev. J. A. Dennis, of Austin, Texas, tells in his testimony how he was healed by laying hold of a promise for him from the Scripture. He was suffering from stomach trouble, and the Holy Spirit showed him the text: "I will take sickness away from the *midst* of thee!" (Exod. 23:25, KJV) "That's for me!" said J. A. Dennis. "In the midst of me, in my stomach, I've got trouble. God will take it away!" And God did take it away, and healed him completely! Later on, the Rev. Mr. Dennis told this to a well-trained Bible scholar who laughed and said: "But *that* isn't what that verse means!" J. A. Dennis was healed, just the same, because the Holy Spirit said: "That's what *I* want it to mean to you, to build your faith!" This kind of inspiration is for blessing, not for doctrine.

J. A. Dennis' reading of Exodus 23:25 reflects a hermeneutic in which the private, immediate enlightenment of the Holy Spirit is the (only) important ingredient in the reading of the Bible. When one's understanding of a biblical passage is attributed to the private, immediate (un-mediated by the clear intent of the biblical words in context) enlightenment of the Holy Spirit, the authenticity, authority and validity of this interpretation cannot be questioned since, from the neo-Pentecostal point of view, to attempt to challenge the validity of this reading places one in opposition to the Holy Spirit.

When we write about "the *immediate* enlightenment of the Holy Spirit, we intend to point out that, in the neo-Pentecostal literature we have investigated, the words, phrases and sentences of the Bible serve as cues which precipitate a direct encounter between God and the individual.

This God-man encounter does not take place in isolation from the Bible, but the Bible functions in only a very limited way in this encounter. The Bible serves as a tool through the use of which one experiences God himself—directly. God speaks *directly* to the individual. He instructs the individual; he shows himself to the individual.

Historically the Reformed community has repudiated the possibility of a *direct* encounter with God. The Reformed community has confessed that we encounter God only in God's works in our world on our behalf (his works in creation, providence and redemption). We recognize and confess God, the Redeemer-Creator, in what Calvin called the "signs of his presence." The Bible is indispensable to this recognition and confession. The Bible is the norm, the standard to which all experience of God must conform. We communally look at our world through the spectacles of the Bible. When we do so, we recognize and confess God, the Redeemer-Creator, as he has acted and acts in our world on our behalf. This recognition and confession are not autonomous acts. They are acts which are initiated and precipitated by the Spirit of God. As the Holy Spirit leads the church in the interpretation of the Bible, he works by means of and in conformity with the content of the Bible; he does not work outside of the framework of the content of the Bible. We understand this to be the thrust of John 14:26; 15:26, 27; 16:12-15.

In the literature we have investigated, moreover, the neo-Pentecostal experience of God himself which is said to be effected by the Holy Spirit through the words, phrases and sentences of the Bible takes place in the space-time continuum, but is different from and other than a historical experience. It is a "spiritual" experience. In this context, we judge that the term "spiritual" functions as the antithesis to "physical," to that which pertains to life in the physical and cultural realm of this world. It is a *direct* experience of "another world," a "different realm." This experience is effected by the Spirit by means of the words, phrases and sentences of the Bible, but the content of the experience is not necessarily controlled by the content of those words, phrases and sentences as this can be deduced through historical and grammatical exegesis of the Bible.

When one's interpretation of the Bible is attributed to the private, immediate enlightenment of the Holy Spirit, no criteria are available to the Christian community by means of which the interpretation may be evaluated. Consequently, the Christian conduct which this kind of interpretation of the Bible stimulates is private, individualistic conduct. (We limit ourselves at this point to Christian conduct because that is the limitation which the Bennetts place upon this kind of Bible reading or interpretation: "This kind of inspiration is for blessing, not for doctrine.")

We urge our neo-Pentecostal brothers and sisters to be sensitive to the danger involved in attributing one's individual interpretation of a specific section of the Bible to the private, immediate enlightenment of the Holy Spirit. This kind of Bible interpretation endangers the communal character of the Christian church in which the *one* Spirit operates in all the members of the organism of the church for the welfare of the body of Christ. Paul tells us that "you (plural) are the body (singular) of Christ and individually members of it" (I Cor. 2:27).

We question, moreover, the analysis which the Bennetts make of J. A. Dennis' case. This case contains evidence which is adequate to indicate that the dynamics operative in Bible interpretation are always complex. The circumstances in which J. A. Dennis found himself conditioned his interpretation of the Bible. This is what J. A. Dennis' friend, a "well-trained Bible scholar," tried to tell him. J. A. Dennis' interpretation of the Bible was not an *immediate* act of the Holy Spirit. It was a mediated act. It was, moreover, a private, individualistic act of J. A. Dennis. He was so conditioned by his circumstances that a text from the Bible was lifted out of its linguistic and historical context. It was then interpolated into the framework of his life. J. A. Dennis, we remind our neo-Pentecostal brothers and sisters, is a member of the Christian community. As such, he *shares* the *one* Spirit, the Spirit of Christ, who is given to each one individually as God wills. The Spirit apportions, however, to each member of the Christian community for the purpose of the common good (I Cor. 12).

We find no evidence in the Bible to warrant the conclusion that there are two kinds of activities of the Holy Spirit in the Christian church: one which is directed to the individual's "blessing" in isolation from the community of Christ, and a second which is operative in the individual but which is directed to the welfare of the total community of Christ.

The Bennetts advise Christians to "spend part of (their) time reading the Bible just waiting for the Holy Spirit to speak to (them) from its pages. In this technique of Bible interpretation, the Christian uses no tools to discern the meaning of the Bible, to interpret the Bible. The Christian is passive. He is a tablet upon which the Holy Spirit, through the vehicle of the words of the Bible, writes God's private, individualistic message to him in the circumstances of this moment. That message may coincide with the meaning of the biblical words, or it may be different from the meaning of the biblical words. We wish to point out that this model of Bible interpretation assumes an atomistic model of the church of Christ in which each individual stands alone and immediately in the presence of God. We wish, furthermore, to raise two questions at this point.

1. Although this model of Bible reading seems to emphasize greatly God's role in illuminating and directing Christians, does not this model do violence to the biblical picture of man as God's covenant-partner who is answerable to God always for his faith and conduct? The Bible's picture of man is one in which man is not isolated from the historical, political, social and economic factors which are operative in his environment. God does not speak to him in isolation from these. Man's thought processes, moreover, are not ignored in the Bible's picture of the God-man covenant partnership. (Cf. Adam's naming the animals.) These processes, too, are God's work. The neo-Pentecostal hermeneutic does violence to God's work. It does not honor God as much as it, at first glance, seems to.

2. Does not this model of Bible interpretation violate the mediated activity of God in revelation and in the production of the Bible, the inscripturated Word of God? We can state this question in another way: Does not this model of Bible interpretation violate the model which has

been operative in the Reformed community under the names of "historical revelation" and "organic inspiration"?

In some neo-Pentecostal literature the private, immediate enlightenment of the Holy Spirit is stated in a crass fashion which seems more objectionable than that found in the book of Rita and Dennis Bennett. One must ask, however, if the crassly stated perspective differs significantly from the perspective operative in the Bennetts' book. Walter Hollenweger, (*The Pentecostals*, p. 298) provides us with an illustration which is found in the Full Gospel Union *Manual*.

God has not confined himself to the written word. He still speaks directly to his children as the Bible plainly teaches he has done in the past. He does not direct anyone contrary to the standard of righteousness as taught in the Bible, but in his direct leadings he often makes known his will to a person entirely apart from any written statement of scripture known to that person.

We summarize the problems involved in the position maintained in this quotation.

1. The quotation ignores the difference between the primary, normative character of the Bible and the secondary, subordinate character of all other historical contexts.
2. If one grants the validity of the position maintained in the quotation, one has no criterion for stating that God does not direct anyone contrary to the standard of righteousness which is taught in the Bible.
3. If one grants the validity of the position maintained in the quotation, how can one confess that the Bible is our only infallible guide for faith and practice?

We recognize that Christians, including those in the Christian Reformed Church, frequently speak of reading the Bible "devotionally." Precisely what this term suggests is difficult to ascertain. We hope that the term is not designed to suggest that reason does not function in the reading of the Bible. We hope, moreover, that the term does not suggest that the meaning of a specific section of the Bible which is derived from a "devotional reading" of the Bible differs from the meaning of that same passage when it is discerned through the use of the linguistic and historical tools which the Christian community has forged through the centuries.

We recognize, of course, that in our individual as also in our corporate reading or interpretation of the Bible we may read a specific section of the Bible ten times or hundreds of times without that passage "speaking" to us. In the changed circumstances of a particular moment, however, that word blazes like the rising sun. A new world opens up. What seemed to be a dead word takes on life and generates life. This phenomenon is quite different from the phenomenon which the Bennetts describe. This phenomenon may in part result from the use of new linguistic or historical insights. It may in part result from a new historical context which is analogous to that of the biblical writer. It may in part result from attempting to read the biblical passage without

some of the barnacles of interpretation which have encrusted the text historically and which have made the text opaque.

We recognize, moreover, that one specific biblical passage may in the present circumstances be a bright light for one person but his attempts to communicate the significance of this passage to another person or group of persons fails. The same word which addressed one powerfully in his circumstances may not address another in his circumstances. The other may be grateful for this evidence of God's activity, but the specific passage of the Bible at this time may leave him untouched. This phenomenon, too, is different from that which is described by the Bennetts. This phenomenon does not depend upon ignoring the linguistic and historical tools forged historically by the Christian community. On the one hand, this phenomenon indicates that Bible interpretation is in part culturally conditioned. On the other hand, this phenomenon indicates that Bible interpretation involves a dimension which can be recognized and confessed but which does not admit of rational description or definition—what the Reformed community has called the "internal witness of the Holy Spirit."

The Reformed community historically has emphasized the necessity and importance of using tools in interpreting the Bible. These tools are the common property of the Christian community and are available to every member of the Christian community as the Bible functions in the community. The Christian community forged these tools. We confess that the Spirit of God operated in the Christian community as these tools were being developed. We should not consider these tools mere human productions which were forged in isolation from God's continued active and faithful presence among men as the Lord. The tools are the tools of the linguist and the tools of the historian. They are God's gift to the Christian community and to the individual Christian. We do not mean to imply that every single believer must be a linguist and a historian. We do wish to emphasize that we interpret the Bible always in the Christian community which is shaped and moulded by the activity of the Spirit who works mediately in the Christian community through the vehicle of these linguistic and historical tools.

In evaluating a particular interpretation of a specific Bible passage, we must take into consideration the tools which the interpreter used and the way in which he used those tools. One does not use tools in a vacuum. The context, the perspective within which an individual operates, influences significantly the way in which one uses his tools what one produces with those tools. The perspective within which he operates, furthermore, does not result from an *immediate* relation between the individual and the triune God which is effected and maintained through the Bible. Rather, God uses the community of faith with its tradition of Bible reading or interpretation to influence and shape the individual. The individual functions within the community of faith. God uses also the shaped and moulded individual to enrich and influence the community of faith. We do not wish to eliminate the Holy Spirit in this process. He operates in the community of faith and in the individual as a member of the community of faith to lead the total community into

the truth. What we are suggesting is that Bible interpretation is a much more complex act than our neo-Pentecostal brothers and sisters assume.

In conversation with one another relative to Bible interpretation, we must articulate clearly and carefully the perspective within which we operate and the tools which we use. Communication breaks down when we fail to do this. We talk past one another. We "live in different worlds." Some illustrations gleaned from the Bennetts' book may clarify this point. (We use the Bennetts because of their significance historically in the rise of neo-Pentecostalism, and because they are moderate representatives of the movement.)

'Canst thou by searching find out God?' asks the Scriptures, and the answer is 'No, not by intellectual and philosophical searching can you find God.' You can only seek God by your 'heart,' that is by your inner hunger to meet Him, the personal God, not a set of abstract principles. People say: 'I'm seeking the truth,' but Jesus says: 'I am the Truth!' (pp. 43, 44).

We discern here a factor involved in the Bennetts' perspective which demands, at least, discussion: i.e., the normative role of experience. Experience is, at least, a source and foundation of the "knowledge of God" for the Bennetts. The locale of the normative experience, moreover, is the "inner life." The Bennetts also minimize at best, or eliminate, the role of man's mind in the "inner experience."

In the Bible, as in the entire ancient Near East, "heart" is a symbol denoting man in his totality. We question, consequently, the Bennetts' usage of the term "heart." The discovery of God, the knowledge of God which the Bennetts discuss, is not that which can be articulated clearly or verbalized. It is, rather, an immediate awareness, an intuitive apprehension of God. This insistence upon the *normative* character of personal experience, stems in part from the private, individualistic faith-stance which is common to neo-Pentecostals. How does the neo-Pentecostal arrive at this private, individualistic faith-stance? He reads or interprets the Bible from an individualistic perspective. The perspective with which he operates influences his interpretation of the Bible. His interpretation of the Bible in turn strengthens his faith-stance of individualism. We submit, moreover, that the individualistic faith-stance of the neo-Pentecostal erodes the covenantal orientation of the Bible which has been discerned in the Reformed community and which has been an important factor in Bible interpretation in the Reformed community.

Let us look at another illustration which concerns explicitly a particular reading of a specific Bible passage: Acts 9, which deals with Paul's conversion:

Although the Scripture does not record at this place that Paul spoke in tongues, we know that he did so from I Corinthians 14:19 (RSV). "I thank God that I speak in tongues more than you all" (p. 32).

The technique of Bible interpretation which is operative here can be stated in terms of a syllogism:

1. Speaking in tongues forms part of the pattern of some New Testament situations which are similar to this one.

2. Speaking in tongues, consequently, could and should have occurred in this situation.
3. Speaking in tongues, therefore, did occur in this situation.

In view of the bad usage which was made of this technique in the Christian Church during the medieval period, we trust that it was not a technique which the Bennetts used consciously.

The texts of the Bible are shuffled around in this quotation as if they were interchangeable pieces of a mosaic. A prior commitment relative to the role of tongues governs the interpretation of the text. All texts, moreover, are stamped from the same die. The specific message of a given text is glossed over. The text is made to say what it did not and can not say. In this illustration, the authority of the Bible operates in a way which is dissociated from the text of the Bible. A formal commitment to the authority and normativity of the Bible is operative, but that commitment is not dependent on the text of the Bible. Whence does this kind of authority originate? We suggest that a particular tradition of the Christian community is the source of this concept of authority, not the text itself. The shuffling of texts found in this illustration is an example, incidentally, of the distortions which can result when one abuses a good Reformed principle of Biblical interpretation: Scripture interprets Scripture, the analogy of Scripture.

The neo-Pentecostal insists that the Bible often functions as God's specific answer to his private problems in the circumstances of the moment. This insistence results frequently in the neo-Pentecostal's abuse of the literary nature of the Bible. This kind of Bible interpretation makes the words of the Bible the Spirit's cues through which he provides a private, immediate, concrete message from God to a specific man which resolves a specific, immediate problem in that man's present. This kind of Bible reading or interpretation negates the history-of-redemption character of the Bible.

The July-August, 1972, issue of *Logos*, a well-known Pentecostal periodical, contains an article written by Jim Handyside which is entitled "The Holy Spirit Comes to Clydebank." In this article, Mr. Handyside describes the process whereby God indicated his approval of Handyside's attempt to obtain a new meeting place for his congregation.

We saw it was time to trust God for a more adequate meeting place where we could meet to worship in a scripturally designated way.

Asking, seeking God long and earnestly, I read the promise in II Samuel 7: 'For Thou, O Lord of hosts, God of Israel, hast revealed to thy servant saying, I will build thee an house.' Could it be that this promise to David of old was God's answer to me hundreds of years later? When I discussed the matter with my wife, she confirmed that the Lord had spoken to her very clearly from the same verse a year earlier, and with such divine impression that she had noted it in her Bible at the time. But why should he build us a house? . . . (p. 39)

One need not be a specialist in biblical studies to note that there is a play on the word "house" in II Samuel 7:27. David wished to build a house for God, but God promised, instead, that he would build a "house"

(a dynasty) for David. God would reserve the throne of Israel for David's family. David's lineage constitutes the house God will build, not brick and mortar.

The Bennetts write that "this kind of inspiration is for blessing, not for doctrine." This kind of Bible interpretation is designed for the individual Christian as he reads and interprets the Bible privately, as God speaks to him *through* the Bible relative to the circumstances in which he finds himself.

Inherent in this private use of the Bible is always the possibility that it will influence one's apprehension of the "teaching" of the Bible. The insert *Agape Power* in the July-August, 1972, edition of *Logos* contains an article by Kathryn Kuhlman entitled "God's Word Has the Answer." This article illustrates that a private, individualistic reading or interpretation of the Bible which is thought to be the product of the immediate activity of the Holy Spirit can move easily from the area of private conduct into the area of "doctrine." The "doctrine," moreover, is bad. It has not been subjected to the critical evaluation of the Christian community and is in conflict with the Christian community's historical interpretation of the Bible. This "doctrine" ignores the hermeneutical question: the influence of the Bible's historical milieu on the meaning or content of the Bible's word, statements, method of narrating a story and describing events.

Is God a Spirit, or does he have a body?

I believe that we have scriptural proof that God does have a body. You and I are made in the image and likeness of our great Creator. I like to know that when I look up at my heavenly Father, I'm not talking just to Spirit. I'm talking to my heavenly Father who has a body.

You want further scriptural proof? You remember that Moses and God were very close. One day Moses made a request of God. He said, 'I pray thee, show me thy glory.' And he said 'I will make all my goodness pass before you, and will proclaim before you my name, the Lord . . . . While my glory passes by I will put you in a cleft of the rock, and I will cover you with my hand until I have passed by; then I will take away my hand, and you shall see my back; but my faces shall not be seen' (Ex. 33:18-23). Therefore God speaking of himself speaks of his face and his hands; and Moses saw the hinder part of the body of God. God is more than Spirit; God has a body.

This reading or interpretation of Exodus 33:18-23 isolates a single passage from the context of the entire Bible. In this interpretation all of the language which is used in the Bible is located on the same plane. It is "straight" language identical to that used when one makes the assertion, "Today is Friday," or, "It is now 11 a.m." This interpretation ignores the nuances of language which become visible when one considers the literary forms in which a particular piece of literature is presented and the historical context within which a particular piece of literature was written. This interpretation, moreover, ignores the way in which the Christian church historically has dealt with the so-called anthropomor-

phisms and opts for an interpretation which the Christian church has rejected consistently. This interpretation considers the language used in the Bible relative to God to be straight descriptions, informational language. This position the Christian church has rejected consistently throughout her history.

Neo-Pentecostalism rejects any attempt to "study" the Bible with the linguistic and historical tools which have been developed in the church. These, they suppose, smack of infidelity to the Bible. They indicate an unwillingness to subject oneself corporately and individually to the Word of God. Walter J. Hollenweger (*The Pentecostals*, p. 298) states that among Pentecostals one still encounters the view that "the Word of God is not taught in his church to be discussed but to be obeyed." We deny that these should be viewed as alternatives. All study of the Bible in the Christian community has faithful discipleship as its objective. The use of linguistic and historical tools in the study of the Bible is ultimately for the purpose of discipleship. Scholarship is pressed into the service of discipleship by the Christian community under the guidance of the Spirit of God. The Reformed community has never rejected the use of linguistic and historical tools for the purpose of aiding the Christian community to live in conformity with the Word of God. Historically the Reformed community has insisted that the tools of scholarship are to be used in a way which is compatible with our commitment to the Bible as Word of God and to the practice of discipleship which is compatible with the Gospel.

"Report 44" was given to the Christian Reformed Church by the Synod of 1972 to provide "guidelines for our understanding and further discussion of the nature and extent of biblical authority" (*Acts of Synod*, 1972, p. 66, Recommendation No. 3). In Part V of the report (entitled "Pastoral Advice") "Synod encourages the churches to see to it that biblical studies are carried on in a careful and disciplined way, submissively rethinking the thoughts of scripture itself; and accordingly warns against the use of any method of biblical interpretation which excludes or calls into question either the event-character or the revelational meaning of biblical history, thus compromising the full authority of scripture as the Word of God" (*Acts of Synod*, 1972, p. 541, No. 5). In explicating this advice, the report states; "Biblical scholarship can be carried on *critically*, if we make clear that 'critical' does not imply a refusal to submit our thinking believingly to the authority of Scripture or a refusal to respond wholeheartedly to the illuminating power of the Holy Spirit who gave us the word. Biblical studies can be carried on *critically* if we understand 'critical' to mean a careful, disciplined, analytical rethinking of the thoughts of scripture itself.

"Thus understood, historical-critical studies, in harmony with the doctrine of organic inspiration, have contributed to a richer appreciation of the real human and historical dimension of Scripture as God's Word to man. Such scholarly approaches to Scripture have highlighted in exciting ways a better understanding of the historical setting and cultural context of the biblical message" (*Acts of Synod*, 1972, p. 541).

The perspective relative to biblical studies which is found in "Report 44" differs fundamentally from the perspective operative in the illustra-

tions of biblical interpretation among neo-Pentecostals which have been used to discern the hermeneutic operative among neo-Pentecostals. Although it is true that these illustrations stem from private, individualistic reading or interpretation of the Bible which is designed for private, individualistic "blessing, not for doctrine," the illustration taken from Kathryn Kuhlman's article indicates that there is no clear line of demarcation between the two "areas." We question, moreover, the validity of a disjunction between private reading or interpretation of the Bible for "blessing" and another kind of reading (a public, communal?) for "doctrine." This disjunction is incompatible with the *Heidelberg Catechism*, Lord's Day XXV, Question and Answer 65: "Since, then, we are made partakers of Christ and all his benefits by faith only, whence comes this faith? From the Holy Spirit who works it in our hearts by the preaching of the holy gospel, and confirms it by the use of the holy sacraments."

The neo-Pentecostals seem to emphasize private reading of the Bible as the means of grace *par excellence* and to downgrade the preaching of the word and use of the sacraments as the means of grace. This phenomenon, in our judgment, results from the individualism which operates as an unexamined assumption among neo-Pentecostals. The biblical warrant for this individualism has not been demonstrated. We suggest that this individualism may owe more to the spirit of the Enlightenment movement in the 17th and 18th centuries than to the activity of the Holy Spirit. We do not wish to minimize private devotional exercises involving Bible reading and study, prayer, etc. We do wish to affirm, however, that even our private devotional exercises are the acts of one who is a member of the body of Christ. We wish to emphasize the interdependence which characterizes the organism of Christ. The individual in turn contributes the uniqueness which is his as God's unique creation to enrich the community of Christ. Interdependence is a term which may be useful in describing the relation between the one and the many in the Christian community.

Frequently neo-Pentecostal sources distinguish biblical studies which use established linguistic and historical tools from biblical studies which are the result of the immediate, private enlightenment of the Holy Spirit. The former is then rejected and the latter lauded. Mel Tari, (*A Mighty Wind*, pp. 32, 33) indicates that textual criticism, too, is offensive to many neo-Pentecostals when textual criticism robs the neo-Pentecostal of one of his favorite texts.

Praise Jesus for the simplicity of the Gospel. Our Gospel is often fooled around with. When we read Mark 16, we begin to question why we don't find it in the most ancient manuscripts. So we begin to dig a hole here and dig a hole there for God's Word. We study it ten years and say, 'Oh, in this manuscript we have it and in this manuscript we don't have it, so we must ponder it and think it over before we make any decision.' We in Indonesia are not smart enough to do that. The missionaries brought us the 'Black Book' and told us that the whole Bible was the Word of God and we were to believe it. So we believed it. And if we were stupid to do so, God used even our stupidity for his glory, for by his power he proved

to us that his word is true. I praise God that no matter what scholars in America might say about some verses, we in Indonesia have experienced all the things in Mark 16 by the power of his Holy Spirit.

The Bennetts in a more modest, more sophisticated statement make the same point relative to the text of Mark 16:9ff.

We are quite aware that this passage at the end of Mark has been questioned by scholars, and put down by many as a 'later addition.' In some popular modern translations it has been 'demoted' to a footnote at the bottom of the page. A friend of ours, Mr. George Gillies, a capable leader in small-group ministry, says of this: 'Even in a footnote, it still *works!*'

It doesn't take any great scholarship to see that there is a break between the 8th and 9th verses of Mark 16—but whoever supplied the 'lost ending' of the Gospel of Mark, whether it was Mark himself or someone else, it came from the earliest period, and was accepted in the early days of the church. It became a part of the canonical Scripture. While this 'lost ending' is missing from the two earliest extant documents we have, it is present in many others. Everything in it is confirmed elsewhere by other incidents of Scripture. We say of this passage: 'It may have been a "lost ending", but somebody found it and stuck it back in our Bible! Apparently the Holy Spirit wanted it there!' We must be very careful about following the teaching and textual criticism of those scholars of the liberal-modernist tradition, who would like to 'desupernaturalize' the Scripture as much as possible (p. 58. note No. 2).

We now summarize our findings relative to the hermeneutic discernible from the literature of neo-Pentecostalism and the individualism which is visible as an operating assumption among neo-Pentecostals.

1. Both in the neo-Pentecostal groups and in the Reformed community, the Bible has a unique significance and importance. The Bible is the Word of God, our only infallible rule for faith and conduct.
2. Among neo-Pentecostals the Bible functions differently from the way in which it functions in the Reformed community. Neo-Pentecostals emphasize a private, individualistic reading of the Bible which is the result of the direct, immediate enlightenment of the Holy Spirit. This kind of reading stems from the commitment of neo-Pentecostals relative to individualism. They assume the believer stands as an isolated individual in the presence of God, who confronts him directly. In this confrontation and enlightenment the Bible serves as the necessary and indispensable vehicle; however, the enlightenment of the Spirit is dissociated from the "meaning" of the Bible.

In the Reformed community Bible reading or interpretation has always had a communal dimension. The Spirit is given to the total community. The individual participates in the one Spirit as a member of the community, not in isolation from the community. The Spirit's operation in the community, moreover, is mediate, not immediate. Relative to biblical interpretation, the tools of the linguist and the historian constitute means used by the Spirit to lead the

community into the truth of the Bible. The interpretation or reading of the Bible is not to be dissociated from the linguistic structures, the cultural context and the historical framework within which the biblical books were written.

3. Among neo-Pentecostals the historically conditioned character of both the Bible and the community's interpretation of the Bible is minimized or rejected. The neo-Pentecostal's concern is the immediate message of God for the individual—God's "blessing."

The Reformed community is aware of, accepts and affirms the historical conditioning of both the Bible and the community's interpretation of the Bible, although there is no uniformity of viewpoint in matters of detail.

4. Among neo-Pentecostals the Bible seems to have two distinct roles which are independent of one another: the Bible is the source of "doctrine" and the source of "blessing." "Doctrine" seems to mean simple gospel: Man is sinner; God provides for the salvation of the sinner in Christ, etc. "Blessing" refers to the immediate message of God given directly to a specific man through the vehicle of the Bible's words but dissociated from the "meaning" of the Bible. "Doctrine" may be a communal matter. (There is, however, very little literature one can explore to understand the meaning of the term for neo-Pentecostals.) "Blessing" is a private, individualistic matter.

In the Reformed community, "doctrine" and "blessing," faith and conduct, form and content, the corporate and the individual have not been dissociated as polarities. This is because the Reformed community has discerned God's covenantal pattern of operation. God uses the Christian community as his hands and voice. The individual is molded by the community, and in turn the individual molds or influences the community as he discharges his role of disciple. Mutuality characterizes the life of the Reformed community.

5. Among neo-Pentecostals there is a distrust of linguistic and historical tools for the purpose of understanding the Bible. This includes the science of textual criticism. These are human tools forged by men, and they obscure the work of the Spirit of God.

Although the Reformed community recognizes that someone who uses historical and linguistic tools may be "practicing" unbelief as he uses his tools, the Reformed community nevertheless appreciates the tools of the historian and the linguist. The Reformed community, recognizing and affirming the mediate character of God's self-revelation, knows no other way of comprehending the Bible than the way of using the historical and linguistic tools which have been forged. Report 44 (Acts of Synod, 1972), provides us with the framework within which linguistic and historical tools can function legitimately.

#### EXTRA-ECCLESIAL KOINONIA

Because the "baptism with/in the Holy Spirit," with the exercise of the accompanying gifts of the Spirit, distinguishes neo-Pentecostals from the rest of the members of the Christian community, neo-Pentecostals

tend to meet together in groups of varying sizes. Most of these groups are relatively small. These meetings frequently are ecumenical in nature in the sense that they embrace neo-Pentecostals from various Protestant denominations and from the Roman Catholic Church. These meetings, moreover, are usually in addition to and not competitive with the regular worship services of the established congregation. The structure of these meetings varies widely. Each group tends to develop its own character. Praise, prayer, group singing, Scripture reading, exhortation, the use of tongues and prophecy are common to the groups, although not all these rubrics are found in each and every session of a given group. There is a greater informality in these meetings than one usually finds in the worship service of the established congregation in the Reformed community.

The concern for growth and maturity in Christ evident among the participants in these groups we must applaud. The sharing of one's Christian experience and the communal praise to God present in these groups demand our expression of thankfulness to God. Some of the changes visible in those who participate in these groups prompt us to thank God for the evidence of his grace.

That there are dangers both potential and real to the welfare of the Christian community in extra-ecclesial groups of this type we must recognize. If the extra-ecclesial groups of neo-Pentecostals in assembly become judgmental relative to the whole Christian community, and if they use their own "spiritual life" as the criterion of judgment, such groups will become divisive. They will fragment the Christian community. The very uniqueness of the groups' members may produce a polarization which will threaten the unity of the Christian community. We consequently give the following guidelines to the churches to serve as pastoral advice in dealing with extra-ecclesial groups of a neo-Pentecostal orientation.

1. We urge all the congregations to be patient with and to exercise love over against those whose Christian faith and conduct have assumed contours differing to varying degrees from the Christian life-style to which we have become accustomed. We urge all the congregations to remember that at other times in the history of the Christian church the established structure of the church repudiated new structures and forms which later were demonstrated to be the work of the Spirit of God.
2. We urge our neo-Pentecostal brothers and sisters to exercise patience and love over against those of us who profess to have received the Holy Spirit in our baptism and confession of faith; who do not feel the need for a second experience subsequent to and different from our confessing Jesus and water baptism because we do not read the Bible as declaring this to be the pattern of the Spirit's working among us; who feel neither the need to possess nor to seek the particular gifts of the Spirit which are emphasized and highly prized by the neo-Pentecostals: e.g., tongues, prophecy and divine healing; and who emphasize the significance of the gifts of the Spirit such as administration, teaching and exhortation.

3. We can neither approve nor endorse extra-ecclesial assemblies. To do so would be to admit that the church lacks the flexibility and the resources to provide the context in which the total organism of Christ can grow and mature in the love of God which is in Jesus Christ our Lord. If the interactions of a small group are found to be beneficial to and productive of the Christian nurture of the members of the organism of Christ, the established churches are urged to provide the opportunity for small groups to meet together for praise, for mutual encouragement and support, for prayer, for listening obediently to the Bible, for sharing the experiences in which the gospel has become embodied in the lives of men and women and children.
4. We urge our neo-Pentecostal brothers and sisters, if they feel compelled to participate in extra-ecclesial groups, to exercise restraint in those meetings, lest assemblies which are designed to promote the welfare of the Christian community actually erode the unity of the community. We urge them to conduct their extra-ecclesial meetings with a sensitivity to Paul's words: "You (plural) know, do you (plural) not, that you (plural) are the temple (singular) of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you (plural)? If anyone (singular) destroys the temple of God, him (singular) God will destroy. For the temple of God is holy, who you (plural) are" (I Cor. 3:16, 17).
5. We urge our neo-Pentecostal brothers and sisters to recognize and accept the Bible's full spectrum of the gifts of the Spirit. What seem to be the established churches' superficial activities and pedestrian administrative and pedagogical roles are, according to the Bible, gifts of the Spirit: i.e., service, teaching, exhorting, contributing, giving aid, doing acts of mercy (Rom. 12:6-8); teachers, helpers, administrators (I Cor. 12:28); pastors, teachers (Eph. 4:11). We urge our neo-Pentecostal brothers and sisters to remember the thrust of Second and Third John: Unless order, structure and apostolic teaching are maintained, the church will die. The structures of the church are God's creations. A society, a group, cannot exist without structure, organization and order. These, as they are expressed in the Christian community, may be bent and distorted by men; they are, however, God's creations. In the Reformed community we should remember that John Calvin was not averse even to an episcopal structure as long as the episcopate subjected itself to the Bible. There is room for flexibility and for diversity within the framework of the community that lives in subjection to the Bible.
6. We urge all the congregations and extra-ecclesial neo-Pentecostal groups to remember that we are brothers and sisters in Christ. Let all commit ourselves corporately and individually once more to the Lord of the church whose we are and whom we will to serve. Let us together commit ourselves to obedient discipleship in the service of him who is able to use a variety of structures in the organism which in his body to achieve his purpose—to make visible the family which God has engendered in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ so that the world will know and believe that the Father has sent the Son for the salvation of the world.

**IX. RECOMMENDATIONS.**

A. That synod recognize Rev. Dirk Hart as spokesman for the report, in addition to the reporter of the committee.

B. That synod receive the report of its study committee and recommend it to the churches.

C. That synod address to the churches the following counsels:

**1. Counsel to the neo-Pentecostals among us:**

a. Remember that all your Christian brothers and sisters have received the Holy Spirit as well as you: "For in one Spirit were we all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, bond or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit" (I Cor. 12:13). "Any one who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him" (Rom. 8:9b).

b. Remember that all religious experience is to be judged by the Word of God in Holy Scripture, as discerned by the Spirit-enlightened community of believers.

c. Remember that the Spirit of God is sovereignly free to work as he will, and there is diversity in his working. Do not presume, therefore, to know the manner of the Spirit's working the grace of God in the hearts of your Christian brothers and sisters. Do not suppose that the Spirit's way with you constitutes a pattern that he follows in every believer.

d. Live together in love, patience and full acceptance with those of your fellow-believers who claim with you the baptism of the Holy Spirit but who do not testify to a "second experience" of the Spirit subsequent to conversion or different from growth in grace, and who do not seek those particular gifts of the Spirit you so highly prize, but tend to stress rather the gifts of administration, discernment, teaching and exhortation.

e. Be discerning about the gifts of the Spirit and be sure that the claims of such gifts are confirmed by the presence of the fruit of the Spirit. Be grateful for the gifts of the Spirit you have received, but receive your gift(s) with modesty, remembering that there are many gifts of the Spirit. Acknowledge with equal gratitude and modesty the gifts received by others.

f. Do not glory in your gift(s), or in those who are gifted, but only in Jesus Christ and in the salvation that you have in him. "Let him who boasts, boast of the Lord" (I Cor. 1:31; II Cor. 10:17; cf. Jer. 9:23, 24). "For who sees anything different in you? What have you that you did not receive? If then you received it, why do you boast as if it were not a gift?" (I Cor. 4:7). "Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you; but rejoice that your names are written in heaven" (Luke 10:20).

g. Remember that the gifts of the Spirit are for the good of the whole body of Christ. Exercise your gift(s) with prudence and love. Where the gifts of the Spirit are not used out of love for the Christian brotherhood, and in the wisdom of the Spirit, they come to nothing (I Cor. 13).

h. Remember that the gifts of the Spirit are not achievements or rewards or endorsements; they are verily *gifts*—not for honor but for service.

i. Do not let your seeking the gifts of the Spirit be governed by the spectacular character of some of the gifts but by their usefulness for the

upbuilding of the church in faith, hope and love. "Since you are eager for manifestations of the Spirit, strive to excel in building up the church" (I Cor. 14:12). "Earnestly desire the higher gifts" (I Cor. 12:30).

j. Do not single out any one of the gifts of the Spirit, be it speaking in tongues or any other, as the touchstone for being filled with the Spirit.

k. Remember that those to whom have been given the more "spectacular" gifts are not necessarily gifted in the interpretation of Scripture or in understanding "what the will of the Lord is." Study the Scriptures within the company of the whole Spirit-gifted church and discern the will of the Lord within the fellowship of the whole brotherhood.

l. Those of you who are pastors, elders or deacons we counsel and warn not to use your gifts in the church as a commission or license from the Lord to impose the exercise of a particular gift on the congregation or God's people in which you serve, if they fail to recognize that gift or their need for it. Love and prudence must guide you at all times.

m. In your use of Scripture remember that what the Spirit has to say to the church and to the individual members of the church is only to be learned by way of a disciplined listening to the Scriptures within the fellowship of the whole church and in a manner which acknowledges the grammatical, historical and literary character of the Scriptures. Only in this way is the Bible truly honored as the inscriptured Word of God.

n. Be guarded in the "language" you use as you testify of the grace of God and proclaim the gospel, so that you may speak out of "one mind" with the whole church, as the Apostle Paul wrote: "May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus, that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. 15:5f). See to it, therefore, that all your speaking is in accord with the Confessions of the church.

o. Those of you who aspire to an office in the church, whether that of pastor, elder or deacon, remember that the church remains judge of what gifts of the Spirit are most needed for the exercise of these offices in any time or place. It is the Spirit-gifted church that appoints to office, in the name of Christ the King of the church.

p. In all things seek the leading of the Holy Spirit, but remember that the Spirit leads through the teaching of Scripture, the counsel of wise and godly men, the accumulated wisdom of the church, the experiences of your own life, and your Spirit-sanctified and enlightened mind and conscience. Although the Spirit may indeed guide us at times in strange and wonderful ways, to seek "special guidance" by signs or portents or revelations is to distrust the Spirit's normal workings, to render yourself a victim to subjective whims, self-deception and arbitrary directives, and to seek escape from your own responsibility before God for decision-making in accord with the will of God—a responsibility which by no means can be escaped. Do not confuse sudden insights with "special revelations," but receive them gratefully and examine them carefully in the light of Scripture and the accumulated wisdom of the church.

q. Be on your guard against those who claim to be agents of the Spirit in the “last days” and who seek to confirm their claims by “signs and wonders” but do not speak out of “one mind” with the church, or even exalt themselves over against the church. From the early years of the church there have been those who are “false apostles, deceitful workmen, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. So it is not strange if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness. Their end will correspond to their deeds” (II Cor. 11:13-15). Be warned that their activities are “with all power and with pretended signs and wonders” (II Thess. 2:9).

r. Remember the reality of the kingdom of darkness and be aware of the dangers facing those who give in to this kingdom or who become involved in occult practices.

s. If you feel the desire or need to participate in extra-ecclesial fellowship, be sure to exercise all due restraint in those meetings so that gatherings of believers designed to promote the welfare of the Christian community may not actually erode the unity of the church. We urge you, therefore, to remember Paul’s words to the church: “You (plural) know, do you (plural) not, that you (plural) are the temple (singular) of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells in you (plural)? If anyone (singular) destroys the temple of God, him (singular) will God destroy. For the temple of God is holy, and you (plural) are that temple” (I Cor. 3:16, 17).

t. We urge you to recognize and accept the Bible’s full spectrum of the gifts of the Spirit. What may seem to you to be only the established church’s superficial activities and routine administrative and teaching roles are, according to the Bible, gifts of the Spirit: e.g, service, teaching, exhorting, contributing, ruling, doing acts of mercy (Rom. 12:6-8); teachers, helpers, administrators (I Cor. 12:28); pastors and teachers (Eph. 4:11). We urge you to remember the thrust of Second and Third John: Unless order, structure and the apostolic teaching are maintained, the church will die.

u. Finally, we urge you in the words of the Apostle Paul; “Be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. Do nothing from selfishness or conceit, but in humility count others better than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others” (Phil. 2:2-4).

## 2. Counsel to the churches:

a. We urge the whole church—members, officers and theologians—to continue to search the Scriptures together in order to bring the faith and life of the church into full accord with that which they testify and teach relative to the work of the Holy Spirit in our salvation.

b. We affirm and testify that according to the Scriptures a believer receives the baptism of the Holy Spirit at the time of his conversion, as the Apostle Paul declares: “For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit” (I Cor. 12:13), so that in Christ we all “have access in one Spirit to the Father” (Eph. 2:18) and “are builded together for a

habitation of God in the Spirit" (Eph. 2:22, ASV). (Cpr. John 3:5f; Acts 2:39; Rom. 8:1-17; 15:13; I Cor. 3:16f; 12:3; II Cor. 1:21ff; Gal. 3:2; 5:16-26; I John 1:20, 27; and see also *Heidelberg Catechism* Questions 49, 51, 53, 55.) We reject, therefore, the teaching of some that the baptism of the Holy Spirit is a "second blessing" received subsequent to conversion.

c. We urge the whole church, and every member, to live in close fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ, and not to "quench" (I Thess. 5:19) or "grieve" (Eph. 4:30) the Holy Spirit but to be "filled with the Spirit" (Eph. 5:18) and to "live" (Rom. 8:13), "walk" (Gal. 5:25), and "be led" (Rom. 8:14; Gal. 5:18) by the Spirit, according to the admonitions of the Apostle Paul, so that the joy of salvation and the fruit of the Spirit may be ever more evident in their lives. (See Section on "Exhortations Concerning the Spirit.")

d. We urge the whole church, especially through her teaching and pastoral ministries, to renew her awareness of and desire for the gifts of the Spirit in accord with the Scriptures, "for the equipment of the saints, for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ" (Eph. 4:12f).

e. We call on the church to recognize the freedom of the Spirit to bestow his gifts according to his will, and that the Scriptures do not restrict the *charismata* spoken of by the apostolic witness to the apostolic age. Let the church be open to an acknowledgment of the full spectrum of the gifts of the Spirit.

f. We urge the churches within their communal fellowship to provide for the free exercise of all genuine gifts of the Spirit, so long as all things are done "unto edifying" and in "good order." "God is not a God of confusion but of peace" (I Cor. 14:33). Provide also full opportunity for Christian service in ministries appropriate to the gifts received by the members of the congregations.

g. We urge the churches to fully accept in love and patience those of their members who claim a "second experience" of the Spirit subsequent to conversion and different from the more ordinary growth in grace, and to give thanks for every working of the Spirit that leads to a fuller manifestation of the fruit of the Spirit.

h. We urge all pastors, elders and deacons to deal lovingly, patiently and wisely with those members of the churches who claim "charismatic" experience and/or who engage in extra-ecclesial fellowship. Disciplinary procedures should not be contemplated so long as these members evidence the fruit of the Spirit and do not disturb the peace and unity of the church.

i. We call on the churches to be aware of the errors involved in much of today's practice of divine healing and urge the whole church, but especially the elders as well as the pastors, to a ministry of prayer on behalf of and with those who are ill.

j. We counsel the church—members, elders and deacons—whose pastor claims "charismatic" experiences to accept the brother fully in the performance of his office, so long as he manifests the fruit of the

Spirit, employs his gifts wisely for the upbuilding of the church and does not disturb the unity and peace of the church. Should the welfare of the congregation require it, the council should seek a dissolution of the pastor-congregation relationship according to the Church Order and the regulations of synod.

k. We urge the churches to safeguard "the unity of the faith in the bond of peace," acknowledge that "just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body. . . ." "Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of working, but it is the same God who inspires them all in every one" (I Cor. 12).

D. Synod declare this report and its pastoral counsel to the churches to be its reply to the overtures of Classis Sioux Center and Classis Chicago South, and to the request of Mr. H. J. Jongsma.

Neo-Pentecostalism Committee

John H. Stek, Reporter

Michael De Vries

Dirk Hart

David Holwerda

Leonard Sweetman

## A DISSENT FROM THE CONCLUSIONS OF THE MAJORITY

Dear Brothers:

The undersigned has worked with the other members of the study committee on neo-Pentecostalism in the preparation of the report now being offered to synod. While agreeing with much of the studies found in the report, I am unable to endorse it in its totality. To dissent from the view of the majority is not a pleasant thing; however, I am constrained to take a different stand on certain conclusions found in the report and which are of extreme practical importance.

In the section of the report entitled: *Are the Gifts of the Spirit Still Present Today?*, we find the following statement: "Other gifts, such as speaking in tongues and healing, have been more controversial, less widely present and are considered to be more dramatic and spectacular. Their validity is often questioned. We should make certain, however, that we question them for good reason. If the Scriptures do not distinguish between 'more' or 'less' spectacular, may we arbitrarily introduce such a distinction and rule out the use of some of these gifts for today's church and not others?"

How are we to understand the statement: "The Scriptures do not distinguish" or "Scripture itself does not demand . . ."? Do we mean that the Scriptures should have spoken directly and clearly about every problem which would arise in the church until the end of time? Utmost care should be exercised when we make the statement about what the Scriptures say or do not say, allow or do not allow.

The Bible makes a distinction between the more or less spectacular gifts. For example, when a miracle of healing took place in biblical times, it was recognized as having occurred through the intervention of God or Christ. See for example the miracles of healing related in Matthew 8. People in biblical times, were not unaware of normal or regular ways of healing. When events happened in an extraordinary way, they looked upon them as miracles or wonders. No one wonders about the usual or the familiar. If we erase the line which separates the ordinary from the extraordinary, we run the risk of making all things miraculous or just the opposite.

In the report, it is stated that the traditional arguments for the cessation of the spectacular gifts prevailed for a long time and were defended by "theologians of great eminence and ability." It is also stated that: "as long as these theologians judged the gifts to be virtually absent from the church, these arguments appeared to explain their absence. The rise of Pentecostalism and neo-Pentecostalism, however, has occasioned a new look at the Scriptures with respect to the more controversial gifts of the Holy Spirit. Such a study makes it clear that Scripture itself does not demand the thesis that these gifts belonged only to the apostles and their age."

Protestant theologians have looked at this subject from the point of view that the special gifts belonged to the apostles and their immediate fellow-workers upon whom they had conferred the gift. At the same time, these theologians were fully aware of the miracles which were claimed in the Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox traditions. From as early as the third century A.D., many lay and ordained members of the church claimed miraculous powers and deeds. The heretical groups made also the same claim. Thus, the rise of Pentecostalism and neo-Pentecostalism cannot mean that for the first time, the church is facing groups which claim extraordinary gifts and powers. The new element in the situation today is that certain people who have espoused views and practices which were confined in the past to Pentecostalism, are eager to remain within their own communions in order to revive them.

The church must always be studying the Bible and testing its doctrines and practices by this infallible rule. While to some Bible students today, it is "clear that Scripture itself does not demand the thesis that these gifts belonged only to the apostles and their age," to others, this is not the case. They are still convinced of the validity of the traditional Protestant view. The question is not at all about the authority of the Word of God, but about our "reading" or understanding of the Bible.

What the Scripture says or does not say about a subject which is being debated in the church involves the teachings of the entire biblical revelation. This revelation has been studied and expounded since the early days of the church. It has been summarized and confessed in the symbolical books of the church. As members of a confessional church, can we engage in a serious discussion of the teachings of the Bible without giving due attention to what the church has taught from the Bible pertaining to certain doctrines and practices? The church today is not the whole church, i.e., the catholic church of the Apostles' Creed; it is only one segment of it. A true ecumenical spirit demands an equal emphasis

on the teachings of the church in all ages as well as on the labors of Bible scholars today. Any major shift in the doctrinal stand of the church cannot be made without injuring our unity with the church of all ages.

When the Bible gives us a description of the life of the church in apostolic days, it does not necessarily mean to tell us that all the practices and experiences of that church are normative for all time. When we reflect briefly on the life of the church in Corinth in the days of Paul, we discover that certain practices or customs were not intended as models for later generations. For example, Paul neither condemned nor condoned the baptism on behalf of the dead, see I Corinthians 15:29. May we encourage such a "biblical practice" on the mission fields? Is Acts 2:41-47 to be construed simply as a divine injunction for a Christian commune?

In the *description of certain gifts*, and specifically, the gift of speaking in tongues, the report states: "We believe that where speaking in tongues is initially a spontaneous experience, the recipient of this gift should accept it in thanksgiving and practice it both in love and according to biblical regulation." The report assumes that today, in certain cases as reported by those who are part of the charismatic movement, speaking in tongues occurs initially as a spontaneous experience. This assumption cannot be proven; it simply depends on the testimony of the one who speaks in tongues. To the latter, its genuineness as a gift of the Holy Spirit is not in question. The speaker believes that the Bible is on his side; after all, it was part of the church life of the apostolic age. The fact that very little is known about the exact nature of the speaking in tongues in the Corinthian church does not bother him. The complete silence of the other apostles and evangelists on the subject is irrelevant to the one who has the gift today.

We are not denying the sovereignty of the Holy Spirit when we view his activities today as functioning in the life of the church and applying quietly, yet powerfully, the benefits of Christ's work of redemption. The charismatic movement has placed undue emphasis on the historical elements in the church of Corinth as described in I Corinthians 12 and 14. Not enough emphasis is placed on the teaching of our Lord about the work of the Holy Spirit as we find them in John 14:15-31 and 16:5-15. From these passages we learn that the activities of the Holy Spirit during the present age are in the area of the application of the redemptive work of Christ. The Holy Spirit is the Comforter and the Advocate of the people of God.

Under the subject of *prophecy*, the report leaves the door slightly open for prophecy as foretelling to take place today. "The preponderant emphasis on prophecy as forthtelling need not exclude altogether, however, the possibility of prophecy as foretelling such as in the case of Agabus." That God guides his people today as he did in the past is not a point in question. But now that we have the full revelation of God in the Bible, we cannot say that he still guides his people in an immediate way in the sense that a believer may say that he has a "direct line" which puts him in touch with God. God's guidance of his people is mediated and includes the written Word and the providential events which remain at all times under the control of God. By leaving the door slightly open for

prophecy as foretelling, one runs the risk of giving the green light for a revelation beyond Scripture. It is practically impossible to guard such a "gift" or preserve it from excesses.

Under the heading of *Miracles*, the report makes the statement that "nothing in Scripture forbids us to believe that the Lord may work signs and miracles today." Certainly, no Christian wishes to put limits to the power of God or his present-day activities in the world. However we must remind ourselves of the *raison d'être* of the miracles which were wrought by Christ and his apostles. Christ's miracles pointed to the basic nature of his mission: redemption. The miracles of the apostles accredited them as the sent ones (messengers) of the Messiah. When one contrasts the miracles of the Old and New Testaments with the ones which have been claimed by many members of the church since the third century A.D., it becomes manifest that there is a great gulf which separates the two kinds. Post-apostolic miracles tend to be more of a legendary type, and often attribute great deeds to certain saints and heroes of the faith—years after their death.

In the section of the report which deals with *Extra-Ecclesial Koinonia* (i.e., *fellowship*), we find an urgent plea for patience and the exercise of love over against "those whose Christian faith and conduct have assumed contours differing to varying degrees from the Christian life-style to which we have become accustomed." Then, we are reminded that we must remember "that at other times in the history of the Christian Church the established structure of the Church repudiated new structures and forms which later were demonstrated to be the work of the Spirit of God."

That the church should exercise love and understanding in its dealings with members who have espoused new doctrines and practices, is generally accepted. But the church is not an open society in the sense that it should have a limitless tolerance towards those who teach and spread doctrines which are not in harmony with the Word of God as confessed and understood by the confessional standards of the church. John, the last apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ, proclaimed in all of his writings the equal importance of truth and love. We may not minimize the one or the other. The teachings and practices of neo-Pentecostalism are not of a peripheral nature; they have implications for all areas of life and are related to every point of Christian belief.

It is certainly true that throughout history, the established structure of the church repudiated new structures and forms which later were demonstrated to be the work of the Spirit of God. But this historical fact need not be brought into the picture as more than a warning lest, in doing the work of the church, we find ourselves fighting against truth or the renewal of the church. It must not be allowed to stand in the abstract or made into a general rule. Of course, when the "established church" is no longer living out of the Word of God and when its traditions no longer reflect the teachings of the Bible, it fights against "new structures and forms." For example, this happened in the days of Christ and during the Reformation. We all know that the church today is not perfect; it needs renewal. It must close the gap between its confession and the daily life of its members. The church has erred in the past and

is still liable to error today. But all this does not mean that the church should remain hesitant in dealing, in an unambiguous way, with the rise of movements which profess and propagate wrong doctrines and practices.

A generation ago, the church faced a tremendous challenge in the form of a dynamic movement: dispensationalism. When the latter was studied in the light of the Bible and the historic creeds, it was found erroneous in its basic thrust. Wherever this movement and its method of "rightly dividing the word of truth" triumphed, it wrought havoc in the life of the churches by fostering a one-sided, other-worldly piety. The biblical teachings about the kingdom of God were made wholly futuristic. Those churches which were affected by dispensationalism completely bypassed the many and complicated problems of 20th century man. The field was left open for the secularists and their false gospels.

Neo-Pentecostalism is a greater threat to the church today than was dispensationalism to the church of a generation ago. Its differences with the historic Christian faith are not matters of secondary importance, and therefore cannot come under the subjects treated by Paul in Romans 14 and 15 where mutual tolerance and acceptance are advocated. The report itself, when dealing with the neo-Pentecostal "reading" of the Bible showed clearly the deep cleavage between the neo-Pentecostal hermeneutics and the one commonly used in the churches of the Reformed faith.

The divisions within the church are not always occasioned by people who set out to divide the church. They often occur because of honestly held and believed different ways of "reading" the Bible. It would be wonderful if all Christians "read" the Word of God in the same way—in accordance with its intended meaning. The sad fact is that they do not read the Bible alike. Some take the Bible and read it as if it has just been given to them from heaven, or as if the church has hardly done any serious Bible study during the last 1,900 years. It would not be doing the church a great service, if we try and build the biggest umbrella possible under which fundamental and divergent ways of Bible "reading" may co-exist.

Church history, both in its apostolic and post-apostolic days, teaches us that those who feel they have discovered the truth, or have re-discovered a neglected or lost truth, develop a dynamic way for the spread of their understanding of the truth. Today, those who believe they have discovered the tremendous power of the Holy Spirit according to the neo-Pentecostal way, find it impossible to keep silent. They will speak the truth as they have experienced it and will do their utmost to reform the church and revitalize it—in accordance with their vision. In these chaotic days, they are convinced that God is calling them to offer the entire church a map for its spiritual recovery and the accomplishment of the unfinished task of the church: the evangelization of the world.

However, in taking a long view of the charismatic movement, one who is committed to the Word of God as interpreted in the historic creeds of the church cannot but view with great alarm the teachings and the practices of neo-Pentecostalism. This movement forms a radical disjunction in the history and beliefs of the church. Actually, we are not left today to choose between renewal à la charismatic way and no re-

newal at all. We do have an alternative; it is in the whole-hearted return to the historic Christian faith as it finds its most balanced and biblical exposition in the creeds and other symbolical books of the Reformed Churches. The Reformed faith has managed to escape the imbalance which one observes in the teachings of many other Protestant communions. Specifically, it has taught a wonderfully biblical balance in the area of the Word of God and the work of the Holy Spirit. In the spirit of Calvin we may say that the masterpiece of the Holy Spirit is the gift of faith to man. By this living and dynamic faith, we take hold of all the promises of God, we are justified, united to Christ and sanctified. This is not an autonomous faith, it is the beautiful work of the Holy Spirit.

The rediscovery and the vital embracing of the Reformed emphasis on the unique role of the Holy Spirit in the life of the church and the individual believer is of utmost necessity today. This, coupled with the emergence of a dynamic and prophetic preaching of the whole counsel of God, is the most sure way for the revitalization of the church and her equipment for the work of missions at home and to the ends of the world.

#### *Recommendations:*

A. That synod declare that the report of the study committee is not sufficiently clear with respect to the distinctive teachings of neo-Pentecostalism and therefore does not accomplish the mandate given to it by the Synod of 1971.

#### *Grounds:*

1. The report fails to adequately recognize the uniqueness of the apostolic age and the special manifestations of the work and the gifts of the Holy Spirit during that age.

2. The report fails to emphasize adequately the consequences of the incompatibility of the two divergent ways of biblical interpretation, namely: the Reformed way and the neo-Pentecostal way; and the equally incompatible guides to Christian life and piety as prescribed by the two ways.

B. That synod declare that neo-Pentecostal teachings and practices are not permitted in the Christian Reformed Church.

#### *Grounds:*

1. Neo-Pentecostal teachings and practices are not in harmony with the Scriptures as understood in the Reformed creeds.

2. Neo-Pentecostal teachings and practices occasion unrest and divisions within the church.

C. That synod urge all members of the Christian Reformed Church to seek the renewal of the church in a whole-hearted commitment to the teachings of the Holy Scriptures and to interpret Christian experience in accordance with the teachings of the Reformed faith.

D. That synod urge all office bearers who hold to neo-Pentecostal teachings to reconsider their espousal of these teachings and to endeavor to work for the renewal of the church in accordance with the teachings of the Reformed faith.

E. That the undersigned be permitted to represent the minority opinion before synod and its advisory committee.

Bassam M. Madany

## X. REBAPTISM AND CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

### A. *Expanded Mandate.*

Rebaptism confronts the Christian Reformed Church not only with a doctrinal question but also with a very practical matter. How should the church respond to persons who no longer accept its teaching concerning the very basic doctrine of infant baptism? Can rebaptized persons still be considered members of a Reformed church? If they can, are there conditions to be attached to their membership? If they cannot, how does the church proceed in removing them from membership?

This practical matter of the effect of rebaptism upon church membership was before the Synod of 1972 in connection with a protest against an action of the Council of the Clinton Christian Reformed Church (cf. analysis below). In this context the Synod of 1972 decided:

“That synod broaden the mandate of its study committee on neo-Pentecostalism to include in its mandate the formulation of practical advice to the churches confronting similar problems.

#### *Grounds:*

- a. The problems faced in Clinton arose in connection with neo-Pentecostal teachings and practices.
- b. The problem is not confined to one local area, but is a denominational matter because it appears elsewhere as well.
- c. Appropriate general advice can best be formulated in the context of a general overview of the problem such as the study committee on neo-Pentecostalism may be expected to gain in the course of its study” (*Acts*, 1972, Art. 73, II, C 3, p. 102).

### B. *Analysis of Previous Synodical Actions.*

The problem confronting us in this section is primarily one of church order. How does rebaptism affect membership in a Reformed church, and how should the church respond to those of its members who have been rebaptized? The issue is not whether churches should allow members to be rebaptized. In rejecting the appeal of Mr. H. J. Jongsma vs. the Montreal Consistory and Classis Eastern Canada for denying him permission to receive “believer’s baptism” in a neighborhood church, synod affirmed that granting such a request “would mean approval of a teaching and practice which are not in accord with the teaching of Scripture and the confessions of the Christian Reformed Church” (*Acts*, 1971, Art. 171, p. 162).

The problem concerns only the effect of rebaptism upon membership in the Christian Reformed Church. This issue was before synod in the case involving an action of the council of the Clinton CRC of Ontario, Canada. It is not necessary to give a complete history of the case for such can be found in Report 34, *Acts*, 1972, pages 389-392.

The essence of the matter as it confronted the Synod of 1972 is as follows: Several members of the Clinton church in connection with their "baptism in the Spirit" had submitted to a rebaptism with water. In response to this action the church council publicly announced that "those members who submit themselves to rebaptism can no longer be considered members of the Clinton Christian Reformed Church." In a further explanation of their action, the council declared that they were merely affirming in this statement what the rebaptized members had done to themselves, i.e., "by their act of having themselves rebaptized they withdrew from the fellowship of the Christian Reformed Church" (cf. Communication 2, re Report 34, p. 2, submitted to Synod, 1972). In addition, since these rebaptized members met separately and actively propagated their views to other members, the council judged that such action was destroying the peace and unity of the congregation (cf. Communication 2, p. 2).

However, since the Clinton council did not follow the road of discipline and excommunication set down in Church Order, Article 86, Mr. J. C. Bakelaar requested classis to declare the action of the council to be illegal. Classis Huron, however, acquiesced in the decision of the council but only as a particular action applying to these persons. This acquiescence was not to be construed as the adoption of a general policy applicable to all rebaptized persons. The ground given for this limited acquiescence called attention to the separate meetings held by these persons to which others were invited, an action which classis judged to be "of a schismatic nature disruptive of the unity of the church" (Report 34, *Acts*, 1972, p. 392). Mr. Bakelaar then protested this action to the Synod of 1971.

The Synod of 1971 appointed an *in loco* committee to assist in adjudicating this matter. This committee recommended to the Synod of 1972 that the appeal of Mr. Bakelaar be sustained and affirmed that membership can be terminated by a council only through the action of excommunication. In turn, this recommendation was presented to the synod by its Advisory Committee but it was rejected by the synod (*Acts*, 1972, Art. 73, pp. 101, 102). Since this action of synod was a negative one, i.e., a rejection of a recommendation to sustain the appeal of Mr. Bakelaar, synod in effect supported the action of Classis Huron and the Clinton council without stating its own grounds for doing so. It then adopted the recommendation to broaden the mandate of its study committee on neo-Pentecostalism (*Acts*, 1972, Art. 73, p. 102).

Since synod gave no grounds for its action, it is now possible to translate this action into a statement of policy. Did synod mean to say that there is an intermediate step between a person's actively resigning his membership and his being excommunicated, *viz.*, that an action of his can mean *de facto* a withdrawal from membership which a council then acknowledges even though the person involved does not? Synod did not say so explicitly, although this is one of the grounds given as the basis for the action of the Clinton council. If this were the case, then synod would be stating a general principle, *viz.*, that rebaptism is a *de facto* severing of relationships with the Christian Reformed Church. But synod did not say so, and Classis Huron explicitly stated that this was

not the general principle it was adopting. Or was the basic reason for synod's support of the Clinton council the matter of schismatic action noted by Classis Huron? Again synod did not declare itself on the matter.

Hence we can only conclude that synod sustained the fact of the action taken by the Clinton council without declaring itself concerning the grounds for this action. Thus we do not feel that the specific grounds given by the Clinton council for its action need be taken by us as general principles which bind our recommendations.

In the past, synod has expressed itself concerning church membership and a denial of infant baptism. In 1888 synod affirmed that persons could not be accepted as members if they denied infant baptism. However, if persons who were already members refused to present their children for baptism, due to conscientious objection, such persons should be patiently instructed and warned and eventually disciplined. (*Acts*, 1888, Art. 57) In 1964, synod rejected a protest against a council which had admitted as members a middle-aged couple of Baptist background even though they still had difficulty accepting our proof for infant baptism. Synod gave the following grounds:

- “1. Article 61 of the Church Order does not deny the right and duty of a consistory to evaluate each case of admittance according to the special circumstances of the persons requesting such admittance.
2. In this case the couple agrees wholeheartedly with the Reformed religion, except on the point of direct biblical evidence for the doctrine of infant baptism, and is willing to be further instructed in the Reformed doctrine of baptism.
3. This couple also promised not to propagate any views conflicting with the doctrinal position of the church” (*Acts*, 1964, Art. 101, p. 63).

In addition, the Synod of 1936 was confronted by a somewhat analogous problem affecting the membership of one who denied the validity of water baptism. The advice finally adopted by the Synod of 1939 was as follows:

- A. Articles 72 and 76 of our Church Order make adequate provision for appropriate ecclesiastical action in the case of members who deviate from our doctrinal standards.
- B. In case a consistory, after denying the Lord's Supper to a member who errs in doctrine, feels the need of guidance as to further procedure, the advice of classis can be sought” (*Acts*, 1939, p. 75).

In the light of this previous history, we present our position and recommendations.

### C. Church Membership and Rebaptism.

The seriousness of rebaptism should not be minimized. We are not here dealing with a minor point of doctrine or a theological nicety. Rather, we are confronted with a rejection of a basic Reformed teaching which is deeply rooted in our understanding of the unity of the Testa-

ments. Since the Reformation, Reformed churches have celebrated infant baptism in obedience to the Word of God and not merely as a sacrament rooted in the tradition of the church. With prayer and with faith we celebrate this sacrament as an action of God. All of this is being challenged by those who have themselves rebaptized. Since no Christian recognizes the necessity or validity of two water baptisms, those who are rebaptized are in effect rejecting the validity of infant baptism and are in effect declaring that this sacrament is not an action of God in the midst of his people.

Nevertheless, does rebaptism with water by a minister of another denomination automatically cancel membership in the Christian Reformed Church? The Clinton council affirmed that it did, and there are others who argue similarly. Some have referred to Art. XXXIV of the *Belgic Confession* which speaks of baptism as that "by which we are received into the church of God," and then have drawn the conclusion that rebaptism therefore makes one a member of that church (i.e., congregation or denomination) in which the rebaptism takes place. Such a person is then no longer a member of the Christian Reformed Church.

But is that type of reasoning correct? Certainly we are received into the church by baptism, but church here means the body of Jesus Christ. Baptism is not a denominational sacrament whereby if one receives it in one denomination he is thereby severed from all others. We view the sacrament ecumenically and have always recognized all official water baptisms using the trinitarian formula. Thus we do not believe that the mere fact that someone has been rebaptized elsewhere automatically severs his relationship with us.

In addition, the fact that a person who was baptized as an infant now erroneously submits to rebaptism in no way cancels the validity (efficacy) of his infant baptism. God's action and promise stand, and the person who has been rebaptized must now be dealt with as one who has acted in error. But the error is not of such a scope as to sever his relationship from the church of Jesus Christ, and therefore it has not severed him either from the Christian Reformed Church.

However, his rebaptism has affected his relationship to the Christian Reformed Church. For it has placed him in the position of rejecting a key doctrinal teaching and practice of the church. Further, if the rebaptized person has been a confessing member, his rebaptism makes it impossible for him to continue the affirmation made at the time of his public confession of faith, viz., that he "heartily believes the doctrine . . . taught in this Christian church to be the true and complete doctrine of salvation" and promises "by the grace of God steadfastly to continue in this profession" ("Form for the Public Profession of Faith," Question 1).

In addition, if a child is born to that person, his rebaptism with its implicit rejection of infant baptism would make it virtually impossible for him to present the child for baptism. Thus rebaptism places a person in a difficult situation within the Christian Reformed Church, but it does not by itself cancel his membership.

The rebaptized member must recognize, therefore, that it is the duty of the consistory to deal with him as one who is in error. He must

be willing to receive with patience such instruction as the consistory deems necessary to give.

What happens if after such instruction the rebaptized member continues to reject infant baptism? Here several distinctions must be made. If the rebaptized member maintains as a matter of conscience the validity of his rebaptism but agrees to respect the consciences of the other members of the church and the official teaching of the church—and thus not actively to propagate his views—a council could decide not to proceed with further discipline.

If, however, a rebaptized member is so convinced of the validity of his views that he must actively seek to convince others, then it should be pointed out that he has only one way to follow, *viz.*, to submit his position to the judgment of the church. He is not free to hold private meetings and seek to propagate views in conflict with the confessional teaching of the church. If he engages in such activity, he is to be held accountable for disturbing the peace and the unity of the church. As such he is to be subjected to discipline.

#### D. *Recommendations.*

The committee recognizes that its statement on church membership and rebaptism given above, and the recommendations that follow, provide no easy solution to the problems confronting some consistories and congregations. Yet when the church is forced to deal with persons who, although holding to doctrinal error, are considered by all to be fellow members of the body of Christ, the way is never simple. We believe that it is necessary to deal with such persons primarily in a pastoral rather than in a judicial way. (The recommendations that follow are essentially those of Report 34, submitted to the Synod of 1972, *Acts*, pp. 394, 395; and they are in agreement with the judgment of the 1970 Synod of The Reformed Churches of Australia.)

We recommend that synod adopt the following recommendations as its advice to churches confronting this problem:

1. The churches are urged, in order to correct tendencies toward an exclusively individualistic understanding of the workings of God's grace, to preach faithfully and explicitly the biblical doctrine of infant baptism as this is rooted in the covenant and the unity of the Testaments.
2. Members who are attracted to the view of "believer's baptism" are urged to seek the counsel of the office bearers of the church concerning the biblical teaching on infant baptism.
3. Whenever a consistory is informed by a member that he has been rebaptized, the consistory shall officially ask such a member whether he/she still considers himself/herself a member of the Christian Reformed Church and is willing to submit to the teaching and discipline of the Christian Reformed Church.
4. If the reply is in the affirmative and the consistory considers such a member to be a sincere believer, the consistory must faithfully and persistently admonish such an erring member.

5. The consistory should bar such a person from the Lord's table only if, and as long as, it is necessary for the unity and well-being of the congregation.
6. If such members actively disturb the unity and peace of the congregation, the regular steps of discipline should be followed.
7. Since neither the Bible nor the Confessions or Church Order allow consistories simply to terminate membership in the church when such action is not requested by the member, such members as mentioned above can be excluded from the church only if they are worthy of excommunication, which is the act of public declaration by the church that such a person has no part in Christ or in his church.
8. Under no circumstances should members erring in this respect be allowed to hold office in the church.

Neo-Pentecostalism Committee

Bassam Madany, Chairman  
John H. Stek, Reporter  
Michael De Vries  
Dirk Hart  
David Holwerda  
Leonard Sweetman

Dr. Stuart Bergsma, a seventh member of the committee, was not able to attend the last meeting of the committee, when the report in its final form was adopted, and so has decided not to be a signatory to the report.

**REPORT 35**  
**NEW CONFESSION**  
(Art. 67)

**DEAR BROTHERS:**

In continuing this committee the Synod of 1972 did not set a date by which we were to report. We have a number of things that we can report to synod at this time. Since we visualize a few things that remain to be done, we offer this report to synod as an interim report.

**I. THE MANDATE**

Your committee was continued and expanded by the Synod of 1972 with the following mandate:

"4. That synod continue the 'new confession' study committee so that it may complete its mandate, and that it may promote further study of our confessional task among the churches.

*"Grounds:*

a. The committee has not been able to complete that part of its mandate which deals with the contemporary means of confessing the faith.

b. The committee would like to invite various agencies and individuals involved in the church's outreach to reflect on the way in which the faith can be confessed today" (Acts of Synod, 1972, Art. 26, p. 31).

This mandate was approved in the context of the following recommendations, adopted by synod:

"2. That synod express as its judgment that the Christian Reformed Church is not ready at this time to augment its confession.

"3. That synod express the judgment that the confessional task of the church requires the churches' attention at this time.

"5. That synod urge our publications, elders' conferences, ministers' institutes, societies, congregations, ministers and professors to study the Scriptures, our confessions, the study report, and the time in which we live, in order to discover which aspects of our biblical heritage need special emphasis in a confessional statement in our time.

"6. That synod make no further commitments on the subject of a new confession at this time, but wait for the fruit of the reflection of the churches under the guidance of the Holy Spirit."

**II. ANALYSIS OF THE MANDATE**

The committee found it necessary to wrestle with the following two problems:

A. What did the Synod of 1971 mean by "contemporary ways"?

When the question "How, in your opinion, can the church confess its faith in contemporary ways today?" was asked in our questionnaire the response was:

(from 367 churches)

1. By writing an additional confession	97
2. By adding to the present confession	44
3. By pastoral letters and similar devices	88
4. By individual Christian action	169
5. By corporate Christian action	164
6. Other	53

(from 116 ministers not serving regular congregations)

1. By writing an additional confession	74
2. By adding to the present confessions	17
3. By pastoral letters and similar devices	29
4. By individual Christian action	66
5. By corporate Christian action	72
6. Other	27

(See Report 38, Acts of Synod, 1972, pp. 403, 404)

While we observed "little clarity" among the respondents about contemporary ways of confessing the faith, it is striking that these responses indicate an interest in confessing by activities in addition to the adoption of documents.

Other responses to the committee indicate the assumption that when an assembly of the church talks about confessing the faith this concerns confessional *documents*. This assumption is in line with the Chatham and Alberta North overtures which lead to our mandate.

Our reflection on the various ways of confessing the faith in the church's history has caused us to ask whether synod decided to insert "contemporary ways" in order to have us look at other *methods of communication* which have been developed since the Reformation and which offer new avenues for the church's confessing activities.

We have proceeded with our work on the assumption that the immediate concern was whether a new (additional) confession should be written. If synod desires investigation of new methods of communicating the Christian faith, we suggest that synod draw up a clear mandate and assign this to an appropriate committee.

B. The second part of our mandate, "to promote further study of our confessional task among the churches" may be read narrowly as only applying to any future confession writing.

A wider reading would include in the church's confessional task our attitude to and use of the confessions we have now. The area of concern becomes then: How can the confessions be made more meaningful in the actual life of the members and the congregations? (Recommendation 5 does include "our confessions.") This is a subject of considerable importance to the church in view of the presence of ignorance and indifference with respect to the confessions, and of the existence of the feeling that these are irrelevant to the real issues of life.

To propose answers in this area implies a broader understanding of the mandate than merely concern with new confessions. We do feel that rejuvenation of the church's appreciation and application of her confession is important. On the assumption that synod intended us to go in this direction, we have prepared some proposals dealing with this concern.

### III. ACTIVITIES

#### A. *Consultation:*

Your committee has met with representatives of various agencies of the church. They were asked to respond to our mandate and to share their insights with us. We appreciate their cooperation in our work.

#### B. *Promotion of further study of our confessional task:*

We have also been busy in various ways to "promote the further study of our confessional task among the churches."

On behalf of the committee Dr. J. H. Kromminga submitted a brief article to *The Banner*. In this article recommendation 5 (see I) is placed before the churches, and some helps for this study are offered. This article appeared in January, 1973.

Members of the committee have also promoted such study in their various capacities. We are grateful for the efforts of the seminary faculty in providing the churches with informative articles about the confessions in the *Calvin Theological Journal* of November, 1972. Also, the May, 1973 issue of *Today* (the family altar) explores the variety of ways in which the early church confessed the faith.

### IV. OBSERVATIONS

#### A. *Concerning confession-writing activity in other churches.*

In view of the alleged lack of interest in confessions, it is surprising how many churches are considering the matter of a new confession which speaks to our age.

In two cases these considerations have led to the adoption of new confessional documents. No doubt the best-known is "The Confession of 1967," adopted by the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. The discussions around this confession have reverberated throughout Presbyterian circles. In 1968 the United Church of Canada adopted a popular, brief creed, which has also become familiar to many.

Several other churches are considering proposed statements of faith. The Presbyterian Church in the United States (Southern Presbyterian) circulated a draft of a new confession for study in August, 1972. The Reformed Church in America began a study in 1959. A draft statement was submitted to the churches in 1966. A different statement is now being studied. The war situation in 1942 led the Presbyterian Church in Canada to consider the relationship of church and state. "A Declaration Concerning Church and Nation" was adopted in 1954. In 1966 a statement of faith was presented to the churches, which did not find acceptance. Much attention has been focused on the terms of subscription to the creeds, culminating in the adoption of new ordination questions in 1970. Its committee on church doctrine has recently published a collec-

tion of articles entitled: "What it means to confess the Christian faith today". (See also *Calvin Theological Journal*, November, 1972, pp. 146-148.)

The Reformed Church in Japan has set itself the unique goal of making fresh declarations of its faith every ten years. A declaration about the place of the church in Japanese society is being prepared at this time.

Within the Reformed Ecumenical Synod there has also been much discussion of the Christian view of the state, relating to Article 36 of the confession. This discussion began in 1958, and ended in 1972. Apparently very little change has been made in this article by any of the member-churches. The RES plans to consider the matter of confessing the faith in an Asian context at the RES 1974 Singapore Conference.

There is evidently a growing feeling, particularly in Reformed churches, that something needs to be done to confess the faith in our time. No one appears to be moving very fast, but many churches have standing or specially appointed committees who work on Christian faith and doctrine.

*B. Concerning a more effective use of our present confessions.*

When the Synod of 1972 declared that our confessional task needs attention at this time, it also urged our churches to study the present confessions. (See I, 3 & 5.)

Our creeds and confessions could become a more vital means of communicating the truth of God's Word today. But with the exception of the Heidelberg Catechism (and the Apostles' Creed within it), our creeds and confessions are not related to life as they should be. New translations of the Belgic Confession and the Canons of Dort are very much in order. Such translations must then also be used in contemporary ways. In the past it has not proven feasible to alter articles or parts of them as was attempted with Article 36 of the Confession. Such expressions should be studied, and then related to life in this age. The relation of the church to the government continues to be a vital issue, as is observed with regard to RES activity referred to in the previous section.

Rather than remaining silent on some doctrinal issues, we should discuss them in current language. The translation of the Scriptures in current language has helped to create new interest in the Word. The Bible is being read and is a power in the lives of many people. What a challenge to make our confessions relevant to the issues of the day, and to study them in facing our problems in the church! The Holy Spirit, who guided our fathers in these great writings, still leads and guides in the way of truth. Our confessions are real channels for the Spirit's operation.

To increase awareness of what we confess editors of our various religious periodicals should be encouraged to provide for a series of articles now and then on the confessions, relating the confessions in these articles to present issues. We think especially of the Belgic Confession and the Canons, which do not get the attention in preaching that the Catechism receives. Such articles could be used by our various Bible study groups.

Our Educational Committee should be encouraged to use the creeds in the material they provide for the church school.

There are also some booklets on the market which our various societies could use with profit to understand our confessions better. The booklet, *This We Believe*, by Richard Postma and the late Rev. P. A. Hoekstra is an excellent guide to the Belgic Confession. However, it is now twenty years old; it could be revised for greater usefulness. For a somewhat deeper study there is *I Believe in God*, written by Dr. Klaas Runia ten years ago. Five years ago the Rev. Henry Peterson wrote *The Canons of Dort*, which is a helpful guide to this confession. Dr. Peter Y. DeJong has written *The Church's Witness to the World*. Such books ought to be called to the attention of our congregations more frequently. They have excellent potential for increasing our awareness of the church's confessions.

## V. SUGGESTIONS

We make the following suggestions to the synod in the hope that these suggestions will serve as practical guidelines to assist the churches in a more vital use of the confessions.

### A. Concerning our present confessions:

1. That synod encourage the use of the Belgic Confession and the Canons of Dort, as well as the Heidelberg Catechism, in preaching.

2. That synod consider translating the Belgic Confession and the Canons of Dort into contemporary English. This is already being done with the Heidelberg Catechism.

3. That synod encourage the greater use of the Heidelberg Catechism, the Belgic Confession, and the Canons of Dort in our catechetical materials.

4. That synod consider the feasibility of versifying and setting to music some portions of the Heidelberg Catechism for use in worship and elsewhere, e.g. Lord's Days 1, 21, 45, etc.

5. That synod arrange for the revision and updating of the booklet: *The Christian Reformed Church—What it Teaches*. Various agencies report that they have found this material useful in their work, but they recognize the need of a new edition.

### B. Concerning synodical declarations:

That synod, considering the fact that from time to time it confesses the faith by official declarations in interpretation and application of the confessions—

1. commission a study of the use and function of synodical pronouncements on doctrinal and practical themes.

2. make provision for the better use of its significant pronouncements by arranging for their compilation, publication, and distribution in a convenient form.

## VI. RECOMMENDATIONS:

A. That synod grant the privilege of the floor to the chairman and the secretary of the study committee during the discussion of this matter.

B. That synod declare whether or not it desires further investigation of contemporary ways of confessing the faith.

C. That synod consider the above suggestions and refer those it endorses for appropriate action.

D. That synod again urge our publications, elders' conferences, ministers' institutes, societies, congregations, ministers and professors to study the Scriptures, our confessions, the study reports, and the times in which we live, in order to discover which aspects of our biblical heritage need special emphasis in a confessional statement in our time. (See Recommendation 5, Acts, 1972, p. 31.)

E. That synod receive this as an interim report, allowing this committee to continue to assist the churches in further study of our confessional task and to watch confessional developments that are under way in other churches.

*Ground:*

Such assistance can be given mainly by mail and a minimum of meetings would be required.

New Confession Committee

L. Oostendorp, Chairman

Morris N. Greidanus, Reporter

H. Arens

S. DeYoung

J. H. Kromminga

F. Van Houten

## REPORT 36

## PROOF-TEXTS FOR THE HEIDELBERG CATECHISM

(Art. 16)

## DEAR MEMBERS OF SYNOD:

Your committee has been at work throughout the past year, meeting bi-weekly, and has made good progress. We are however not ready at this time to present a finished product to synod. Moreover, the fact that the Committee for a New Translation decided to make significant changes in its proposed text made it necessary for us to review our work from the beginning and slowed us down somewhat. We trust that in this coming year we will have ample time to finish our work barring any unforeseen circumstances.

Last year we reported to synod about our method of procedure. We have not had any reaction from the churches and therefore assume that our work meets with the approval of the church at large.

Proof-texts for  
Heidelberg Catechism Committee

Willis P. DeBoer, President

Hubert DeWolf

Charles Greenfield

Carl G. Kromminga

Elco H. Oostendorp

Clarence J. Vos

Martin D. Geleynse, Secretary

**REPORT 37**  
**PSALTER HYMNAL SUPPLEMENT**  
(Art. 27)

**DEAR BROTHERS:**

Your committee for the Psalter Hymnal Supplement has continued the time consuming work of preparing texts, harmonizations and the securing of copyrights for the sixty-six songs Synod of 1972 authorized as those songs to be made available to our churches for study and trial use.

We hope to have inexpensive copies printed and ready by late summer so that churches, chapels and evangelists, as authorized by synod, may then receive their two initial copies of this interim edition and thus be able to decide whether they wish to have more.

As soon as this major task is finished, we hope to pursue the various other items of our mandate.

Psalter Hymnal Supplement  
Committee,

Calvin Seerveld, Chairman

Gary Warmink

John Hamersma

John Worst

Nancy Van Halsema

Mike McGervey

Betty De Vries

John Schuurman

Marie Post, Secretary

**REPORT 38**  
**LITURGICAL COMMITTEE**  
(Arts. 43, 58, 90)

DEAR BROTHERS:

The Synod of 1964 appointed the Liturgical Committee and gave it the following mandate:

a. to review all our liturgical literature in the light of its history, its theological content, and the contemporary needs of the churches; and to recommend such revisions or substitutions as the results of this review might recommend.

b. to study liturgical usages and practices in our churches in the light of Reformed liturgical principles and past synodical decisions, and to advise synod as to the guidance and supervision it ought to provide local congregations in all liturgical matters.

The committee has continued to meet in the past year and has continued to work in accordance with the above mandate. At the present time we are working on a Form for Excommunication and a Form for the Solemnization of Marriage.

Because of the large number of requests for copies of the provisional Form for Public Profession of Faith, recommended to the churches by the Synod of 1972, it has been published in booklet form.

The Synod of 1970 authorized the Liturgical Committee to publish the Form for the Ordination (Installation) of Ministers in booklet form. Since this form is available in the latest edition of the Psalter Hymnal and since the demand for this form is very limited, we did not deem it wise to publish this form separately.

An error crept into the Form for Ordination (Installation), and we have taken the liberty to correct it. In the Pledge of the Congregation we have changed the answer to the three questions from "We promise, God helping us" to "We do, God helping us."

*Ground:*

"We promise" is the proper answer to only one of the questions, while "We do" is a fitting answer to all three.

*Form for the Baptism of Children*

We have completed our work on an updated version of the Form for the Baptism of Infants found in the Liturgical Section of the Psalter Hymnal. This is *not* a new form, but a translation of the old one. In comparing the language of the form presented with the form in the Psalter Hymnal it will become clear, we are confident, that the updated form is not a substitute, or new, or revised form, but a translation.

The new version reads as follows:

Beloved in the Lord:

The teaching about baptism falls into three main divisions:

*First:* Baptism teaches that every man, woman, and child is by nature sinful. This means that we are all under the judgment of God and for that reason cannot be members of his kingdom unless we are born again. Immersion into water or the sprinkling of water upon us teaches that we are so badly soiled by sin that we must undergo a cleansing process which only God can accomplish. Therefore, we ought to be disgusted with ourselves because of the hold which sin has on us, and looking away from ourselves, humbly turn to God for our salvation.

*Second:* Baptism declares and guarantees that our sins are washed away through Jesus Christ. This is made plain by our baptism into the name of the triune God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Our baptism into the name of God the Father is a clear sign that the Father makes an everlasting covenant of grace with us. He adopts us as his children and heirs. Because we are his children, he will see to it that our lives are surrounded by his goodness and that we are protected against evil. Should evil befall us, he will turn it to our profit.

When we are baptized into the name of the Son, we are assured by Christ himself that he washes us in his blood from all our sins. Christ joins us to himself so that we share in his death and resurrection. Through this union with Christ we are sprung free from our sin and looked upon by God as having no sin.

Baptism into the name of the Holy Spirit is the assurance that the Spirit of God will make his home within us. While living within us, the Spirit will continually work to strengthen and deepen our union with Christ. He will make real in our lives that which Christ has done for us, namely, the washing away of our sins. He will also help us each day to live the new life we have in Christ. As a result of his work within us, we will one day be presented without the stain of sin among the assembly of the elect in life eternal.

*Third:* Because two parties are always involved in a covenant, baptism also places us under obligation to live in obedience to God. We must cling to this one God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. We must trust him and love him with all our heart, and soul, and mind, and strength. We must abandon the sinful way of life, work to uproot our sinful nature, and show by our lives that we belong to God.

Should we through weakness fall into sin, we ought not worry that God will forsake us, nor should we use our weakness as an excuse to keep on sinning. Baptism is a seal and totally reliable witness that God is always faithful to the promises he makes in this covenant.

Our children should not be denied the sacrament of baptism because of their inability to understand its meaning. Without their knowledge, our children not only share in Adam's condemnation, but are also received into God's favor in Christ. God's gracious attitude toward our children is revealed when he said to Abraham, the father of all believers, "I will establish my covenant between me and you and your descendants after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be

God to you and to your descendants after you" (Gen. 17:7). The apostle Peter testifies to the same with these words, "For the promise is to you and to your children and to all that are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to him" (Acts 2:39).

God formerly commanded that children be circumcised as a seal of the covenant and as a declaration that righteousness comes by faith. Christ also recognized that children are members of the covenant people when he embraced them, laid his hands on them, and blessed them (Mark 10:16).

Since baptism has replaced circumcision, our children should be baptized because they are heirs of God's kingdom and of his covenant promises. As the children mature, their parents are responsible for teaching them the meaning of baptism.

Let us turn to God, asking that in this baptism his name may be glorified, we may be comforted, and the church may be edified.

Almighty, eternal God, long ago you punished an unbelieving and unrepentant world by sending a flood. But you showed your mercy when you saved and protected believing Noah and his family.

Your judgment upon sin and your great mercy toward us was again shown when the obstinate Pharaoh and his whole army were drowned in the Red Sea, and you brought your people Israel through the same sea on dry ground.

We pray that in this baptism you will again be merciful. Graciously receive these little ones as your own children by bringing them into union with your Son Jesus Christ through your Holy Spirit. May they be buried with Christ into death and be raised with him to new life. Give them true faith, firm hope, and ardent love so that they may count it a privilege to bear the cross of Christ as they daily follow him.

Give these children the full assurance of your grace so that when they leave this life and its constant struggle against the power of sin they may appear before the judgment seat of Christ without fear. We ask this in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, who with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one only God, lives and reigns forever. Amen.

#### ADDRESS TO THE PARENTS

People of God, as you have now heard, baptism is given to us by God as proof that he does make a covenant with us and our children. We must, therefore, use the sacrament for the purpose that God intended and not out of custom or superstition. You are asked to give an honest answer to these questions as a testimony that you are doing what God commands.

First: Do you acknowledge that our children, who are sinful by nature and therefore subject to the misery which sin brings, even the condemnation of God, are received by God in Christ and as members of his body ought to be baptized?

Second: Do you acknowledge that the teaching of the Old and New Testaments, summarized in the creeds and taught in this Christian church is the true and complete doctrine of salvation?

Third: Do you promise, and is it your intention, to do all you can to teach these children the Christian doctrine of salvation, using not only your own personal resources but also those of the Christian community?

Answer: We do.

N....., I baptize you into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

#### PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Almighty God and merciful Father, we thank you and praise your name for having forgiven our sins through the blood of your dear Son Jesus Christ. We thank you for uniting us with Christ through your Holy Spirit and adopting us as your children, and we thank you for sealing and confirming these blessings to us and our children in the sacrament of baptism.

We pray, Lord Jesus, that you will always govern these children by your Holy Spirit. May they, through your guidance, be so exposed to the Christian faith and godliness that they are moved to cultivate a living trust in you. Help them see your fatherly goodness and mercy which surrounds us all. Make them champions of righteousness under the direction of Jesus Christ, our only Teacher, King, and High Priest. Give them the courage to fight against and overcome sin, the devil and his whole dominion. May their lives culminate in an eternal song of praise which declares the greatness of you, the one only true God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.

#### REPORT ON THE SECOND SUNDAY SERVICE

For some years your committee on liturgy has been under pressure to submit a study on the second Sunday service. Churches, particularly city churches, keep on asking questions about the place and possibilities of this service in the whole of the Christian life. If we now submit a report on this subject it must be remembered that it does not stand by itself. Much of what we said about worship in our report on the morning service (1968) is valid also for the second service. In that report we stated: "It is chiefly from the sense of its importance, then, and not from a suspicion that things are badly askew, that this study of liturgy proceeds" (*Acts*, 1968, p. 135). With regard to the second service it is perhaps more honest to say that a study is presented both from the sense of its continuing great importance as well as from an awareness of the problems associated with it. Our report falls naturally into two sections. The first takes a look at the reasons for having a second service and the second suggests ways in which, with God's help, it can be revitalized.

#### WHY A SECOND SERVICE?

The answer to this question can be approached from at least three angles.

1. *A Theological Approach.* This approach starts out from the conception that the Lord has marked the entire Sunday for worship. Ideally the

congregation devotes the whole day to the service of worship. Out of consideration for the limits of human endurance, congregations split the day into two parts, each having a distinct service. By sanctifying the beginning of the day as well as the close, believers set aside the whole of it as holy. In this conception the second service is maintained to uphold the institution of the Lord's Day. To adherents of this view the continuation of the second service is self-evident. It needs no other rationale. It hardly needs saying that this approach is wide open to the danger of a joyless and even a mindless institutionalism.

2. *A Historical Approach.* Another view is that which points out that for centuries the churches have assembled more than once on the Lord's Day. Augustine (354-430 A.D.) already mentions afternoon services and values them as opportunities for doctrinal instruction. In the Middle Ages, alongside of the Sunday assemblies, there is much evidence of daily hours of prayer for which the believers met in their places of worship. In Calvin's time, though one does not read of morning and evening prayers, there is mention of daily preaching services. It is clear that the Sunday afternoon or evening service of the Reformed Churches in The Netherlands has its origin in a simple Catechism service. A song was sung, a sermon delivered, a prayer made. A clear distinction was at first drawn between the morning and afternoon service. But in later years the second service began more and more to resemble the first. Today, those who would keep the second service can appeal to history; and those who would keep it practically identical with the first can appeal to tradition that developed in the seventeenth and following centuries. It is doubtful, however, that for those not already convinced of the desirability of it the appeal to this tradition will have any effect on their attitude toward the second service.

3. *A Pastoral Approach.* More immediately profitable, it seems to us, than either the theological or historical approach is the one that considers the church's needs in the present in the light of Scripture. The one recurring complaint in nearly all the critical discussions of present patterns of worship is that worshipers remain their isolated lonely selves and do not experience a deep sense of communion and festive celebration. Modern life, as has been well-documented, deprives people of a sense of community. *Yet community is of the essence of being a church.* The New Testament throbs with excitement over the incredible reality of a fellowship in which social irreconcilables—Jews and Greeks, slaves and freemen, men and women—have become reconciled. It shows us a picture of warm and vital assemblies in which each member who had a gift could use it for the upbuilding of the whole church (I Cor. 14). Members are constantly encouraged to build each other up in the assemblies. "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, *as you teach and admonish one another* in all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs with thankfulness in your hearts to God" (Col. 3:16). "Let us not ignore the New Testament pattern. Then Christians gathered together, not only to be instructed by the appointed teacher, not only to celebrate together, but to speak to one another in words that build up the whole body of Christ" (Christians, Schipper, and Smedes in *Who*

*In The World?*, p. 94). It hardly needs saying that opportunity for mutual edification is now rarely provided in our worship service.

History shows us, we think, that at various times the leaders of the church have used a "second" assembly for the building up of Christ's body at the point where this was most needed. Is there persecution? Let us together pray and encourage each other lest we fall away. Is there wide-spread ignorance of the Gospel and the Christian way of life? Let us instruct our people in the great themes of God's Word. Is there today a sense that the life of the individual counts for almost nothing? Are we being reduced to zeroes by impersonal forces and immersed in masses that can be technically manipulated? Then let us insure that in our assemblies God's people are enabled to be their warm personal selves, share their God-given gifts with each other, bear one another's burdens, help dispel one another's doubts, and seek to bring to bear on their hurts the resources of God's healing grace under the competent leadership of ordained men. We need again, at this late hour, to learn to follow the admonition: ". . . and let us consider *how to stir up one another to love and good works*, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another . . ." (Heb. 10:24, 25). In places where the present system is too rigid to allow for a sharing of life, while the erosion and waste of spiritual strength continues, it is essential to have a fresh look at our second service for a possible corrective.

What do we have in mind? Let us give you a description of an evening service that actually occurred in one of our Christian Reformed churches. Though not perhaps typical it is an example of what may happen when the opportunity is provided.

#### AN EXAMPLE

The service opens with the pastor suggesting that the congregation sing the invocation.

"Thy loving kindness, Lord is good and free  
 In tender mercy turn Thou unto me;  
 Hide not Thy face from me in my distress,  
 In mercy hear my prayer, Thy servant bless." (No. 129)

The pastor warmly greets the congregation in the name of the Lord. The opening hymn is sung. Then the pastor asks for another hymn suggestion from the congregation—this time from the age-group between 70 and 80. Without hesitation old Mr. Vander Laan proposes no. 74, the stanzas 1, 3, and 7. The whole congregation responds to the mood of this selection and raises the plaintive question:

"O my soul, why art thou grieving;  
 Why disquieted in me?  
 Hope in God, thy faith retrieving;  
 He will still thy refuge be."

Next the Lord's Supper is served. The congregation and pastor read the form responsively. A sense of unity pervades the worshiping, eating, and drinking fellowship.

The sermon which follows is an exposition of a most experiential passage: "For now we see in a mirror dimly but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall understand fully, even as I have been fully understood." It distinguishes carefully the value, the limitations, and the future of our grace-given knowledge. The message is No. 7 in a popular series of post-communion sermons on I Corinthians 13.

After the sermon there's a moment of reflection as the people think of an appropriate song to sing in response to the message. This time it is a lady in her sixties who proposes the hymn. Soon the building resounds to the old psalm tune.

"With grateful heart my thanks I bring . . .  
The work Thou hast for me begun  
Shall by thy grace be fully done."

Together the congregation then lifts up its confession as articulated in the Apostles' Creed and underscored in a battle hymn:

"Still lift your standard high,  
Still march in firm array,  
As warriors through the darkness toil  
Till dawns the golden day."

A sense of anticipation now rises from the pews. It is a time for prayer requests and testimonies. The pastor reminds the people that in the ancient church, after the Supper had been celebrated, the worshipers lingered for a time of sharing needs and making confessions. Does anyone wish to avail himself of the opportunity? A young man in his thirties stands up. "Yes, I would like to address a few words to the congregation." He walks to the pulpit. "My name is Jim De Vries. I am an alcoholic. Then something happened which made me take an honest look at myself . . . I request the prayers of the congregation." You can feel the hearts of the people going out to the speaker. They love him for sharing his terrible problem with them. They thank the Lord it is now in the open where it can be treated. Another man stands up. His voice is very hoarse. It is hard for him to make himself understood. "I am a visitor from the East. I have never been in your church before. Recently I lost my voice. Will you please pray for healing. It means everything to me." The man, it turns out later, is a professional entertainer who in his desperation has walked in from the street. A third speaker expressed his concern that we should not place temptations in the way of our weaker members. The pastor then leads in a prayer of intercession in which the needs mentioned as well as the needs of the world are lifted up before the God of all mercies.

The offering, a doxology, and the benediction bring to a close a richly satisfying service.

Why have a second Sunday service if it does not meet the needs of believers living in today's world? One can ask this question in a spirit of cynicism or frustration. A fair number of people have simply dropped out of our second service or never did accustom themselves to attend-

ing. They have decided it does not help them or anybody else enough to justify the associated inconveniences of time and travel. Often, it appears, this attitude reflects the same individualistic bias that the critics deplore in the worship services themselves. Resentment and dissatisfaction set the tone, rather than concern for what is happening to the church of our Lord Jesus Christ.

There's another way of asking the question: "Why have a second Sunday service?" We can also ask it for the purpose of reawakening a sense of its great potential value. We are convinced that dropping the second service would entail serious consequences. Large numbers of shift workers, as well as some parents of young children, for example, would be able to attend worship services, at most, every other week. Others, whose heart-hunger is not satisfied by one hour of worship, would drift away to other evangelical churches. Catechism preaching would become extinct. The loss of community, already a serious deficiency under the present system, could only become worse. Everyone would be the weaker for it. We are also convinced the second service *can be* most profitable, God-glorifying, and exciting, if we prayerfully allow it to be used in a way that is closer to the spirit of the New Testament assemblies than our present practice.

The suggestions that follow do not make it easier for ministers and consistories. They presuppose a willingness to engage in advance scheduling and planning. At the same time they bring into our services a freedom that many of our people still find somewhat frightening. But we believe they have the potential for a revival that goes beyond the Sunday services themselves. If in every classis two or three congregations were encouraged to serve as pilot churches, then there need be no misunderstanding between those who do, and those who don't favor a new approach.

The following is a positive elaboration of what we take to be a responsible pastoral approach.

#### THE NEED FOR DIVERSITY AMIDST A DIVERSITY OF NEEDS

A pastoral approach will be sensitive to a diversity of needs. In a given locality, for instance, the sense of community may be adequate but the level of scriptural knowledge very low. Believers need insight into the teaching of salvation in its unity and interconnectedness. Today's church members too easily fall a prey to sectarian teaching because they really know little of what they are assumed to believe. In other instances their grasp of the great themes of Scripture is so weak that they have neither strength to bear adversity or power to witness. No strong and healthy church can develop without solid doctrinal preaching. In line with our own tradition for the second service we give first place to a teaching-centered service.

1. *The Instructional Service.* There can be no doubt that in Reformed Protestantism the second service has been designed to meet the need for instruction in the contents of the faith. The church of our Lord Jesus Christ must learn to understand, in their depth and cohesion, the great doctrines it confesses. In the face of this imperative

need the Catechism sermon can still render a splendid service. In the past, it is true, it has often come across to people in a cold intellectualized form, in which neither the breathtaking perspective of Scripture nor the love of God or the realities of the believer's experience came fully into their own. Not infrequently it was an argumentative essay in which opponents were speared but the people and their needs were forgotten. To this day, and with some reason, the doctrinal sermon is in disrepute. But, in our judgment, it should be revived and made into an exciting form of thematic biblical preaching. The Heidelberg Catechism certainly strikes many of the great themes of the Christian life: the fundamentals of the Apostles' Creed, the function of the sacraments (infant baptism and adult communion), the need for discipline, the instruction of the Ten Commandments and that of the Lord's Prayer. What is needed at every point is a careful and critical study of the 16th century text as well as a restatement of its contents in terms of an up-to-date exegesis of the biblical materials woven into it and the realities of the 20th century.

The church's teaching in the second service need not, however, be limited to the subjects explained in the Heidelberg Catechism. There is good reason why, in the framework of a teaching service, we should deal also with the great controversial issues of our own times: our relationship with the post-Vatican II Church of Rome, the quest for unity among Christian churches, the revival of the gifts of the Spirit, the question of modern warfare, our deteriorating physical environment, abortion, homosexuality, family and marriage, Christian action in education and other spheres. All this should be done in answer to the perennial question: What is the power by which we can live and die as God's people? For this purpose the Heidelberg Catechism can still serve as a starting point and an outline, but churches should have the courage to go beyond it and speak with a contemporary voice. From time to time the regular series of Catechism sermons can and should be supplemented with a sermon on a subject of immediate current importance.

It goes without saying that churches will have to guard against allowing the pulpit to be used as a mere sounding-board for personal opinion. Preaching is the proclamation of the Word of the Lord. At the same time, because the Word comes to people facing complex issues, it needs to be sensitively related to those issues. In the area of application, if we say anything at all specific, we may have to speak provisionally and with a profound sense of the fact that we still see "in a glass darkly." Instruction in subjects like abortion, homosexuality, or race relations, will often have to be a team effort. And the pulpit does not lend itself well to this type of instruction. We therefore propose that instruction from the pulpit be focused on fundamentals and that this instruction be augmented with panels, interviews, audio-visuals, and group discussion possibly held in another part of the building after the service. Teaching is still the need of the hour. But for teaching, in today's world, we have to bring together, in and around the second service, all the resources God has given us.

2. *The Ecumenical Service.* Local congregations of differing denominations but of undoubted fidelity to the fundamentals of the Christian

faith may worship on the same city block and yet remain total strangers. They may vie for the same parking space, seek evangelistic outreach in the same area, worship the same Lord and confess the same Savior, but out of sheer inertia refrain from recognizing each other's existence. To an astonishing degree Christian churches accept this situation as normal.

This lack of fellowship between bodies of Christian disciples is more conventional than Spirit willed. A real blessing could be obtained in an occasional coming together of various congregations in and around a worship service. To listen to the same message, to lift up the same songs of praise, to join in common prayers would form the core of such a service. A fellowship meeting immediately after, in which people shared their hopes, and fears, and problems, would round it off. Community building in the Spirit could be both the purpose and the result of such a service. If this ecumenical service were made the second service it would not have to interfere with ongoing programs in one's own church.

3. *The Diaconal Service.* Often our churches are isolated from the needy of the world by walls, distances, ignorance, attitudes, and customs. We hear of starvation but it does not come home to us. Disasters strike but we learn of them only through the late evening newscast. Poverty blights a nearby area but we drive past it without understanding. Meanwhile, diaconates wonder what they can do.

The second service could be used to overcome the remoteness of the needy. The message would focus on Christ, the compassionate helper of the needy. A special collection for a specific current cause could be held. The deacons would be enlisted to lead in prayer. Representatives of community agencies could help the congregation become aware of crying needs right in the neighborhood. An occasional CRWRC film could be shown. The whole character of such a service would show that when God's people assemble for worship they retreat from the world only to be the better able to serve the Lord in that world.

4. *The Special Category Service.* Youth services have been with us for some time and can be very useful. But what of a special service for the over 75 group? All too often the aged have the feeling that their presence is more tolerated than valued. They may have served in consistency functions for years but now find themselves displaced by another generation. Of the righteous we believe that "they still bring forth fruit in old age" (Ps. 92:14). But it may take a special service to make it visible.

In such a service the congregation would be made aware of the treasures given to it in the talents and experience of its senior members. The sermon would expose the current cult of youthfulness and show the biblical reverence for the aged. A number of older members and possibly a retired minister might be asked for a testimony "to show that the Lord is upright" (Ps. 92:15). In many congregations a Dutch Psalm would still be appreciated. The whole service would breathe a spirit of gratitude that the Lord attends us with his blessings throughout our lives and in all eternity.

Other special categories are the sick and the invalids. How comforting to them a special service could be!

5. *The Evangelistic Service.* Many a church member has wished that he could invite an unchurched person to a service especially adapted to his needs. There is also another reason for considering an evangelistic service. Surely we cannot blithely assume that all of our members on the records are converted people, true, practicing children of God. The evidence points to the presence of much unregeneracy in the body of the churches. Reformed churches with their strong emphasis on covenant training may well have developed a blind spot in the direction of the unconverted in their midst.

In an evangelistic service the message would be an appeal to everyone to surrender heart and life to the grace and guidance of God. The congregation would sing:

“Come to the Savior now,  
He gently calleth thee:  
In true repentance bow,  
Before Him bend the knee . . . .” (No. 410)

Those seeking salvation could be asked to come forward during the singing for special prayer and after the service there would be opportunity for counseling with them.

#### CONCLUSION

Rather than regarding the second service an additional burden or a hopeless cause, consistories may well look upon it as an exciting challenge. An attitude of fatalism which declares that in another five or ten years the second service will have to be given up, besides being born of scepticism, is blind to the great many needs in our day that can to a considerable extent be met in a second service. Only we must become imaginative and flexible. There's no law demanding that the second service be a duplication of the first. There's no necessity for dull repetition. There's every reason to trust God to lead us into richer worship services. He still comes to expectant spirits in the power of his Spirit. He still draws the seekers. He still satisfies the meek; He still performs miracles of conversion and healing. He can revive us in the midst of our years. But he will not allow himself to be boxed in by one-hour formats and time-worn routines. He only asks that we shall trust the power of his Word and the blessed gift of his Spirit. For it is in these modes that our Lord Jesus Christ exalts himself in the hearts of believers. Surely he is able to do for our second service far more than we now think possible or dare to pray for.

Our enemy is accommodation: accommodation to a deteriorating state of affairs. Ministers may be tempted to devote their best efforts to the service that is best attended. The weaker service of the two (in some rural churches that is the morning service) is given step-child treatment. This must not be so. Bad trends need not be irreversible. If the second service is weakening, let it be given special attention.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. That synod recommend the updated Form for Baptism to the churches for provisional use for a period of three years, with a view to

eventual adoption by synod, and request that reactions to the form be presented to the Liturgical Committee.

2. That synod recommend the report on the second Sunday service to the churches for their consideration, reflection and guidance.

3. That Dr. Carl Kromminga and the Rev. John Schuurmann be permitted to represent the committee during the consideration of our report.

Liturgical Committee

Carl G. Kromminga, Chairman  
John F. Schuurmann, Recording Secretary  
John Vriend, Corresponding Secretary  
Alvin L. Hoksbergen  
Nicholas B. Knoppers  
Calvin D. Seerveld  
Lewis B. Smedes  
Nicholas P. Wolterstorff

## REPORT 39

## WOMEN IN ECCLESIASTICAL OFFICE

(Art. 81)

At the recommendation of the delegates of the Christian Reformed Church to the Reformed Ecumenical Synod of 1968 and who reported to the CRC Synod in 1970, a study committee was appointed to examine the Reformed practice of excluding women from ecclesiastical office (Acts of Synod, 1970, article 167, 3a, "Women in Office," Supplement 25).

The mandate given to our study committee reads as follows:

"That synod appoint a committee 'to examine in the light of Scripture the general Reformed practice of excluding women from the various ordained offices in the church.'

*Grounds:*

1. The views and practices of members of the RES differ markedly on these matters.
2. The CRC should play a responsible role in the consideration of the issues within the RES.
3. An official stand by our church in the light of recent developments will serve as a directive for our delegates to future RES meetings."

To avoid confusion as to what precisely our committee has studied, and since the word "office" can have different interpretations, we decided to call our study, "Women in Ecclesiastical Office" and use the word "office" in the meaning of Part I of the CRC Church Order. Moreover, since its inception, our committee has felt that our primary purpose is to exegete properly scriptural data and thus provide guidance and leadership to our own denomination first. The results of our report and the consequent actions of our synod will then serve the RES and our delegates.

At its many meetings our committee has wrestled with the problems involved in the mandate. Until a few decades ago, the Reformed practice to exclude women from the offices in the church had been generally accepted as biblical. This unanimity no longer exists. Certain churches of Reformed persuasion now question whether this practice is in true agreement with the Scriptures. They feel that there is no indication in God's Word why women should not fully participate in all of church life on an equal level with the men. It is evident, then, that the crucial point of our mandate lies in the correct interpretation of the Scriptures.

What does the Bible say concerning women in general, about their place in the history of redemption, and about their place in the Christian church? What does the Bible tell us about the male-female relationship, and the status and role of both sexes as well as their respective functions

and responsibilities? How do the Old Testament writers, Jesus himself, and the New Testament authors view women? What passages in the Bible refer to eternal injunctions of God, and what passages deal with temporal elements written for people in specific times? Our committee has seriously examined all these matters; we have attempted to gain insight through responsible Bible exegesis and to prayerfully let the Holy Spirit lead us in our deliberations.

Convinced that the Bible is God's Word, infallible and true, we know that we have stood and still stand together on common ground. As committed Christians we confess our solidarity with the readers of this report in trying to understand in a meaningful way what Scripture shows us. With an open mind we have earnestly searched God's Word and its meaning for our church of today. We all seek to serve the same Lord and the same church. Needless to say, in our readings and discussions we have encountered various and different observations, sometimes conflicting ones, as to the exegesis of certain passages. Sorting out the "truth" became at times a major undertaking.

Admittedly, the matters under study are to some extent controversial, and deep-rooted traditions, preferred interpretations of selective passages, and prevailing social conditions in church life throughout the ages, have tended to obscure a fresh and clear understanding of what the Bible really tells us. It is indeed very difficult to overcome ages of accepted interpretations and exegesis. At the same time, it is difficult to place into the context of our present-day church life the meaning of such passages as, "greet each other with the holy kiss," "slaves, obey your masters," "do not seek a wife," and "wash each other's feet."

Helping to maintain unity in the Reformed community has been of concern to us. In the light of various possibilities for the interpretation of certain passages, we have tried to give cognizance to several views without being swayed by bias, and to pay particular attention to such key concepts as "head" and "submissiveness." Understandably our task has not been easy, since clear-cut answers are not available. Too much depends on correct interpretation and the willingness to understand God's Word in all its revelations. We have reported briefly to the 1972 Synod and posed a number of questions. We hope that these important questions have been dealt with in this study.

Two other important matters remain to be discussed before we present our report.

1. At first we were inclined to write about the concept of "authority," the authority of the ordained offices, the general and specific offices in the church, the authority delegated by Christ to his church, and the scriptural views on "office" as well as the Reformed views. After initial studies we have purposely left all this out of our report since another study committee was examining these matters and we did not want to duplicate their efforts. We had hoped that their report and its acceptance by our synod would sufficiently clarify these related matters so that we would be better equipped to deal with our mandate. Although the Synod of 1972 referred the report on "Ecclesiastical Office and Ordination" back to its committee to present an enlarged report to the Synod of 1973, we

felt that we should submit our report nevertheless. The position we take is that our report can stand on its own, albeit that the report on "Ecclesiastical Office and Ordination" may aid in a fuller understanding.

2. At a time in which the role of women is rapidly changing, the church is faced with the task of examining its practices to exclude women from the ordained offices. An important question is whether the social structures of our civilization are rooted in the teaching of the Bible rather than in non-christian philosophies. Similarly, whether our Reformed views concerning the place of the women in the church are more determined by existing social conditions than by the doctrines of God's Word. Part of the answer is the fact that we cannot divorce culture and social situations from the Bible and vice versa, since God himself has given mankind the nature and ability to establish cultures and societies.

In the beginning God created male and female. He made them social creatures with social needs. Man was not made to live as an entity, isolated from his fellow-man, but he was meant to be part of mankind, a member of one or more groups, of a society. As a member of a group, however, he is not completely equal to all members of that group since all group members tend to assign ranks to one another. Thus every member has a certain position, a status, in that group. This status includes a collection of rights and duties, and requires that a certain role appropriate to that status be played. Everyone has either the status of "man" or "woman." What roles shall be appropriate to that particular status is determined by being either male or female and by the culture in which one lives. This difference between the sexes is in the creation order and is a part of nature. Men and women are, therefore, never exactly the same. Every society assigns a certain status to its male and female members, and either status may be dominant—the other status is then subordinate. In certain cultures neither status has dominance, although the particular roles that are played do differ. It speaks for itself that every culture determines what status it will assign to women, and that great differences have existed, and do exist, throughout the history of mankind. In general we can say, however, that historically women have had a subordinate status compared to the one of men.

What does the Bible say about the status of the woman and the role which she has to perform? The Bible, having been written over hundreds of years, addresses itself to the people of different cultures. How much of this applies to the North American culture of 1973? Does God's Word set forth eternal principles concerning the absolute status of men and women? Has the atonement of Christ changed the position of men and women since the fall into sin? These questions should be clearly answered in this report.

The appropriate roles are learned by each person from infancy, as the prevailing social situation demands. These social situations include the practices and traditions of the Christian church if the person is a member of the church. It follows, then, that a subordinate position of the woman, for instance, and the appropriate role she must play, is not something which is inherent in her being a woman, created in her, but rather something taught by those around her. If a woman knows that she cannot

have authority and ecclesiastical leadership functions in the church, she knows because she has been instructed in this way. These attitudes and notions have not been created in her. A woman is not inherently, by birth and by nature, inferior to a man. At the same time, however, men and women do not play their respective roles uniformly—they are not the same. A woman will do things in a feminine way, the man in a masculine way. It follows, then, that when men and women do things together, they complement each other, they form a unity in which the image of God is more fully revealed. This is a God-given principle, his creation order. Cooperation and a working-together, in and out of marriage, in church life and in Christian fellowship, are assumed in the biblical givens. Each one is called to his or her own task, in his or her own way, working together in loving obedience to what God demands.

To what extent has the Reformed practice of excluding women from office been determined by social conditions and traditions, by the status that society has assigned to women? To what extent has this practice been determined by scriptural injunctions? We acknowledge that the standards and norms of society cannot usually be accepted as norms for the practices in the church of Christ, yet we cannot ignore the societal content of the church. We have, therefore, seriously attempted to find out what status and role the Lord has assigned to the female members of his Church. Neither old established traditions nor new modern concepts may be our guidelines in searching for the place that women should have in the church, but rather the revealed will of the Lord in the Scriptures.

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### I. WOMEN IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

In the very beginning of the Bible, in the opening chapters of Genesis, we are informed about two different periods in the history of mankind—the sinless period and the sinful one. Genesis 1 and 2 deal with the first period—God's creation of the world and of mankind; Genesis 3 tells of the fall into sin; while Genesis 4 and the following chapters and books of the Bible, deal with sinful mankind. The fall of man into sin has made a very deep incision in the history of man, an incision which is matched only by the coming of Jesus Christ as described in the gospels of the New Testament.

#### A. *Before the Fall into Sin—Genesis 1 and 2*

Genesis 1 tells us about the creation of man, male and female, as a very special event, an act which produced man as the crown of the works of God's hands. God created everything. Everything was called out of the darkness of nothing into being. Everything that God made was good. This state of "goodness" man shared with the rest of the creation. But there was a difference, too. This difference is that God created man in his image and after his likeness (vs. 26). Only of man do we read that he was made in this way. Although all other creatures are undoubtedly beautiful, being the product of God's hands, they are not like God in the way that man is because man reflects God's likeness. And so the Shorter Westminster Catechism states that man was to find his chief end and purpose of being in serving God and in enjoying him forever.

God and man share the ability of speaking and planning. To enable man to function as his image, God created for the man a partner with the same unique qualifications of speech and thinking mind. In the context of our study it is not important to explore the difference between the words "image" and "likeness," their meaning is rather similar. What is important, however, is that Genesis 1:27 states that "male and female he created them" *after* informing us that "God created man in his own

image." In this way the biblical text indicates that man and woman are God's image in their togetherness and that both share in that image of God in the same measure and in the same way.

Many theologians have tried to come to a sharp and clear definition of the exact meaning of man as the human image of God. Berkouwer in his book, *Man as the Image of God*, discusses several of these attempts. Most Reformed persons are likely familiar with the traditional concept that the image of God would consist in *knowledge, righteousness, and holiness* (this being the image of God in a more restricted sense). This concept is obtained by adding the *knowledge*, mentioned in Colossians 3:10, to the *righteousness* and *holiness* mentioned in Ephesians 4:24. We agree with Berkouwer, however, that this summing up of characteristics is not meant to be exclusive, but only indicates a new conformance (p. 90). Another well-known attempt has been to understand the image in the sense of dominion. Man is God's image in that he has the ability to rule over all things as God's vicegerent. Berkouwer, however, observes correctly that the wording of the verse that follows ("And God blessed them, and God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply . . . and have dominion . . .'" vs. 28) provides a strong argument against the identification of image and dominion. In his *Dogmatics* Karl Barth has argued that the meaning of the image of God is not to be found in some human characteristics *per se* (*analogia entis*), but that the image of God refers specifically to and is found in the relationship of man and woman (*analogia relationis*). Berkouwer concludes, however, that there is not enough biblical evidence to limit the image of God to the man-woman relationship.

Thinking about man as God's image we feel that the Dutch theologian J. C. Sikkel is right in stating that God's decree in Genesis 1:26 confronts us with one of the most mysterious words of Scripture. We can also quote the well-known theologian H. Bavinck ". . . nowhere (in Scripture) the full content of the image of God is unfolded" (Berkouwer, *op. cit.*, p. 74). Let it be sufficient to say that man apparently is God's *created* child and that he is given the mandate and privilege to reflect in many ways the excellencies of his Maker.

Yet we should not forget that the creation story stresses especially the togetherness of man and woman in connection with the image of God. Man and woman are both God's image and their being together, their man-woman relationship, is of great importance for both of them to bring the likeness of God to its fullest expression. Furthermore, as Vos says, ". . . the record ascribes the image of God to man and woman indiscriminately. . . . Genesis 1 gives us no reason to think that woman participated in the image of God in any different way than man" (Clarence Vos, *Women in Old Testament Worship*. Delft: N.V. Verenigde Drukke rijen Judels en Brinkman; 1968, p. 15). Huls is of the same opinion: "Here is no question of any discrimination of inferiority of the woman, but she is mentioned in complete equality with man" (in the original: "zij wordt volkomen gelijkwaardig naast de man genoemd") (G. Huls, *De Vrouw in de Kerk*. Baarn: Bosch en Keuning N.V., 1965; p. 8).

Genesis 1 and 2 teach us that man and woman are both the image and

likeness of God. At the end of Genesis 1 God addresses and blesses them both. To both he says, "Be fruitful and multiply," to both is given the task to fill the earth and subdue it, and to both is given dominion over the rest of God's creation. They share the same food.

We should not overlook the fact, however, that in their being-the-image-of-God and in their functioning-as-God's-vicegerents the differentiation of the sexes is of unique importance. Genesis 1 in mentioning only *this* human differentiation indicates its basic and fundamental meaning. This is followed up in Genesis 2 when God says about Adam as a single human being, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him" (vs. 18). The emphasis which Genesis 2 places on the creation of woman *after* man and from man, a consecutive creation, seems to indicate how great the importance of the sexual difference and the man-woman relationship is going to be in human history. The sexual difference in human beings is not just something which man has in common with animals and plants; in human life it is meant to be more than just a procreative function, it has the deep meaning of oneness in a love relationship. Both the man and the woman become what they are meant to be in the male-female relationship; this is affirmed by Genesis 1 as well as Genesis 2. The importance of man's self-realization resulting from the duality of the man-woman relationship finds even more affirmation in God's own plurality in unity and his own decree, "let *us* make . . .", which refers to God's Trinity.

Even anthropologists in their studies of human society have discovered this deep togetherness of man and woman. Margaret Mead, for instance, writes, ". . . we have seen how damaging to full sex membership can be some of the conventions by which each society has differentiated the sexes. Every known society creates and maintains artificial occupational divisions and personality expectations for each sex that limits the humanity of the other sex" (*Male and Female*, p. 276). She also states, "We can build a whole society only by using both the gifts special to each sex and those shared by both sexes—by using the gifts of the whole of humanity" (*ibid.*, p. 284). As man and woman in their togetherness bring to expression the image of God, at the same time they bring to its fullest development their common and individual humanity. Therefore, in the congregation of the Lord Jesus Christ, the cooperation between the sexes is of great importance. A church dominated by either sex will be hampered in its being the body of the Lord Jesus Christ. Looking for a moment at "the beginning," as Jesus himself does in Matthew 19:4, 8, one could conclude that the church is shortchanging herself in her exclusion of women from office, especially so at a time when women are no less qualified for leadership than men, and have obtained positions of leadership in almost every other sector of life.

Genesis 2 provides us with more detail about the creation of both the man and the woman. First we read that God formed man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life (vs. 7). Man is given a place in the garden of Eden. Man is also given the task to till the garden and to keep it. In this way man is to have dominion over the works of God's hands. Then we read that God gave him a

special commandment, "You may freely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat . . ." (vss. 16, 17). This commandment is given before the creation of the woman. In Genesis 3, however, the woman proves not only that she knows this commandment, but also that she is convinced that she, too, has to obey it. Thus it is shown in Genesis 2 and 3 that both man and woman share in the common responsibility for the upkeep of the garden, and both are responsible to God who denied them (not only him) the fruit of this special tree to test their obedience. We should note here that God tested only the man and the woman, not the whole of creation. The fact that the probationary command is given to the man only does not change the co-responsibility that both have in this respect. God addresses the man in Genesis 2:16, 17, as the head of the human race. The man, being the beginning, represented all human beings who would come after him, including his wife. Satan knew very well that in order to tempt man to sin, he could do this by attacking either the man or the woman. Man and woman together are as human beings very different from the rest of creation. They enjoy, being God's image, the freedom and the privilege to make decisions, something unknown to the other creatures. It is clear, of course, that since Adam is the head, the first one to be created and the representative of the entire human race, Satan could not succeed in his seduction of mankind if Adam would not follow Eve in sinning (cf. 1 Timothy 2:13, 14, and section II D 3c).

In Genesis 2 the creation of the woman begins with a divine initiative, "The Lord God said, 'It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him'" (vs. 18). The best translation for "helper fit for him" is likely "partner." God wants to give to the man a partner, so that he may be better equipped to be God's image, to fulfill his mandate, and to live a full and meaningful human life. This partner is to be fully human yet different. Thus, man and woman will be able to communicate meaningfully with each other. In their basic oneness they will always be attracted to each other and they are created to interact in a unique manner, which differs from the rest of creation. The difference in sex between the man and the woman, which comes to expression with every aspect of their being, creates as has been said "an antithesis striving unceasingly for synthesis." Male and female in their differences become one in togetherness. Harmonious polarity-in-union expresses the fullness of being human.

The word that needs special attention here is that of "helper." If woman was created as a helper of man, is she not then by that very token an inferior, a lower human being? Vos answers the question in this way, "The word *ezer* has sometimes been understood as though it meant a helper in the sense of a subordinate assistant. A study of *ezer*, however, leaves quite another impression. Besides Genesis 2:18, 20, this word appears in the Old Testament nineteen times. Of these it is used once in a question; it is used three times of man as a help, but in each instance it is clear that man's help is not effectual. Fifteen times it is used of God as the One who brings succor to the needy and desperate. Thus if one excludes Genesis 2:18, 20, it could be said that God only gives effectual help (*ezer*) to man" (op. cit., p. 16).

In Genesis 2 we further read how Adam is led to discover that in all of creation he does not find “a helper fit for him” (vs. 20). God then causes him to sleep and builds a woman out of one of his ribs. In this very way woman is created out of man that man and woman together may represent their heavenly Father on earth. As to the creation of the woman from one of man’s ribs, it has been remarked by the churchfather Augustine that if God had meant woman to be superior to man, he would have created her from man’s head; or if he wanted her to be inferior to man, he would have made her from his feet. Her creation from the man’s side shows her to be of equal value, she is to stand side by side to him in all of life. That he is called “man” and she “woman” (*ish* and *ishah*) again shows how equally human they are, not sharing sameness but sexually differentiated in their entire humanness.

Woman’s equality to man is also expressed very strongly and very beautifully by Adam as he welcomes her in poetical exclamation, surprised by joy, “This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called woman because she was taken out of man” (vs. 23). The poet Willem Bernard has expressed this duality-in-unity in these lines:

“The creation consists in twain  
 from the very beginning;  
 God made lands and oceans,  
 God made sun and moon.  
 One blood but from two sources,  
 One man, but two sexes;  
 From sons and daughters  
 God secured one future.”

(Th. Delleman en Pr. Wiepkema, *Wording van Mens en Wereld*. Franeker: T. Wever, 1971; p. 92, 93). Adam’s poetic welcome for the woman has been expressed well by the poetical Bible scholar Dr. B. Wielenga who writes, “Man and woman are the two shells that fit together and in this way preserve the pearl of humanity.”

K. Dronkert observes, “In this picture of the creation man assumes a different place than woman, but certainly not a higher one” (*Het Huwelijk in het Oude Testament*, p. 69). In retrospect to Genesis 1 and 2 we note that we have discovered the basic equality between man and woman, which is expressed in different symmetrical roles like “the two shells that enclose the pearl of humanity.” In the Reformed churches until the present the difference in the roles of man and woman has led to the exclusion of the woman from office. The problem that presents itself here, and which must be answered later, is whether this practice does justice to the equality between the sexes as created by God, and to the partnership between man and woman as intended by God. In other words, does the woman have to be excluded from the ecclesiastical office in order to do justice to her place in the history of mankind as the helper fit for, the partner of, the man?

### B. *The Fall into Sin—Genesis 3*

Woman was created last and fell into sin first. From this has often been concluded that woman was the weaker, the one who could easily

be seduced. The church father Tertullian for that reason called women the "devil's gateway." The fact that woman fell first, however, does not imply moral inferiority. Woman would indeed have been the weaker one if man had resisted the temptation, but he did not.

When God comes to the garden he calls Adam, but he does not talk to him only; he soon addresses Eve also. This shows that she is co-responsible; she, too, must answer her Creator and covenant God and tell him what happened. Both respond to God's inquiry since both are responsible human beings. It is also noteworthy in this regard that even their responses are rather similar. Adam accuses the woman and the woman the serpent. "Possibly man's response, 'The woman whom thou gavest to be with me . . . ' is more disrespectful, but essentially the response is the same. Both seek to escape responsibility and to place the blame elsewhere. Even in perversity one notes a parity between them" (Vos, *op. cit.* p. 21).

It should also be noted that though sin originated with the woman, God is addressing the serpent, acknowledges her who sinned first as the representative of mankind, when he gives the promise of salvation (often called the mother-promise). Here God uses the unfamiliar expression, "her seed." Biologically we can only speak of the man as seedbearer. This expression therefore gives to the woman a position unusually equal to that of the man. In the light of the New Testament (e.g. Galatians 4:4, "born of woman"; and Revelation 12, "the dragon was angry with the woman and went off to make war on the rest of *her offspring* (seed)") we acknowledge that in a prophetic way this promise speaks of Christ's virgin birth.

Furthermore, God said to the woman herself, "I will greatly multiply your pain in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children; yet your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you" (Gen. 3:16). The question is sometimes raised whether these words do not degrade woman to a second-class, an inferior human being, one who must be under man's dominion because of this punishment for her sin. C. F. Keil in his *Commentary on Genesis* even suggests that "the woman was made subordinate to him (the man) from the very first" (English edition, p. 103). It is obvious, though, that in these words we do not deal with God's creation order but with the punishment which fell upon woman after she had fallen into sin. Hence, she is in the same position as Adam to whom God says, "cursed is the ground because of you; in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life; thorns and thistles it shall bring forth to you, and you shall eat the plants of the field. In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread . . ." (vss. 17-19). Both Adam and Eve are given a sentence. For the man it will be that the ground is cursed. The man is punished in his work. That work from now on will be heavy, there will be toil and sweat. Struggles and frustrations will take the place of easy creative living. In the same way Eve will be punished in her role as wife and mother, and every woman shares in this. The similarity with Adam's punishment is clear: the area of greatest joy and fulfillment—marriage and the family—will become the stage for suffering, frustration and often fear.

It must be noted that God curses the serpent, and the soil, but neither the man nor the woman—they remain human, but their living in difficult situations will continually remind them of their sin. Man and woman may, however, try to improve their situation. Adam may try to pull out the thistles, and Eve may seek help in the pain of childbearing. She may have a love relationship with her husband, in which she is again honored as an equal partner to the man. Moreover, in the covenant of grace, God himself promises redemption and restoration. In Christ the woman's relation to her husband will lose its mark of inferiority, its painful yoke-character; it will be renewed and will begin to express once again the beautiful harmony between the two sexes as created by God.

In the meantime, being so intimately engaged in the process of procreation, woman will often suffer. Giving birth to children and nurturing and raising them, she is bound to her home and needs special protection. The process of procreation does not leave her much time for other activities. She will depend heavily upon the protection and resourcefulness of her husband. Yet this position of dependency will open the door for the deterioration of man's protective role into that of the tyrant. In history, especially where the healing influence of the Gospel has not been felt, many women have found themselves quite helpless and defenseless over against their husband's brute abuse of power. "He will rule over you" often meant in practice, "he will take advantage of your disadvantages" (Vos, *op. cit.*, p. 27).

A question often raised in connection with this punishment is whether these words are God's prediction of what will happen, or whether they express a special ordinance of God after the fall. Even if the latter were true, Christ's redemption would bring, at least in principle, a reversal of this decree of God. It is true that a relationship in which one rules another does not necessarily have the character of a punishment. Having a king seemed a blessing to the Israelites, and so it was at times. We often notice in history, however, that power corrupts and that absolute power corrupts absolutely. Throughout the ages women have often been the victims of such absolute power.

In Genesis 3 we also note that after the fall Adam called the woman Eve, which has the beautiful meaning of "mother of all living." At that moment, so different from their beginning together, Adam acknowledges his wife again as his equal, his partner, the helper fit for him. The concluding verses of this chapter further express this partnership. Together man and woman are banned from Paradise in garments of skin which God had made for them. These garments also indicate their common humanity. God cares for his fallen children in a special way.

Genesis 3 shows us how both man and woman fell into sin, and how they both suffered under the results and punishment of sin. The misery of sin is shared by it in different ways. However, both also receive God's promise of salvation. In this salvation a special place and role is given to the woman. The Messiah will be her seed. One might ask whether man may separate with respect to the office in the church what God has joined together in the history of salvation.

### C. From the Fall to the Exodus

#### 1. From Adam to Abraham

Old Testament history can be rightly labeled as male-centered. This is illustrated, for instance, by the fact that in the period from Adam to Abraham only four women are mentioned by name: Eve, Ada, Zillah, and Naamah, and "of the latter three no act is recorded" (Vos, *ibid.*, p. 34). Beginning with Genesis 4 the act of procreation is always described in the words, "he knew her." This formulation draws the attention mainly to the man. This expression, however, does not exclude the idea of partnership from the side of the woman. Furthermore, women may play a predominant role in the naming of the children; "in the forty-five cases in which the naming of children is recorded in the Old Testament, in twenty-six it is ascribed to women, in fourteen to men, and in five to God" (Vos, *ibid.*, p. 161) Hence, we observe that all basic relationships described before continue after the fall.

Sin, however, distorts relationships, not only the relationship between man and God, but also the relationship between man and man. This distortion becomes more pronounced in such intimate relationships as those of husband and wife, and parents and children. Yet God remains faithful. In his dealings with mankind he includes both men and women. In Genesis 6 he speaks to Noah, ". . . I will establish my covenant with you . . . and you shall go into the ark, you, your sons, your wife, your sons' wives with you." This covenant, therefore, is not only for the male descendants of Adam, but also for the female ones, even though the male-centered character of the historiography is shown in the order which places Noah's sons before Noah's wife. Here we must take into consideration that the Lord in his Word does not always express his own evaluation of certain situations or conditions. God often accommodates his revelation to the cultural patterns of a certain time. This does not mean approval of such cultural patterns. Their description has the authority of historicity, not that of normativity. Slavery, for instance, is often tolerated in Scripture, but this does not mean that the institution of slavery ever met with divine approval. The same thing can be said for polygamy. Its factual acceptance certainly does not mean that this was so from the beginning. In the same way Eve was told, "your husband shall rule over you," yet Paul writes in the New Testament, ". . . there is neither male nor female, for you are all one in Christ" (Galatians 3:28). We may conclude, however, that God in the covenant of grace, also in the Old Testament, always included the women with the men as partners of equal human importance.

In the past the male-centered character of the biblical revelation in the Old Testament has probably been stressed too much. Vos writes in this regard, "recent studies on the social position of women in the Old Testament have modified the thesis that she was a possession to be bought and sold at will" (Vos, *op. cit.*, p. 48). A footnote refers to the conclusion of W. Plautz in *Die Frau*, ". . . Es has sie ergeben, dass die Frau nur zu einem bestimmten Zweck, namlich der Fortpflangung der Familie, Eigentum des Ehemannes ist. Ihra Person gehört ihm jedoch nicht" (it has become clear that the woman only for one specific purpose, namely

that of procreation, can be called the possession of man. Her personality, however, does not belong to him). The same idea is expressed in a later book in the Bible, the Song of Solomon, in which we listen not only to the songs of the bridegroom but also to those of the bride. The bridegroom exclaims in ecstasy, "Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away" (2:13), and the bride responds by expressing her love in most convincing words, "He brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love" (2:4). The bride is certainly not passive, not a possession obtained like a slave without power of consent. As a matter of fact, most of the descriptions in "the greatest song" is from the perspective of the bride. She testifies to her equality in the love relationship with the bridegroom in her statement, "My beloved is mine, and I am his" (2:16). Love to the bride is more than belonging ("I am his"), it is also possessing (he is mine).

## 2. *The Patriarchs, Genesis 12-50*

During the period of the patriarchs the healing grace of God becomes more visible, also as it pertains to the relationship between the sexes. In the biblical narrative we read that the women are now able to assume more responsible roles and have greater responsibilities. Their functioning within the marriage relationship becomes more pronounced. Whereas we do not hear about acts of women in Genesis 4-11, in this later period we repeatedly read what women said and did. This does not mean, of course, that women of this era were fully restored to their original roles of partnership with their husbands; this is not even the case with the wives of the patriarchs. There are quite a number of illustrations of a changing role, however, which we want to examine more closely. It is regrettable that we often read the Scriptures with preconceived notions and hence are not sufficiently sensitive to subtle changes of emphasis.

God deals extensively with both Abraham and Sarah in the promise of their son Isaac. God changed both their names. When Abram (exalted father) becomes Abraham (father of a multitude, or father of nations), then Sarai (my princess) becomes Sarah (princess, queen, i.e. of a multitude or of many nations). God says, "she shall be a mother of nations," just like Abraham is to be a "father of a multitude of nations" (Gen. 12:4, 16). The parallelism is strict.

In Genesis 18 the Lord asks Abraham, "Where is Sarah your wife?" She is acknowledged as the active partner of Abraham when the Lord rebukes her, "Why did Sarah laugh . . . ?" Later on, the Lord talks directly to her. Sarah is afraid and she tries to cover up her laughing in unbelief with the stupid lie of denial, "I did not laugh," which results in a direct word of the Lord to her only, "No, but you did laugh" (vss. 9-15). In Genesis 21:12 we read that God, when speaking to Abraham, tells him in no uncertain words, "Whatever Sarah says to you, do as she tells you . . ." or as the Berkley version has it, "Listen to everything Sarah tells you . . ." We can safely assume here that if God did not regard Sarah as an equal and worthwhile partner he certainly would not have said this.

The Lord does not only speak directly to Sarah as the elected mother,

but also to her maid Hagar. When Hagar flees from her mistress, the Lord tells her in no uncertain terms to return. He also gives her the promise, "I will greatly multiply your descendants that they cannot be numbered for multitude" (Gen. 16:7-14). Her son is Ishmael (and God gives him his name), which means, "God hears." She responds by giving the well a name which means "God sees." The full name of the well is Beerlahairoi, which means, "the well of the living God who sees me." Here Hagar mentions God and herself in one breath, and the miracle of it is not that she is a woman, but that she is a sinful human being who "remained alive after seeing him" (vs. 13). Some time later during her flight to Egypt with Ishmael, the angel of God calls Hagar from heaven (Gen. 21:17) and informs her that God had heard the voice of her son.

In the case of Rebekah the time of departure from her home is left to her: "They said, 'We will call the maiden and ask her'" (Gen. 24:57). She later shows her independent relationship to God during her pregnancy as "she went to inquire of the Lord" (Gen. 25:22) and in this case, too, the Lord answers this woman directly (vs. 23).

The relationship of full partnership with her husband Isaac becomes apparent in the reaction of both parents to their daughters-in-law, Esau's wives, as "they made life bitter for Isaac and Rebekah" (Gen. 26:35). That husband and wife discussed these matters as parents, both equally concerned and both equally entitled to make suggestions for the prevention of similar developments with Jacob, becomes clear when we read that "Rebekah said to Isaac, 'I am weary of my life because of the Hittite women. If Jacob marries one of the Hittite women such as these . . . what good will my life be to me?'" (Gen. 27:46). The question itself shows that for both the younger and the older generation the wife functions as partner-in-communication and that her value surpasses by far that of being only the mother of the children of her husband—the means for procreation. At a later date Rebekah plays a prominent role in Jacob's deceit of Isaac, and she organizes his escape to and possible later return from Laban (Gen. 27).

With the next patriarch the influence of both Leah and Rachel on their marital relationship with Jacob appears to be equally strong. They both provide their husband with a concubine. They give names to their children and to the children of their maids as well. In their competition they talk about "taking away my husband." The way in which Rachel expresses her disappointment and deep grief to her husband is certainly not an expression of subdued resignation. The redemptive position of partnership in marriage, provided by God in the covenant of grace, can always deteriorate into a pattern of domination and even threat: "Give me children or I shall die" (Gen. 30:1). It is at this point that Jacob strongly protests and points out how unreasonable Rachel's demand really is. She then gives her maid to Jacob, and in this way receives a son for him. Rachel then testifies after the birth of Dan that "God has heard my voice and given me a son" (vs. 6). Rachel had her own independent prayer life.

We conclude that in this patriarchal setting women were very much aware of possessing an identity of their own; they were well aware of

the value of their own individual personality. In their relationship with their husbands they did not only function as equal partners, but at times—either assumed for better or for worse—assumed leading roles in this partnership. In the patriarchal history we notice a trend of restoration of woman to full partnership with man, a trend that, on the one hand, points back to the creation order in paradise and, on the other hand, points forward to the full redemption of human life in Christ.

All this does not mean that the patriarchal history is not male-dominated. Yet, there is a remarkable difference between Sarah's status and role in her tent by the Oaks of Mamre and her status in Egypt. There she is treated indeed as a piece of property, there she loses not only her freedom but her humanity as a person as well. In the time of the patriarchs we note a checkered pattern as far as the status and role of women are concerned. There are instances of male domination but also of mitigation of this rule over women.

It is true that the covenant is made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. They function as head. They represent the rest of God's covenant people, including their wives. But in the administration of the covenant these wives are certainly not ignored, God deals with them as well as with their husbands, and they function independently of their husbands in their relationship with God. God's covenant of grace with the patriarchs shows clearly that God allows women not only to be included in the covenant through their husbands, but also allows them to speak and act as participants in that covenant as well in their own rights.

### 3. *The Exodus*

In the first chapter of the book of Exodus the Hebrew midwives Shiprah and Puah are mentioned. Through them the king of Egypt tried to kill the male babies of Israel, but they defy his orders and tell him how strong the Hebrew women are, ". . . they are not like the Egyptian women. . .," not without exaggeration. In this way they served the Lord and protected his people; therefore, "God dealt well with the midwives . . ." (Ex. 1:15-20). In saving little Moses from death two women played a vital role. His mother and his sister were instrumental in saving him from Pharaoh's death sentence, and they looked after him in early childhood and probably informed him about the covenant between God and his people.

During this period of bondage women might have been considered second-rate subjects in the eyes of their secular rulers, but the Lord certainly does not treat them as such; he sees them as full members of his people. It is true that in the account of the exodus we read, ". . . the people of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand on foot, besides women and children . . ." (Exodus 12:37), but this way of counting does not have to be explained in a discriminatory or derogatory way. It is offset by God's institution of the passover, "In one house it shall be eaten" . . . and . . . "all the congregation of Israel shall keep it" (Ex. 12:46, 47). Women shared in the celebration of the passover, the sacrament, together with the men.

In ancient history, too, the place of woman in society is not always the same, and we find a checkered pattern. We have seen how Pharaoh

treats Sarah and the midwives, in contrast there are recorded instances of women who obtained higher status and stronger influence in pagan countries than women did in Israel. Roland de Vaux remarks, "In Egypt the wife was often the head of the family, with all the rights such a position entailed. In Babylon she could acquire property, take legal action, be a party to contracts, and she even had a share in her husband's inheritance" (*Ancient Israel*. New York: McGraw-Hill Inc., 1961; p. 27). He continues to point out that Jewish women in foreign countries obtained more rights than they possessed at home, and writes, "In the colony of Elephantine . . . the Jewish women acquired certain civil rights. We have already said that she could obtain a divorce. She could also own property and thereby become liable to taxation (in a long list of taxpayers there are the names of thirty-two women). Deeds of exchange and donations, etc. also survive, in which the contracting parties were women" (*ibid.*).

Yet, when one compares these notes to situations and descriptions in the Old Testament, one wonders whether the difference was all that great. We already have mentioned the active role of the bride in the Song of Solomon. Throughout the book of Proverbs, despite several negative comments about women, (e.g. chap. 7), we find instances of women's influence; especially in the last chapter we see a picture of a powerful woman, "a wife with strength of character" who works with willing hands, who is a clever merchant, a good administrator, a close supervisor, an able dealer in real estate—"she considers a field and buys it"—and yet not a Scrooge—"she opens her hand to the poor."

The conclusion seems to be justified that in almost any culture—even one that places women in a very disadvantaged position—Eve's daughters have been able not only to survive and to make the most of their inferior position, but also to exercise great power and to rise to positions of leadership. Often they have accomplished what they have, not because they were women, but in spite of being deprived of easy access to positions of influence.

After the miraculous crossing of the Red Sea Moses sang a song of praise, as well as Miriam, the prophetess and his sister, who took a timbrel in her hand, and "all the women went out after her with timbrel and dancing" (Ex. 15:20). During the desert journey Miriam functions as a prophetess and a leader. She certainly held a position of great importance. Sad to say, we see in her history that much power becomes a great temptation. She desired for herself and for Aaron the position and power of Moses. Apparently she took the initiative: "Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses because of the Cushite woman whom he had married" (Num. 12:1). Rather than being a partner with Moses in the leadership of God's people, she tried to oust him and to take over his place and task. That she was the driving force in the rebellion became clear in her punishment: ". . . when the cloud removed from over the tent, behold, Miriam was leprous, white as snow" (Num. 12:10). Her grasping for power in that situation was a gross sin. Aaron in his repentant words to Moses acknowledges his co-responsibility for the rebellion. God answers favorably to Moses' request, yet Miriam had to be outside the camp for seven days. The position of leadership she

held comes through clearly because “the people did not set out on the march till Miriam was brought in again” (vs. 15).

At the end of the journey when Israel is about to enter Canaan and the tribes are once again numbered according to their families, the five daughters of Zelophehad stand before Moses and Eleazer the priest, and before the leaders and all the congregation. They present their juridical problem, namely, their father had died without leaving a son and he had not taken part in the rebellion of the company of Korah. If the land would be exclusively divided among the males, their father would have no heritage within his people. They ask for a bylaw to regulate exception in their case (Num. 27).

First of all we note that these women had the right and the ability to speak for themselves. Dr. A. Noordtzijs writes in this connection, that this procedure “proves again that the place of women, also of the unmarried daughter, was at that time completely different in character than later and also than today still in the Eastern world. Even if her place was not what it would be later in the third century before Christ in Babylonia, where she was in every aspect equal with man and also her succession right had been fixed (cf. also Job 42:15), she was also not considered being inferior to man. She was allowed to bring juridical cases before the court. Her vows could have legal force. She had lost only her succession right (see Deut. 21:15ff, 25:5ff)” (*Korte Verklaring van het Boek Numeri*, p. 298). A decision on this request was extremely difficult. To refuse the daughters of Zelophehad the inheritance which would have been theirs even if their father had had a son, would hardly seem fair, especially since Zelophehad had refused to join the rebellious crowd. On the other hand, to make land available to women would be a complete change of policy and would endanger the boundaries of the areas assigned to each tribe individually. To acknowledge the succession rights of women would endanger the entire tribal system and would also make large estates possible.

No wonder that Moses decides to bring their case before the Lord (vs. 5). God's decision is that “the daughters of Zelophehad are right” (vs. 7). In this way it became possible for women to possess land in their own name. This is the principal decision. Later, in chapter 36, a new bylaw is added, “let them marry whom they think best” (which shows that these ladies were not without power of preference or influence in the decision of the choice of a marriage partner), only “they shall marry within the family of their father . . . every daughter who possesses an inheritance in any tribe of the people of Israel, shall be wife to one of the family of the tribe of her father, so that every one of the people of Israel may possess the inheritance of his fathers” (vss. 6, 8). We are further informed that the daughters of Zelophehad conformed to this bylaw and married sons of their father's brothers. This additional rule was needed only to maintain the geographical integrity of the tribal provinces.

In this illustration we see how women could exercise great influence. True, the male-centered administration of the division of the land and the distribution of the inheritance is maintained. But Zelophehad's daughters were instrumental in maintaining the rights of their father, they initiated action, and they obtained the Lord's approval.

## D. *Development and Decline of Israel as a Nation*

### 1. *Women under the laws.*

In the committee's studies of the Law of God in the Old Testament it became clear that women are included in many, but not all, cases on a par with men. In addition to this, God gives specific laws for women only whenever he deems this necessary.

a. In the Ten Commandments we notice that women are mentioned as distinct from men yet on the same level. In the fourth commandment it is ordained ". . . you shall not do any work, you or your son, or your daughter, or your manservant or your maidservant . . ." The fact that the wife is not mentioned specifically shows her equal status with her husband in the household. The husband could not command her to do certain things as he could his son, his daughter, or his servants. The fifth commandment speaks for itself: "Honor your father and your mother." (cf. Lev. 19:3 for the reversed order.) Equality between men and women is evident in the punishment for transgression of the seventh commandment. Deuteronomy 22:22 and Leviticus 20:10 both stipulate that in case a man commits adultery with the wife of his neighbor, "both the adulterer and the adulteress shall be put to death." This is reinforced by other biblical passages: Ezekiel, speaking the word of the Lord, says that God will bring the blood of wrath upon women who break wedlock (16:38); David admits that for his sin with Bathsheba he "deserves to die" (2 Sam. 12); and in the New Testament the scribes and the Pharisees brought to Jesus "a woman who had been caught in adultery" who should, therefore, be stoned (John 8:1-11). It is noteworthy that the law does not require the death penalty of a man who "lies carnally with a woman who is still a slave" (Lev. 19:20), whereas adultery can never be atoned for by bringing certain sacrifices. Here Koole concludes, "This proves that the status of the married woman is an entirely different nature than that of a bought slave girl, and from this it follows that adultery is more than just an attack on somebody's property" (*De Tien Geboden*, p. 108). In this way the law acknowledges the fact that women are just as human as men.

Finally, in the tenth commandment the neighbor's wife is mentioned together with the neighbor's house, manservant, and maidservant. While Exodus places the house first, Deuteronomy reverses the order; hence, no definite conclusions can be drawn from the order.

### b. *Other laws.*

When we consider the many other laws given to Israel in the Pentateuch, we discover a pattern of parity as well as disparity.

In the commands regarding the attendance at feasts (Ex. 23:17; 34:23; and Deut. 16:16), it is stated specifically that "three times a year all your males shall appear before the Lord your God at the place which he will choose." This, however, does not exclude women from being present. In the history recorded in the Bible we read of women who accompany their husbands to the great feasts (e.g. Hannah, 1 Sam. 1; and Mary, Luke 2:41, 51). Ideally, according to the law, they should be present. Deuteronomy 16:14 reads, "You shall rejoice in your feast, you and your son and your daughter, your manservant and your maid-

servant . . . (including even) the widow . . . within your towns." Israel's feasts were occasions of rejoicing with the entire family and their guests before the face of the Lord. Permission to stay home would be granted to the women for reasons of childbearing, purification, etc. (Lev. 15:31).

Leviticus 12 shows parity as well as disparity in connection with the laws on purification. When a male child was born, the mother was unclean for seven days and had to "continue for thirty-three days in the blood of her purifying" (vs. 4). On the other hand, when she gave birth to a girl, she would be unclean for two weeks and she would "continue in the blood of her purifying for sixty-six days" (vs. 5). These regulations indicate a disparity, but what is the meaning of it? Is the fact that the uncleanliness of the mother lasted twice as long after the birth of a girl as after that of a boy, to be understood in a discriminatory sense? Do girl-babies make their mother twice as unclean as boy-babies? These are questions which are not easily answered. Clarence Vos states, ". . . the question is, did the Lord intend to say anything about the status of women by prescribing this longer period of purification for the birth of a girl, or is this to be regarded simply as conforming the cult (the law) to notions already existent in Israel?" (*op. cit.*, p. 70). Vos reminds us of the fact that also Gispén speaks about the duality of revelation and God's accommodation to the prevailing way of thinking. It seems that in ancient times the idea that pregnancy and delivery of a baby girl were more difficult than a baby boy was generally accepted. It was also believed that a discharge continues for a longer period of time after the birth of a baby girl than after that of a baby boy (Gispén, *Commentary*, p. 197). Some have suggested that there are medical reasons for the distinction, reasons which still may not be fully known to medical science today.

Parity, however, prevails again in what follows. The offering to be brought after the time of purification, either 33 or 66 days, is always the same: "a lamb a year old . . . and a young pigeon or turtledove . . . (or) if she cannot afford a lamb . . . two turtledoves or two young pigeons" (Lev. 12:6, 8; Luke 2:24). Two things are to be concluded from this commandment:

1) It is always the mother herself who had to bring the offering. "We may assume that the husband was her *head*, but . . . that headship was not of such a nature, that women were prevented from participating in this individual act of worship" (Vos. *op. cit.*, p. 73).

2) The quantity of the offering remains the same for both a male or a female child, only lack of funds may make a difference.

There are many other instances of parity between men and women in the Mosaic laws:

- in the ritual of the atonement after abnormal discharge (Lev. 5);
- in the tests for leprosy and in the ritual for purification afterwards (Lev. 13, 14);
- in the dietary laws, the sons and daughters of the priests are both allowed to eat the sacrificed meats (Lev. 10:14; 22:12, 13; Num. 18:11);
- after coitus both the man and the woman are subject to the same rules (Lev. 15:18);

- in the case of bestial coitus both men and women are to be punished similarly by death (Lev. 8:23; 20:15, 16);
- the same punishment is applied to man and woman in case of functioning as a medium or a wizard (Lev. 20:27);
- both men and women are forbidden to engage in the perversion of dressing in the clothes of the opposite sex (Deut. 22:5);
- any man or woman who does what is evil in the sight of the Lord, worshiping other gods, must be stoned (Deut. 17:2-7; 29:18ff.);
- at the end of seven years . . . all people, women as well as men . . . had to appear before the Lord to listen to the reading of the law (Deut. 29:10ff.; 31:10ff.);
- the very radical vow of the Nazirite “to separate oneself to the Lord” was open to women as well as to men (Num. 6:2);

In connection with the Nazirite vow we would like to make some observations. Women were restricted in the right to make a vow. A father could annul the vow of his unmarried daughter, and a husband the one of his wife (Num. 30), but “any vow of a widow or a divorced woman, anything by which she has bound herself, shall stand against her” (vs. 9). Apart from this restriction it is good to note the importance of the institution of the Nazirites. Vos writes, “The view of Kurtz and others that the Nazirite must be viewed as a sort of priesthood is probably justified . . . And we hardly err if we point out that it would be a mistake to view the Nazirite as a second-rate priest, since if we compare the requirements which the Nazirite was to observe, it appears that he was closer to the High Priest than the common priest . . . Women can attain this high level of consecration as well as men” (Vos, *op. cit.*, p. 114f.). In a note Vos refers to the Misnah which links the Nazirite with the High Priest in that both may not contact uncleanness. As we will see later, women could not serve as priests, but prophetesses, queens, and Nazirites are presented in the biblical record.

Some clear cases of disparity between men and women should also be mentioned:

- the monetary value of men and women is different in the scale of redemption prescribed in Leviticus 27:1-8. We note, however, that with the increase in age there is a decrease of the monetary difference between men and women. This reminds us of the Jewish proverb “An old man in the house is a snare, but an old woman is a treasure” (Vos, *op. cit.*, p. 116). Hence, it is clear that this difference does not reflect disparity between the sexes, but rather certain socio-economic standards of that time;
- if a man distrusts his wife he can take her to the priest, regardless whether she has been unfaithful or not, to have her take the oath of the curse (Num. 5:11-31). Although the woman actively participates in the ritual, the man nevertheless has the authority to submit her to this oath and curse;
- the husband could write a bill of divorce for his wife if she found no favor in his eyes, but the reverse procedure was not provided for in the law (Deut. 24:1-4; see also Matt. 19:3-9);

—for women it was difficult to plead their cause, e.g. Ruth could not go directly to the elders of Bethlehem.

We agree with Clarence Vos that “in the final analysis there seems to be no reason to doubt that woman, when viewed in her quality as member, had an equal place with man in the cultic community” (Vos, *op. cit.*, p. 13).

The disparity between men and women in Israel's culture is mainly to be explained from the fact that the man represented his wife in public life. But this did not make her an inferior member of the community. Often the same sacrifices were required from both sexes, both were to be punished with the same punishment, and both were given the same privileges. In section II D 4 we will discuss in more detail the matter of man representing woman as “head.” We conclude this section by emphasizing the important status and role which the Old Testament laws give the women as full members of God's covenant people.

## 2. *Women as active participants in worship.*

In the Old Testament we find several instances of activities of individual women in acts of worship.

In Exodus 4:24-26 we find the only example in the Bible of a woman performing the rite of circumcision. The account gives the impression that Zipporah functioned with great reluctance, most likely because Moses was unable to perform the act. Whatever the case, it seems clear that a woman under certain circumstances was allowed to perform the rite of circumcision which was normally administered by men. By doing this, Zipporah committed herself and her family to the service of the Lord, the covenant God of Israel.

In Judges 13 we read that the angel of the Lord appeared to Manoah's wife and told her how to prepare for the birth of her Nazirite son. She was alone at the time, but “went and told her husband . . .” (vs. 6). For the second time the angel appeared to her while she was alone (“her husband not being with her” - vs. 9); the woman called her husband and apparently they both prepared the sacrifice for the angel. Furthermore, the woman assured her husband that the Lord did not intend to kill them (vss. 22, 23). It is interesting to note that this woman, who is the key person in this account is not mentioned by name, not even when as Samson's mother she plays an important role in his pre-marriage years (ch. 14).

Hannah herself went to the tabernacle to bring her needs in prayer directly to the Lord (1 Sam. 1). To strengthen her prayer she vows that her son, if the Lord would give her one, would be dedicated “to the Lord all the days of his life” (vs. 11). She shows remarkable independence here, as well as in verse 22. She herself brings Samuel to the tabernacle, conversed freely with Eli the priest, and presents to the Lord a rather elaborate sacrifice at the occasion of the payment of her vow (vss. 24-28). Her prayer of thanksgiving becomes a beautiful song of praise (1 Sam. 2:1-10). The question has been raised whether Hannah's song was an original psalm or whether she used the words of an already existing psalm. If the former assumption is true, Hannah must have been an unusually gifted woman and was probably regarded as a leader in Israel;

this would also shed some light on her vow. However, if the latter assumption is true, we may conclude that "average" women prayed in the tabernacle and sang "their" psalms. Clarence Vos chooses this latter possibility.

In the biblical history of the Old Testament we find two more women besides Hannah going directly to the Lord with their problems. One is Rebekah about whom we wrote before. The other one is the wife of King Jeroboam who instructed his wife to disguise herself and visit the prophet Ahijah to inquire about the health of their son. It apparently was not uncommon in those days for women to visit the prophet. When she arrived, Ahijah addressed her scornfully, not because she was a woman but because of her pretense. At the same time he entrusted to her, a woman, a prophecy regarding the future of the kingdom, which she had to relate to her husband the king (I Kings 14:1-18).

Both men and women, "all who were of a willing heart" (Ex. 35:22) brought their gifts for the furnishing of the tabernacle. Not only were the men permitted to make their services available in the building of the tabernacle, but the women as well (vs. 25, 26) made articles to be used in the worship of the Lord. Verse 29 stresses the voluntary character of these gifts and services by both men and women, and it seems to be perfectly natural for both sexes to participate, albeit in "typical," masculine and feminine ways. After more than enough was obtained Moses constrained both men and women not to bring more, "to do anything more for the offering for the sanctuary" (Ex. 36:6).

In public worship men and women took part in singing, dancing, and making music. We have already discussed Miriam's song and the participation of all the women (Ex. 15). After the victory over Sisera, both Deborah and Barak led in a song of praise to the Lord (Judg. 5). At times men are mentioned specifically, for instance, David dancing before the ark (II Sam. 6); at times women, such as in Psalm 68:25, where the maidens are playing the timbrels between the singers and the minstrels in the procession. While both sexes, "young men and maidens together, old men and children" are commanded to praise the Lord (Ps. 148:12), in the following psalm only the "sons of Zion" are invited to "praise his name with dancing, making melody . . . with timbrel and lyre" (Ps. 149:3).

In Exodus we read that women were "ministering at the door of the tent of meeting" (38:8). In times of spiritual decadence, even those relatively few ministering women could present sinful temptations, as in the days of Eli when his sons "lay with the women who served at the entrance to the tent of meeting" (I Sam. 2:22). This probably is the reason why female choirs are not mentioned for tabernacle or temple service; apparently the Lord wanted to protect his people against the dangers of religious or cultic prostitution.

### 3. *Women in public functions.*

#### a. *The prophetic office.*

Especially with regard to the prophetic office the Old Testament stresses parity between men and women. The Holy Spirit inspires women as well as men to speak God's Word. Joel states very clearly,

“And it shall come to pass afterwards,  
that I will pour out my spirit on all flesh;  
your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,  
your old men shall dream dreams,  
your young men shall see visions.  
Even upon the manservants and the maidservants  
in those days, I will pour out my spirit” (2:28, 29)

Four prophetesses are mentioned by name: Miriam, Deborah, Huldah, and Noadiah. The first two have been written about previously. Concerning Huldah it is noteworthy that king Josiah commanded five men, the priest Hilkiah among them, to go to her, to “inquire of the Lord concerning the words of this book (of the law) that has been found” (II Kings 22:13, 14). The only thing that is known about the prophetess Noadiah is that she opposed Nehemiah. She is mentioned by him in one breath with Tobiah and Sanballat and the rest of the prophets who, as Nehemiah said in his prayer, “wanted to make me afraid.” Nevertheless he still calls her a prophetess and does not seem able to have her deposed (6:14). Apparently she was not only a prophetess but a leader of all the prophets as well.

The mother of Mahershalalhashbaz, Isaiah’s son, is not just called the wife of the prophet but a prophetess, which in her case seems to indicate stronger involvement than just being the wife of a prophet (Is. 8:3). That women could also be involved in false prophecy becomes clear from Ezekiel 13:17-23. Hence the Lord will deliver his people out of their hands and they shall know that he is the Lord (vs. 23).

b. *The priestly office.*

There were no women among Israel’s priests. Clarence Vos mentions the following reasons for their exclusion from this office:

- 1) Priesthood was a full-time profession. Women, usually married, could not hold such a profession.
- 2) The work of the priests included such masculine activities as the slaughtering of large animals.
- 3) Women’s tasks were mainly those of being a wife and mother.
- 4) Periodic uncleanness prevented women from serving uninterruptedly in the appointed duty timetable (Luke 1:8).

c. *The royal office.*

As a rule the king served in this royal ministry, but there are exceptions. Queens influenced Israel’s history directly as well as indirectly, positively as well as negatively. Bathsheba went to king David on behalf of her son Solomon (I Kings 1:15ff.). The queen of Shebah contributed to Solomon’s glory nationally as well as internationally, thus fulfilling in part the prophecy of Psalm 72. Queen Esther was instrumental in saving her people from death and total genocide. King Asa, in contrast, deposed the queen mother “because she had an abominable image made for Ashera” (I Kings 15:13). Jezebel and Athaliah are striking examples of queens with much power used for destructive purposes.

The importance of the queen is acknowledged in the Song of Solomon and in Psalm 45. The psalm does not only praise her beauty, but also

describes her royal dignity and influence, "Hear, O daughter . . . the king will desire your beauty . . . The people of Tyre will sue your favors with gifts, the richest of the people with all kinds of wealth" (vss. 10-22). Whenever a woman prophesies or rules, the Old Testament does not speak disapprovingly of her in her position of leadership because she is a woman. Disapproval is expressed only when she uses her influence against God's will.

d. *Summary.*

We have seen how the Lord wants to be served by men and women alike. We have observed many examples of parity between men and women in their relation to the Lord and in their serving him in the world. We also have noticed that the man is usually called to represent the woman, not because he is superior and she inferior, but because the Lord has given him the status and role of head. This, however, has not prevented women from serving as prophetesses, queens, and Nazirites. Hence, the Old Testament data seem to favor the idea that women, too, may serve in the ministry of the special office of the New Testament church, although no *conclusive* argument for this position can be deducted from these data.

E. *Summary of the Position of Women in Old Testament Times*

Coming now to the end of our Old Testament survey, we would like to make some general concluding remarks on the status and role of women in Old Testament times, in Israel as well as in the surrounding cultures mentioned in the Bible. The remarks must indeed be general because it is very difficult to come to one simple and clear-cut observation as to the exact status of "the woman." The reason for this is the fact that Old Testament history spans thousands of years and deals with various and different cultures. What is acceptable and practiced at one time and in one culture is not so in another period. The question can also be raised whether a number of the women mentioned in the Scriptures, who have a high status because of their position (e.g. the wives of the patriarchs, queens), illustrate the exception rather than the rule. Furthermore, we have read that some women were bought and sold (e.g. daughters, slaves, maidservants, cf. Ex. 21:7), that husband and wife could be sold (e.g. Deut. 15:12, Matt. 18:25), and that husbands could have more than one wife at a time (e.g. Jacob, Elkanah, David, cf. Deut. 21:15) while the reverse was not true. Do these practices prove inferiority, subordination, being a possession, a lesser humanity? We hardly think so. The point is that the Bible talks about sinful woman as well as sinful man, in a sinful society where relationships are often distorted and the laws of God not always obeyed. We should, therefore, not stress the negative, but rather the positive; we cannot always readily understand what the exact meaning is of certain passages, and what conditions were prevalent at that time. Yet, we are allowed to draw certain conclusions.

1. Certain ancient civilizations, such as Sumerian, the Babylonian, and even more so the Egyptian, showed a high respect for women as equal partners with men. Traditionally, women in Egypt had great influence, even more than that of women in Israel. But it is also clear that not

all women shared in these privileges. H. R. Hall writes, "In the ancient Sumerian laws (the Sumerians lived in Babylon and were followed by the Babylonians, yet the culture did not change much), the man is more important than the woman, the father more than the mother, the husband more than the wife. This is in striking contrast to Egypt, where the "lady of the house" was usually a more important personage than the mere "male" as the husband was called, and where men often preferably traced their descent in the female line. In Egypt there were always strong traces of *Mutterrecht* (the right of the mother), but none in Babylonia. Still, women were, generally speaking, quite as independent in Babylonia as in Egypt; they could own property, whether in houses or in slaves, and could personally plead in the courts" (*The Ancient History of the Near East*, London, Methuen and Co. Ltd., 924; 6th edition, p. 205). This is in agreement with the findings of R. deVaux (section C 3), and with the statement of Sabatino Mascati who writes, "It is obvious that women hold a high position in Sumerian society" (*The Face of the Ancient Orient*. Garden City: Doubleday and Company, Inc. 1962; p. 47):

2. Ancient civilizations show marked divisions of society into classes. Mascati writes about the Sumerians, "Society is divided into three classes: free men, slaves, and an intermediate between these, the partially free men who have been pressed into palace service and reduced to the status of royal dependents" (*ibid.*). Not all women enjoyed the same status and respect, and their influence was largely determined by the class to which they belonged. Furthermore, the status of native women differed greatly from that of strangers. Illustrations of these situations can be found throughout the Old Testament.

3. The status of women is not always the same, but fluctuates according to time and culture. For example, when Abram evacuated to Egypt to escape a famine, he showed his fear by inventing a lie: "Sarai is my sister." This did not protect him sufficiently and Sarai was taken into the king's palace. It took affliction with great plagues for Pharaoh before the truth came to light (Gen. 12:10-20). The life of a man did not count for much in those days and that of a woman was worth even less. On the other hand Bathsheba had not much trouble to make her entry into the king's chamber and to present her request on behalf of her son Solomon (I Kings 1:15). The same freedom was exercised by Jezebel to a greater extent when she addressed her husband, King Ahab. She talked to him with an amazing boldness which bordered on insult: "Do you now govern Israel?" The irony of this story is that Jezebel right then took over: "I will give you the vineyard of Naboth" (I Kings 21:7). She even declared a fasting with the intent to dispose of Naboth. This can be equated with the calling of a public meeting, which shows how much power she had attained. The situation at the court was a relaxed one as far as the place of women was concerned. Although it was not desirable in Jezebel's case, it pleads for the redemptive humanity of Israel's kings when we read what Benhadad's servant said, ". . . we have heard that the kings of the house of Israel are merciful kings . . ." (I Kings 20:13). A contrasting story is found

in the book of Esther. King Ahasuerus is advised to depose the Queen Vashti in order that "all women will give honor to their husbands, high and low" (Esther 1:20). The king then sent orders "that each man should be master in his house" (1:22). In this Persian culture Queen Esther must risk her life in an attempt to see the king without having been called in. Threatened by the complete genocide of her people, she ventured, "I will go to the king, though it is against the law; if I perish, I perish" (Esther 4:16). This is the second vow by a woman to be recorded in Old Testament history. It is worth noting that Esther not only pledges to hold a fast herself, but she virtually decrees that all Jews in Shushan must hold a fast.

4. As to Israel, we should note that what R. de Vaux writes after he has outlined the legal status of women in Israel, "For all this, the wife of an Israelite was by no means on the level of a slave. A man could sell his slaves, or even his daughter (Ex. 21:7), but he could never sell his wife even though he had acquired her as a captive in war (Deut. 21:14). The husband could divorce his wife, but she was protected by a letter of repudiation, which restored her freedom. Most probably, most married women kept, if not the use of at least the ownership of the *mohar* and of whatever she received from her parents (cf. Josh. 15:19; Judg. 1:15)" (*op. cit.*, p. 39). How influential a woman, or even a girl, could be in Israel follows from the first chapter of Judges where Caleb's daughter approaches her father Caleb, when Othniel hesitates to do so. When Rachel and Leah talked to Jacob about their inheritance, it appears that they knew fully well what had transpired, and it was upon their advice and consent that Jacob decided to leave Laban. They expressed themselves rather emphatically, "Are we not regarded by him as foreigners? For he has sold us, and he has been using up the money given for us. All the property which God has taken away from our father belongs to us and to our children . . ." (Gen. 31:15ff.). We must also distinguish between a woman's status *de jure* and *de facto*. *De jure*, legally, the Israelite woman may have had fewer privileges than women of surrounding civilizations; *de facto*, in practice, she may well have enjoyed the same respect and influence, and possibly more, than her sister in pagan countries, (e.g. Proverbs 31, the history of Deborah, Hannah, even Naomi and Ruth). We agree with de Vaux when he states, ". . . those rare passages which give us a glimpse into the intimacy of family life show that an Israelite wife was loved and listened to by her husband, and treated by him as an equal . . . And there is no doubt that this was the normal picture. It was a faithful reflection of the teaching enshrined in Genesis, where God is said to have created woman as a helpmate for man . . ." (*op. cit.*, p. 40).

5. Finally, on the basis of the above we may end with this final conclusion. The status and role women enjoyed both in and outside of Israel does not seem to warrant the later reluctance of the church of the Reformation to allow women to be "a helper fit for him," i.e. man (Gen. 2:20) in the ecclesiastical office. In the history of Israel we see that the Lord did not hesitate to use women in very important "offices" and that women did not feel incompetent whenever they were called to serve.

It can also be said that the practice of excluding women from ecclesiastical offices does *not* have its basis in the history of God's people before Christ was born.

## II. WOMEN IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

### A. *A Socio-Cultural View of New Testament Times*

Before we examine the New Testament itself, we would do well to take a brief look at the social situations and cultural conditions that existed at the time in which it was written taking particular interest in the status and role of women. It is not really necessary to go into great detail, since there are many books that extensively describe life as it was in the Graeco-Roman-Jewish worlds at the dawn of Christianity. Yet, we should have some understanding of the customs and traditions, the life philosophies, and the social norms of the people to which the New Testament writers address themselves. With this background understanding the New Testament becomes much more meaningful. Luke, Paul, Peter, John, and the other New Testament authors speak to real people, many of whom have to learn what the new Christian life is all about. These apostles must teach the new converts how to conduct themselves as Christians without revolutionizing and upsetting the prevailing social norms. Marriage and the marital relationship are, for instance, topics that are discussed time and again.

During Jesus' earthly ministry the Jewish nation was occupied by Roman military forces, a situation which affected life among the Jews. More important, however, was the Hellenistic or Greek influence. Despite efforts to keep Israel Jewish, the Greek language and cultural norms made inroads in the Jewish way-of-life. Outside Israel, in the regions covered by Paul for example, the Greek culture was well established, even though the Roman culture became gradually more influential. As a result, many areas had mixed cultures. It should be kept in mind that most of Paul's epistles were written to not exclusively Jewish churches.

Concerning the status of women in these cultures we would like to make the following observations.

#### 1. *The Greek Culture*

Women lived secluded lives and were primarily confined to their homes and families. They spun and wove, looked after household duties, cooked, and raised children. They never appeared in public unless accompanied by attendants. The main virtue to which they were to aspire was faithfulness, and their sole interest in life was the family. They were not supposed to understand the affairs of men, who lived public lives, governed, made war, attended the theatre, and so on. The woman was subordinate: her father and later her husband was her master; she had no rights or freedoms in public. The children were raised according to their respective status and future roles, and so education was primarily confined to boys. Marriage was often seen from a political point of view, namely, to beget and raise future citizens of the state. As time went on, however, women obtained some public free-

dom. It is interesting to note that the various Greek writers and philosophers often show conflicting views on the status of the woman in their time; thus it becomes almost impossible to reach a clear consensus on the exact position of the woman from their writings. Generally, however, the woman had a subordinate status and was required to be submissive.

## 2. *The Roman culture*

In earlier days the position of the Roman woman was very much like that of woman in the Greek culture, but before long her status improved, and in general we can say that the woman became less subordinate and obtained more rights. Even though the man in the household had absolute control over her, she could go out in public, and later on could even hold positions of power and influence herself. The Romans' main interest was the political life, and it was thought that marriage should reflect this; the quality of home life was at the heart of the civilization. High moral standards were evident. Later on, there were signs of some form of emancipation, and women could have authoritative functions. They also obtained a high degree of freedom. Cato observed, "We rule all men, but our wives rule over us." Women were allowed to own property and to operate shops. On the streets and in public life the women had much more freedom than their Greek counterparts. Towards the end of the Roman civilization a general decline in morality had an adverse effect on the relationships between men and women.

Both the Stoic philosophy and the mystery religions advocated the obliteration of all differences between people. This becomes clear also from the following statement of the Stoic philosopher Epictetus, a statement which reminds us of Galatians 3:28:

"One prejudice after another disappears when it is breathed on by a philosophy which usually presents itself as a robust and sound common sense. The man himself remains to be taught as a man and as 'cosmopolitan,' as a citizen of the world, and as neither Greek or barbarian, neither free or slave, neither male or female, but only as human." (*Epictetus* i, 9, i, 6; ii, 10, 1-3, Paraphrased in Lietamann, Vol. 1, p. 173)

## 3. *Paul's reactions against these cultures*

Paul, though from Jewish ancestry and a Roman citizen by birth, was reared in the Greek culture. He was also educated by the Jewish religious leaders and steeped in the Law. In his travels he encountered many different situations, and he was able to adapt himself to any particular social situation in which he found himself. Yet, it is clear from his Epistles that he spoke from a Jewish-Greek background. He must have been well aware of the development toward greater freedom of women and their participation in public life, a development contrary to his own orientation. For example, in Corinth, an old Greek city rebuilt by the Romans and with a population so mixed and customs so varied that it almost defies description, the new converts came from all walks of life. This young church became disorderly, and Paul time and again attempted to restore order and decency, advocating a life in Christ

without upsetting greatly the prevailing norms and traditions. The conventions of the time should be observed even though all Christians are one in Christ. Paul stressed that what some saw as a new freedom contrary to the existing social conditions could in effect be a hindrance to missionary work; charges of objectional conduct could be levied at the new church. This was, of course, to be avoided. Paul, therefore, was not a social revolutionary. Christ and the preaching of the Gospel was everything to him; a new life in Christ was his main concern. He helped to establish new churches, but how these churches were run was essentially a matter to be decided locally by the members themselves, though everything was to be done decently and in good order. This may well be one of the main reasons why the New Testament speaks so little about ecclesiastical offices.

### B. *The Gospels*

The status of women and their function in society had not improved since the days of the Old Testament. Therefore, the prominent place given to women throughout the Gospels, especially in the Gospel of Luke, is remarkable. It is true that the Lord Jesus did not appoint women to be apostles. Yet women were always present, as Luke states, "And the twelve were with him, and also some women . . . who provided for them out of their means" (8:1-4).

This fits in well with what Helmut Flender calls Luke's "complimentary parallelism" with regard to the relationship between man and woman. He gives the following examples: "Zechariah and Mary (the angelic annunciation: Luke 1:11-20, 26-38; glory to God: 1:46-55, 67-79). Simeon and Anna (2:25-38), the widow of Sarephath and Naaman (4:25-8), the healing of the demoniac and Peter's mother-in-law (4:31-9; cf. Mark 1:21-31), the centurion of Capernaum and the widow of Nain (7:1-17), Simon the Pharisee and the woman who was a sinner (7:36-50), the man with the mustard seed and the woman with the leaven (13:18-21), the good Samaritan and Mary and Martha 10:29-42), the man with the one hundred sheep and the woman with the ten pieces of silver (15:4-10), the importunate woman and the publican (18:1-14), or the friend at night (11:5-8), the sleeping men and the women at the mill in the last judgment (17:34f; cf. Matt. 24:4f), the women at the tomb and the Emmaus disciples (23:55-24:35), Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:1-11), Aeneas and Tabitha (Acts 9:32-42), Lydia the purple seller and the Philippian jailer (Acts 16:13-34), Dionysius and Damaris (Acts 17:34)" (*St. Luke, Theologian of Redemption History*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1967; p. 9, 10). This parallelism of Luke in his gospel and in the book of Acts follows naturally the description of the relationship between man and woman in Genesis 1 and 2.

It is in accordance with the redemptive character of Jesus' ministry that he did not act as a revolutionary. Social changes were to result from the new redeemed relationship to God and the new life of the Christian serving God in the society in which he was living. Yet Jesus did not hesitate to ignore traditional views whenever his work would require this, as in the case of the Samaritan woman, when the returning

disciples marveled at his talking to a woman. This Samaritan woman, regardless of her being a woman and her past history, was sent by Jesus to her hometown where she proved to be a most effective preacher (John 4:39-42). Jesus used this woman to bring a foretaste of Pentecost to Sychar. John in his Gospel shows also a very striking parallel and contrast between the man, Nicodemus, and the Samaritan woman.

Special attention should be given to the beginning and the end of Jesus' earthly ministry. It was to women first that the announcements of his birth and resurrection were made. Mary was not just the recipient of the annunciation, but she became actively involved in the great plan of God's salvation when she said, "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word" (Luke 1:38). In these words Mary expressed her willingness to serve in the ministry for which she had been elected (vs. 31). Calling herself the *handmaid* of the Lord, she showed deep understanding of this ministry and accepted it with a humble "fiat" (let it be). Later Mary visited Elizabeth, since the angel Gabriel had told her that "Elizabeth in her old age . . . also had conceived a son." This message was given to Mary that she might know "that with God nothing will be impossible" (Luke 1:36). This would strengthen her in the fulfillment of her most difficult task. During that visit Elizabeth, filled with the Holy Spirit prophesied, "Blessed are you among women and blessed is the fruit of your womb" (vs. 42). Mary replied with a prophetic song of praise. Making Hannah's words her own, she showed that she knew that the final fulfillment of Hannah's hope was near. Thus in Luke 1 both Mary and Elizabeth prophesy, and so did Zechariah, who sang his inspired song of praise and prophecy after the birth of John.

In addition to Mary and Elizabeth, we find in the history of Jesus' birth still another woman endowed with prophetic gifts—Anna. In her expressions of joy on the coming of the Messiah she parallels Simeon. "In Anna we have a sample of an aged female's waiting faith, as Simeon is of an aged man's" (Herbert Lockyer, *The Women of the Bible*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1967; p. 31). Huls points out that it is better to look at Anna as the beginning of a new era of prophecy in the time of fulfillment than as a closing figure of the Old Testament times (*op. cit.*, p. 21). We accept Huls' conclusion as we note on the one hand that Anna was the beginning of a succession of prophetesses (Acts 2:17, 18; 21:9), and on the other hand that Anna's role in the history of salvation changed from being a prophetess to being a witness, immediately after she had met the Saviour. In this connection it deserves our careful observation that Anna did not only speak in the "corner where the females only supplicated God" (Lockyer, *loc. cit.*), but that she "spoke of him to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem" (Luke 2:38) and thus she "spoke openly in the presence of the congregation" (Lockyer, *loc. cit.*).

As Genesis 1 mentions male and female in connection with man's creation in the image of God, so the Gospel of Luke shows in the fullness of time a man, Simeon, looking for the consolation of Israel, and a woman, Anna, looking with others for the redemption of Jerusalem

(Luke 2:25, 38). C. B. Caird writes, "The piety of the Old Testament, properly understood, produced men and women agog for the coming of the Gospel" ("The Gospel of St. Luke", *Pelican Gospel Commentary*. London: Adam and Charles Black, 1963; p. 63).

At the end of the Gospels, women were not only the recipients of the good news of Christ's resurrection, but they also immediately received the mandate to be the first messengers of this great fact and of their risen Lord. In the Gospel of Matthew the mandate is first given by the angel, ". . . go quickly and tell his disciples that he has risen from the dead, . . ." (28:7), and later by Jesus himself, ". . . go and tell my brethren to go to Galilee" (28:10). In John 20:17 a similar command is given to Mary Magdalene when Jesus tells her, ". . . go to my brethren and say to them . . ."

It should be noted that the women who followed Jesus and who were with the disciples provided for them out of their own means, (Luke 8:1-3), which shows that they had a position of relative independence. These women had their own diaconia or ministry.

In contrast to the rabbis, who refer to women almost exclusively as being inferior and seductive, Jesus in his teachings always speaks positively and with appreciation about women (Luke 18:1; Matthew 13:33; Luke 15:8) and treats them accordingly (the Samaritan woman, John 4; Peter's mother-in-law, Matthew 8:14ff; the crippled woman, Luke 13:10ff; the Syrophenician woman, Mark 7:26; and others).

#### B. *The Acts of the Apostles*

Even prior to Pentecost women had a prominent place in the congregation. They were known as "the women" (Acts 1:14). With the disciples they united in prayer, and they helped approve the election of Matthias as an apostle (Acts 1:14, 26).

Peter welcomed the coming of the Holy Spirit as the fulfillment of the Joel prophecy, the beginning of a new dispensation in which men and women would share equally in all that pertains to the work of the Holy Spirit. Acts 2 shows the same parallelism with regard to man and woman as Genesis 1 and 2 and Luke 1 and 2, as Peter quotes the Old Testament prophet:

"And in the last days it shall be, God declares, that  
I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh, and  
your sons and daughters shall prophesy, and  
your young men shall see visions, and  
your old men shall dream dreams; yes, and  
on my menservants and my maidservants in those days  
I will pour out my Spirit;  
and they shall prophesy . . ." (Acts 2:17-18).

Equality, equal status and equal function, is very much evident in the history of the early Christian church of the New Testament, as the following facts show. In several instances women are mentioned among the first converts and first members of a congregation (Damaris in Athens, Acts 17:34; and Lydia in Philippi, Acts 16:14). Women, as well as men were subject to persecution (Acts 8:3 and 9:2), which

proves that they were just as "dangerous," that is, they witnessed openly of their Lord. In the first congregations women were not only recipients of the ministry of mercy, but they also were actively engaged in the carrying out of this ministry, e.g. Tabitha in Joppa (Acts 9:36-43).

As mentioned before, the gift of prophesy was given to women as well as men. Specifically mentioned are the four daughters of Philip in Acts 21:9.

A very important place in the early churches is given to Priscilla, who with her husband provided a home for the Apostle Paul in Corinth, Ephesus and Rome, and who herself was actively engaged in teaching the famous preacher Apollos, expounding to him "the way of God more accurately" (Acts 18:26). Little wonder that Paul calls her and her husband "my fellow workers in Christ Jesus" (Romans 16:3).

The book of Acts shows clearly the restoration of woman through Jesus Christ to the work of ministry, a trend which is continued in the epistles of the New Testament.

#### D. *The Epistles of Paul*

##### 1. *Introduction*

As we now turn to the Epistles of Paul with the question of whether the exclusion of women from the ecclesiastical offices can be justified, we ought to bear in mind that the organizational structure of the church in the New Testament was extremely fluid and differentiated. There was a great variety of activities and functions which seem to have existed alongside one another, even though at times there was a rather acute danger of confusion and disorder (I Corinthians 12-14; Romans 12:3-8; Ephesians 4:1-16; I Thessalonians 5:12-23; II Thessalonians 3:6-16). Even though we find here and there terms which are very familiar to us, e.g. "elders" and "deacons", we must remember that these terms are not entirely synonymous to what we today call "elders" and "deacons."

Without going into an exhaustive examination here, we wish to refer to the report on *Ecclesiastical Office and Ordination*, and especially to the section on "The Nature of Ecclesiastical Office" (Acts of Synod, 1972).

The question of the office in the New Testament church is made very complex by the fact that we find two types of "official" functions in the early Christian church, namely,

- a. functions originating from an appointment made by a leading individual or by a congregation (Acts 6:3, 5; 14:23; I Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:5).
- b. functions originating from a more direct intervention of the Holy Spirit. Here we are referring to the "Gifts of the Spirit," mentioned in Romans 12:6-8, I Corinthians 12:4-11, 28-30, and Ephesians 4:11 or to what is commonly called the "charismatic offices."

We do not want to suggest that these two types of offices or functions were in any way in conflict with one another. In I Corinthians, the

apostle Paul stresses that all the various types of functions in the church have the same origin, source of energy and purpose:

“Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of working, but it is the same God who inspires them all in every one. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. All these are inspired by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills” (12:4-7, 11).

In connection with the matter which we were given to explore, it is worth noting that, according to the information given in the New Testament there was a distinction between these two types of offices or functions with regards to the participation of women. From the more institutional offices women were generally excluded, although there may have been some exceptions to this rule (see section 2c). But the Holy Spirit did not exclude Christian women from receiving the gifts which would qualify them for the more charismatic functions. Both men and women shared in these special gifts of the Holy Spirit (cf. Acts 2:16-18; 21:9; I Corinthians 12:7).

## 2. *Men and Women are One in Christ (Galatians 3:28)*

### a. *Both are called to salvation and faith*

The call, in the name of Jesus Christ, to salvation and faith comes to men and women alike. “We are convinced that One has died for all; therefore all have died. And he died for all, that those who live might live no longer for themselves, but for him who for their sake died and was raised” (II Corinthians 5:15). “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, behold, the new has come” (II Corinthians 5:17). “For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus” (Galatians 3:27-28). “For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body . . . and all were made to drink of one Spirit” (I Corinthians 12:12, 13).

We believe and confess that both men and women are justified by Christ through faith, that Christ Jesus has taken our iniquity upon himself, has borne for us the wrath of God, and “has taken the curse from us upon himself that he might fill us with his blessing” (Form for the celebration of the Lord’s Supper). The curse on womanhood mentioned in Genesis 3:16 is no exception to this rule. Jesus took this curse, too, upon himself.

Instead of achievement, Jesus asks for faith, a responding to the love of God which is revealed in him. This is where men and women are placed in an equal position. “Blessed are the poor in spirit,” “Blessed are the merciful,” “Blessed are the pure of heart,” “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind . . . ;” “You shall love your neighbor as yourself,” are requirements, so internal, spiritual and universal that they can be met, with the help of God, by men and women alike. The apostle Paul says the same in Galatians 5:22-23, “The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace,

patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control, against such there is no law."

In this way the Christian gospel dissolves the basis for any special and unequal position of women with respect to faith and personal salvation.

*b. Both are called to Christian action and worship*

Whenever Paul calls people to Christian action and worship he makes no distinction between men and women. The same call goes out to both alike. See the text from Galatians 5, quoted above, about the fruits of the Spirit. To this text many more could be added.

All Christians, both men and women, are repeatedly and in various ways called to be *witnesses* to Jesus Christ and his salvation. In the daily confrontation with Judaism and paganism, the Christian church is to display the redemption by Jesus Christ by intentional witness as well as by sanctification. No member of this church is excused from witnessing. "There are varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of working, but it is the same God who inspires them all in every one. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good" (I Corinthians 12:6, 7). These activities include those within the framework of Christian public worship; men as well as women are called to take part in Christian worship, as the following quotations from Scripture exemplify:

"Any woman who prays or prophesies . . ." (I Corinthians 11:5)

"Earnestly desire the spiritual gifts, especially that you may prophesy . . . He who prophesies speaks to men for their upbuilding and encouragement and consolation . . . he who prophesies edifies the church. Now I want you all to speak in tongues, but even more to prophesy . . . When you come together, each one has a hymn, a lesson, a revelation, a tongue, or an interpretation . . ." (I Corinthians 14:1-5, 26).

"I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all men . . . I desire then that . . . the men should pray, lifting holy hands without anger or quarreling; also that women should adorn themselves modestly . . . as befits women who profess religion" (I Timothy 2:1, 8-10).

In I Timothy 2:1-10 Paul speaks about prayer in the congregational meeting, about the contents of this prayer (vs. 1, 2), the purpose (vs. 2-4), and about the form (vs. 8-10). As far as the form is concerned, Paul urges both men and women to be alert to their own weaknesses and sins. The men should make sure that when they pray there is no anger or desire for quarreling in them (vs. 9), and the women should refrain from anything that might distract the attention of the people from prayer to themselves by extravagant dress or hairdo. As long as women keep this in mind, Paul does not appear to object to their praying in public worship. The text is a clear parallel of I Corinthians 11:4-5, where Paul also speaks about public prayer of men and women, and lays down some rules for this act of worship. (See also 3c.)

c. *Both are called to leadership*

Anyone who is used by the Holy Spirit in a charismatic way—prayer, prophecy, tongues, interpretation of tongues, etc.—is at that very moment in a position of leadership and authority. Others have to stop talking; they are told to be silent (I Corinthians 14:30-31). Seeing that women, as well as men, were given such manifestations of the Spirit (see above) we must conclude that women, as well as men, found themselves in such position of temporary leadership.

In the closing chapter of his letter to the Romans Paul conveys his greetings to a number of women who “worked hard (in the Lord)” (vs. 6, 12). Paul here uses a verb that, to him, has the specific meaning of “working for Christ, or for the Christian church,” “ministering,” in the sense of “Christian ministry.” Also the words “in the Lord” indicate the specific nature of this “hard work,” (cf. for the verb “*kopiaoo*” Acts 20:35; Romans 16:6, 12; I Corinthians 4:12; 15:10; 16:16; Galatians 4:11; Ephesians 4:28; Philippians 2:16; Colossians 1:29; I Thessalonians 5:12; I Timothy 4:10, 5:17; and for the noun “*kopos*,” I Corinthians 3:8; 15:58; II Corinthians 6:5; 10:15; Galatians 6:17; I Thessalonians 1:3; 2:9; 3:5).

Thus here we find women in a position of leadership in the Christian church. We may not know the nature of their ministry, but we do know that some of them were quite outstanding in this ministry. Why did Paul mention them by name? In order to recognize them and their ministry? Or perhaps in order to support their position of leadership among the Christians? This Paul does very openly in I Corinthians 16:16, where he urges the Christians to be subject to “every fellow worker and laborer,” using the word “*kopiaoo*” again which he in other passages uses in reference to women. Here Paul urges the Christians to be subject to women like Mary, Tryphaena, Tryphosa, Persis and Prisca. (Romans 16:6, 12, 13). Similarly, he admonishes the Christians of Thessalonica “to respect those who labor among you and are over you in the Lord . . . and to esteem them very highly in love because of their work”, (I Thessalonians 5:12, 13; cf. Philippians 4:2-3 about Euodia and Syntyche, who labored side by side with Paul).

In Romans 16:1 and 2 we read, “I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a deaconess of the church at Cenchreae, that you may receive her in the Lord as befits the saints, and help her in whatever she may require from you, for she has been a helper of many and of myself as well.” By informing the Romans that he “commends” Phoebe to them, Paul gives her a certain status in their church. This is the kind of recommendation, or reference which a person needs in order to have the authority required to do his/her work in behalf of Christ. This matter of proper recommendation is important to Paul. (cf. II Corinthians 3:1; 4:2; 4:12; 6:4; 10:12, 18) Phoebe’s special position in the church is also brought out by her title, “*deaconess*,” even though we may not be certain about the exact meaning of this title here and elsewhere in the New Testament. Paul urges the Christians of Rome to “help her in whatever she may require from you.” When Paul calls her a “helper,” he uses a word (*prostatis*) that describes a person who rules

over others, one who manages or provides for others (I Thessalonians 5:12, "and are over you"; I Timothy 5:17, "the elders who rule well"; 3:4, "He must manage his own household well," cf. vs. 5 and 12; I Timothy 5:8, "If anyone does not provide for his relatives . . ."). In all these ways—"commend," "deaconess," "help her in whatever she may require from you," "helper"—Paul supports Phoebe in her ministry at Rome, and he even gives this ministry an unusual public status for this time.

In this connection we should also mention I Timothy 3:11 ("The women likewise . . ."), which may be another evidence of women with a special, somewhat official ministry. It has been said that Paul is speaking here about the wives of the deacons he mentions in verse 8. The text does not warrant that kind of interpretation. We believe that this text allows for the interpretation that Paul is speaking about women in the "office" of deaconess.

Finally, Paul gives some rules for the position of "enlisted widows" in I Timothy 5:9-11. Given the fact that not every widow was such an "enlisted widow," but that there were conditions to be met and special actions to be taken in order to "enlist" such widows, we may conclude that also here some women were given a somewhat official position in the Christian church. Perhaps their leadership did not go beyond the teaching and training of young women (cf. Titus 2:3, 4), but even this, in terms of ministry, would be more than women have in our churches today (except perhaps on the mission fields).

d. *Both are called to order*

In the early Christian church there seems to have been an acute danger of disorder and confusion. Factors contributing to this danger were, among others;

- a. the difficulty the Christians experienced in handling the many and varied manifestations of the Holy Spirit in a responsible and edifying manner, and
- b. strong influences of Gnostic ideas on the thinking and acting of these Christians. (See the excursus below.)

Paul recognized that this disorder and confusion could well lead to a serious damaging of the witness of the Christian church. In order to prevent such a development, he stresses the importance of order and the need of mutual edification (cf. I Corinthians 14:26-40, especially vs. 26, ". . . Let all things be done for edification"; vs. 33, "For God is not a God of confusion but of peace"; vs. 40, "But all things should be done decently and in order").

Even though this call for order is directed to both men and women, in terms of practical behavior it means different things for each sex. Basically, it is a call to not upset any social relationships and patterns of behavior needlessly. Special attention is given to the relations between slaves and freemen, and women and their husbands. Even though Christ has brought complete freedom and oneness to these categories of people, Paul calls the slaves to continue to obey their masters, and the women to continue to be submissive to their husbands (cf. I Corinthians 7:17, "Only, let everyone lead the life which the Lord has assigned to

him, and in which God has called him"; vs. 20, "Every one should remain in the state in which he was called"; vs. 24, "So, brethren, in whatever state each was called, there let him remain with God").

With respect to the husband-wife relationship, Paul confesses on the one hand their complete oneness in Christ (Galatians 3:28); their interdependence, "As woman was made from man, so man is now born of woman" (I Corinthians 11:12); their authority over one another, "The wife does not rule over her own body, but the husband does; likewise the husband does not rule over his own body, but the wife does" (I Corinthians 7:4), and their duty to "be subject to one another" (Ephesians 5:21). On the other hand, instead of accepting the social and practical consequences of this basic equality of man and wife, Paul tells them to be content with their present position of social inferiority and to submit to their husbands in everything (Ephesians 5:22-24; I Corinthians 11:7-10; I Timothy 2:12-14).

We may undoubtedly assume that Paul's "status-quo-ism" is for the furtherance of the Gospel. Christianity must not be charged with bringing disorder.

Undoubtedly, Paul had to take into account the social conditions prevailing in his days. His intention was not primarily to introduce social reform, but to proclaim the saving Gospel of Jesus Christ. And he wanted to protect the early Christian church against the growing influence of pagan philosophy and ethics.

The call for order and decency in the church remains, but every age will have to spell out, in its own way, what this call means in practical terms of social conditions and patterns of behavior.

#### 1) *Excursus on the Concept of Submissiveness*

In the New Testament concept of "order," the idea of submissiveness plays a significant role. Understanding this term helps us to discover the nature of the order the New Testament wants, not a hierarchical order based on power and authority, but the kind of order which is governed by love and a voluntary-yielding to the other. In Luke 2:51 we read that Jesus was subject to his parents, not because they were superior to him, or had dominion over him, but out of love for them, and out of respect for the order established by his Father who had given him his parents.

In Romans 12, Paul calls the believers to submissiveness to the governing authorities, because God ordained them. They belong to the order which he has established, they are his servants (*diakonos*, vs. 4) and ministers (*leitourgoi*, vs. 6). By fitting themselves into this divine order, the believers serve and honor God. Basically it is a matter of love (*agape*, vs. 8).

I Corinthians 15:23-28 describes the order in which God is going to work out the "Last Things." The Father is the One who gradually subjects all things to Christ, putting all things under his feet. Christ knows that his dominion has come to its end as soon as all things have been subjected to him. At that moment he submits himself to God, in order that God may be all in all. Thus Christ accepts the order which God has established, willingly fits himself into that order, and

places himself at God's disposal as he (God) hastens towards the day of the resurrection. This submission is not demanded or imposed, it has nothing to do with Christ being inferior to the Father.

In Ephesians 5 an attitude of mutual submissiveness is seen as an evidence of being "filled with the Spirit" (vs. 18). The Revised Standard Version does not bring out, as the King James Version does more faithfully, that such being filled with the Spirit leads to the three-fold response of

- a. "Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord (vs. 19);
- b. "Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ (vs. 20);
- c. "Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of the Lord" (vs. 21).

In this new relationship in which Christ has placed us, sex is something totally irrelevant (cf. Galatians 3:28, ". . . there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus"). The man has no "natural" superiority over the woman. As members of Christ's body, men and women will count each other better than themselves (Philippians 2:3).

Then, in Ephesians 5:22-33, Paul tells the wives in the congregation to be *submissive* to their husbands (twice, vss. 22, 24), and he tells these husbands to *love* their wives (three times, vss. 25, 28, 31). To draw the conclusion that the husbands do not have to submit to their wives would not only be in conflict with the mutual submissiveness Paul requires in verse 21, but would be as foolish as to draw the conclusion that these wives do not have to love their husbands! We should not unduly stress the point that Paul calls the wives to be submissive, and the husbands to love. There certainly is no ground for concluding from these texts that women are inferior to men. The concept of submissiveness in the New Testament does not at all contain an idea of inferiority. Far from it, submissiveness is an act of yielding to the other person, voluntarily, out of love, for the sake of what is recognized as God's order. For the sake of this same order, wives should refrain from taking part in the discussions in worship services (I Corinthians 14:34); if they have questions, they should ask their husbands at home (vs. 35); it just does not look good for a (married) woman to ask such questions in the meeting (vs. 36). These wives are told to be submissive to their husbands, because of the marital order, or perhaps to the rest of the congregation, because of the congregational order required for a worship that is edifying.

In I Timothy 2:12-14 Paul reminds the Christians of the terrible things that happened and can happen again when a wife is not submissive to her husband. Such a woman shows that she has lost sight of her proper place in life. She acts contrary to what Paul wrote in I Corinthians 7:17-24 ("Everyone should remain in the state in which he was called," vs. 20), and that is upsetting the social order, the order which according to the providence of God prevailed at that time. "Remaining in the state in which they were called" means for these wives "bearing children," and continuing "in faith and love and holiness, with

modesty" (I Timothy 2:15). Such women will be saved, because they accept the order which prevails in the situation in which they live. With this order they will be content, unless God in his providence changes the order.

It would certainly be incorrect to conclude that verse 15 reflects Paul's intention for *all* the women in the church, since he clearly states his opinion in I Corinthians 7:8 that it is well for unmarried women and widows to remain single. The point is not "to be married or not to be married," but, "What was your status when you accepted Christ as your Savior?" If at that time a woman was married, she certainly had to accept the marital order as it was understood in those days (cf. Titus 2:3-5 and I Peter 3:6).

In summary, "submissiveness" in the New Testament is the attitude by which a Christian recognizes the prevailing order as one wanted by God and personally asserts that order by fitting himself into it. It is a way of yielding to the other person, out of love for him and out of respect for God's order, for the kingdom of Christ is not promoted by disorder.

It is clear that this submissiveness does not prohibit women from taking a leading role in the congregational meeting and affairs. However, there are restrictions, at least for married women. We will further explore why it is that (married) women, in contrast to men, are repeatedly admonished to be a submissive, even though Paul required mutual submissiveness in Ephesians 5:21.

## 2.) *Excursus on Paul's Reaction to Gnostic Tendencies*

There are indications, in Paul's writings as well as in other books of the New Testament, that the confrontation of the early Christian church with the growing movement of Gnosticism was a very real and serious one. R. M. Grant writes, ". . . it would appear that a movement like the one which later became Gnosticism was probably present in Corinth" (*Gnosticism and Early Christianity* New York: Columbia University Press, 1966; p. 156).

To the Gnostic of those days, God was a purely spiritual, abstract idea, completely free of any qualities and attributes, beyond any form of diversity and distinction, and totally "one". In this god the human spirit finds its origin. This spirit, however, left its home and started wandering away from its origin. As it did, it found itself caught in a process of progressive alienation from God and from itself. It even got caught in things physical and temporal. The further it became removed from the one god, the greater became the diversification and complexity of life.

The spirit can be redeemed by reversing this downward process, by a movement upward, back to the origin. A person must denounce all that is not purely spiritual, as well as every evidence of plurality in his life. His protest against whatever is physical and diverse and whatever restricts his personal freedom, e.g. the law, could assume the form of asceticism (a process of mortification of these things), or of libertinism (total contempt). The spiritual person is free of any outward law and convention, free of anything material and physical. There can be nothing

that restricts his freedom. Even marital bonds cannot be tolerated. A man should strive for total equality of the sexes, regardless of their innate differences, since also this form of diversification is evidence of imperfection and should not be condoned. Rather than a normal marriage, governed by social customs and laws, which restricts the personal freedom of the partners in many ways, a purely spiritual marriage is advocated, one that respects the individual freedom of the partners (cf. Colossians 2:8-23; I Timothy 4:10; and Revelation 2:20). This is a call for emancipation which certainly did not draw its inspiration from Christ.

Considering the position in which women in the oriental and Greek world found themselves, it should not surprise us that this movement of Gnosticism was especially fascinating to them. In the secret meetings among Gnostics, prophetesses and priestesses played a major role, often they were regarded as infallible teachers and guides. Under the influence of Gnosticism there was a prevailing tendency in the world of the New Testament to level off all differences, including those of sex. Some statements of Paul concerning the status of women in the Christian church may have to be understood against this background. They are polemical statements facing in one distinct direction. The same holds for Paul's statements concerning the slaves, the value of goods and of the body, the resurrection of the body, and many other aspects of Christian ethics.

Allowing gnostic practices into the church was a kind of acceptance of the ideas of the thoroughly pagan philosophy which had given rise to those practices. Paul could not possibly allow this to happen. Extreme caution was required to prevent an infiltration of gnostic philosophy and practices. Under these circumstances it must have been very difficult for Paul to work through the problem of how best to utilize the different gifts of the sexes in the new era of salvation.

#### 4. *Exegesis of some specific passages*

##### a. *Introduction*

After what was said in previous sections we must now discuss those passages in the Pauline epistles which are often quoted as "convincing" evidence against the eligibility of women for ecclesiastical offices. It is our intention to deal with the following passages: I Corinthians 7 (*passim*); 11:3-16; 14; 33-35 and Timothy 2:8-15.

Many Christians maintain that they have no difficulty at all with these passages. They ask, "Does not the apostle state clearly in I Corinthians 14:34 that 'women should keep silence in the churches'?" They claim that women should be silent because the Bible commands this; they interpret the text literally. This, however, cannot be the end of the discussion for then Christians would have to take everything literally, also the statements that women should wear a veil on their head because of the angels, and that they always should wear their hair long since this is their pride (vss. 10, 15). Hence it is obvious that we must raise the question whether the words of Paul, e.g. in Corinthians 14:34, still have the same power of prescribed observance as they had in the days that they were written.

We must know before we decide on the exact meaning of certain passages, whether the apostle permitted himself to deal with some particular problems germane to his time and to the situation of the early Christian congregations, or whether it was his intention to proclaim once and for all the will of God for the status and role of women in society as a whole, in the community of believers and in worship situations. In other words, did Paul deal pastorally with existing problems, or did he prophetically proclaim everlasting principles? We must determine first what Paul actually meant to say to the people who initially read his letters. Even if he did not foresee any significant changes in the status and role of women in the society of his days, would he, as an inspired author of many of the New Testament epistles, allow for the possibility that in other historical situations other rules might and perhaps should be applied?

The limited and dated significance of some of Paul's more pastoral statements is clear from a text such as I Corinthians 11:7: "... a man ought not to cover his head . . ." Jean Hering in his commentary on *The First Epistle of Saint Paul to the Corinthians* states, "In the Christian churches, until our own day, the apostle's instructions have been generally observed, women covering their heads (not any more!), men going bare-headed—apart from Catholic and Orthodox priests. But the motives for this are in part very different from those of the apostle. A man who fails to remove his hat on entering a place of worship would not be considered as despicable but as insolent because he lacked respect. Exceptions are, however, shown in Calvinist churches in France, especially in the south. The same thing occurred in the low countries. Further, the skullcap is generally admitted . . ." (p. 10).

We maintain that many of Paul's specific regulations are not intended to be timeless precepts, but are temporally and culturally limited applications of certain lasting and foundational principles. The applications may change, but the principles remain the same. Archibald Robertson in his *Commentary on the Epistles to Corinth* (in the *I.C.C. series*) writes that Paul "throughout I Corinthians 11 appeals to principles. The wearing or not wearing of a veil may seem to be a small matter. Everything depends upon what the wearing or not wearing implies, and what kind of sanction the one practice or the other can claim" (p. 235). In this connection F. Grosheide says: "The explanation is sought in that Paul uses the word *kome* rather than *triches*, indicating hair that is kept in place with a hairband or net . . . The women of Corinth wore their long hair loose in ecstasy without keeping it in place by a band or veil. This means therefore that attention should be paid to what has to be done to the hair of the women to make it look neat. This indicates that the apostles did not necessarily demand a veil or band, but a neat feminine hairdo which distinguishes women from men. This neat hairdo a woman should always have, also when she prays or prophesies" (*Commentary on I Corinthians*, Amsterdam: Bottenburg, 1932; p. 380).

Grosheide states with regard to the entire pericope that "a matter of seemingly little importance is discussed by the apostle with great sincerity, not so much because the misconduct of the Corinthian women caused disorder in the congregation, as is mentioned in I Corinthians 14:40 (all things should be done decently and in order), but rather because it dis-

rupts God's creation order, which has to be maintained also in sacred actions. This also constitutes the lasting importance of this part of God's Word. We may not deduct from this passage how women and girls should wear their hair. But they do wrong when in hairdo or clothing they wipe out the distinction between men and women. The apostle teaches that the distinction between the sexes which God himself established may not be done away with in the congregation . . ." (*Ibid.*, p. 381),

b. *I Corinthians 7*

For our purpose it will not be necessary to give an explanation of the entire seventh chapter of I Corinthians. The interest of this report is in the way in which Paul deals with the problems that are presented to him for his advice.

Some people in Corinth had fallen victim to a new asceticism, and in their attempts to legislate this form of self-discipline, and to make it mandatory for the entire congregation, they asked Paul for his apostolic advice. Most likely because of gnostic influence, this asceticism encouraged the complete denial of sexual desires, considering marital intercourse a stage that Christians had to leave behind in their search for higher spirituality. (See D, 2).

In general it can be stated that Paul in I Corinthians 7 tries to sail a clear course between the Scylla of the old, pagan libertinism on the one hand and the Charybdis of a new neo-Christian asceticism on the other hand. We want to point out how Paul with regard to each aspect of the problem addresses both men and women as equals in Christ, since the pattern of equality is indeed remarkable in this chapter.

The first section deals with (temporal) abstinence (vss. 1-7). Paul admits in answer to the question submitted to him that "it is well for a man not to touch a woman" (vs. 1). It is clear that he does not legislate, he does not lay down the law, he only speaks about what is "well," what can be acceptable and even commendable at times. The Greek word *kalon*—which means something beautiful, nice, or useful—is used here.

Yet, immediately after Paul has given this answer in principle, he works it out in two ways, for the man *and* the woman: for the husband and for the wife. We summarize this in the following chart:

<i>Husband</i>	<i>Wife</i>
each man should have his own wife (2)	each woman her own husband (2)
husband should give wife her conjugal rights (3)	likewise the wife to her husband (3)
the wife does not rule over her own body, the husband does (4)	the husband does not rule over his own body, the wife does (4)
agree with your wife (5)	agree with your husband (5)

Either the husband or his wife may propose to refrain from sexual intercourse for a season in order to devote himself or herself to prayer. But the decision depends on the agreement of both partners. Solitary devotion should not endanger the lasting togetherness of marriage.

The next short section (vss. 8, 9) deals with the unmarried and the widows. Here too, Paul addresses both sexes, with no distinction made between male and female.

The following verses (10-16) deal with the problem of divorce. Again Paul follows the pattern of parallel statements. This time he begins with the woman's side. Were there more female than male members in Corinth's congregation? Did some perhaps advocate divorce in order to become free from their heathen husbands?

<i>Husband</i>	<i>Wife</i>
the husband should not divorce his wife (11)	the wife should not separate from her husband (10)
He should not divorce his wife, if she is an unbeliever (12)	she should not divorce her husband, who is an unbeliever (13)
the unbelieving husband is consecrated through his wife (14)	the unbelieving wife is consecrated through her husband (14)
if the unbelieving partner insists, let it be so (15)	if the unbelieving partner insists, let it be so (15)
Husband, how do you know that you will save your wife? (16)	Wife, how do you know whether you will save your husband? (16)

Verses 17-24 deal with the Christian's calling: every person should lead the life which God has assigned to him. This does not mean that he is not allowed to change the situation if this is possible. Everyone is free and called to freedom.

The next passage deals in more detail with the unmarried state (vss. 25-38). The apostle hastens to assure his readers that he has no specific command of the Lord Jesus Christ concerning these matters, but that he "only" gives his opinion as one "who by the Lord's mercy is trustworthy" (vs. 25).

Again we notice the balanced parallel statements. Verse 28 is directed to the male members of the congregation: ". . . if you marry, you do not sin"; and is followed by the parallel: ". . . if a girl marries, she does not sin." Then Paul introduces the eschatological perspective of his time, which explains his reservations with regard to marriage. Marriage always makes persons more vulnerable to earthly cares. He favors the unmarried state not because it is better or holier, but because it offers greater opportunity for being without anxieties and for devotion to the service of the Lord. Again the parallelism is sustained. The married *man* worries about worldly affairs (vs. 33), and so does the married *woman* (vs. 34). The married *man* is anxious to please his wife, and the *wife* wants to please her husband. The unmarried *man* is anxious about the affairs of the Lord, and the unmarried *woman* or girl also is anxious about the affairs of the Lord (vss. 32, 34).

The preceding paragraph is summarized in the following chart:

<i>Man</i>	<i>Woman</i>
if you marry, you do not sin (28)	if a girl marries she does not sin (28)
the unmarried man is anxious about the affairs of the Lord (32)	the unmarried woman or girl is anxious about the affairs of the Lord (34)
how to please the Lord (32)	how to be holy in body and spirit (34)
the married man is anxious about worldly affairs (33)	the married woman is anxious about worldly affairs (34)
how to please his wife (33)	how to please her husband (34)

The last section of this chapter (vss. 36-40) lacks the parallelistic examples of both men and women. It is very difficult to understand the exact meaning of this pericope. Some scholars write that the apostle deals

here with what was known in those days as "spiritual betrothal." If this were Paul's intention, it seems strange that he gives only the male partner the right to decide. Other scholars, however, are of the opinion that the word *gamidzo*, used in verse 38, is not correctly translated by "to marry," but always means "to give in marriage"; and they conclude therefore that the passage speaks about a father and his daughter and not about two young people who are engaged. If this were to be the case, it would be easier to understand why the parallelism is not maintained in this section.

In conclusion we note how the apostle in this chapter proceeds from the basis of the spiritual equality between men and women in Christ to give his advice. As in marriage, so in the unmarried state, men and women are expected to take part in their common calling. In marriage they must cooperate in worldly affairs; and, being unmarried, they are to be anxious about the affairs of the Lord. Both in marriage and in affairs of the Lord, both sexes have to contribute their own share. In I Corinthians 7 there is no trace whatsoever of discrimination against women in this respect.

#### c. I Corinthians 11:2-16

Paul begins, as he often does in his epistles, with praise for the congregation to which he is writing. The Corinthian Church has maintained "the traditions even as I have delivered them unto you" (vs. 2). The word "traditions" includes all of Paul's missionary message. In Corinth the believers have remained faithful to the message, to the Gospel. That is why they deserve praise.

A problem, however, has arisen. The new wine of Christian liberty resulted in revolution rather than in new holiness. The problem is stated in verses 4-6. Some women were praying and prophesying with unveiled head. Perhaps, they did away with the veil entirely in order to be able to pray or prophesy in public, if the Spirit should so lead them. Huls calls this the central problem of the passage, or the core problem (*op. cit.*, p. 39). He describes this in the following words: "In Corinth people forgot—just like this was forgotten again in the struggle for the emancipation of the woman at the end of the nineteenth and at the beginning of the twentieth century—that equal value of man and woman does not mean there is no difference between roles of the sexes any more." One might say, "Equality does not imply sameness." Huls continues, "Paul wants to say here: the woman who acts in the congregational assemblies with her head unveiled, just like the man does this, denies therewith her place as a (married) woman and in this way she dishonors her husband by refusing to acknowledge him as her head" (*ibid.*, p. 40). It is evident that this holds true only as long as the veil has a certain cultural function in the society. In our present society a veil, or the lack of it, has nothing to do with respect for one's husband.

Archibald Robertson gives the following summary of this passage: "Although in respect of religion men and women are on an equality, yet the Gospel does not overthrow the natural ordinance, which is really of divine appointment, that woman is subject to man. To disavow this subjection before the congregation must cause grave scandal; and such

shamelessness is condemned by nature, by authority and by general custom" (*op. cit.*, p. 226).

An interesting point is that Paul in verse 5 expects women to pray and prophesy in public, occurrences which were usually part of the worship service. Does Paul contradict himself when he rules in I Corinthians 14:34 that "women should keep silence in the churches"? Calvin seems to have some difficulty in explaining this apparent contradiction, as he writes, ". . . when he reproveth them for prophesying with their head uncovered, he at the same time does not give them permission to prophesy in some other way, but rather delays his condemnation of that vice (sic!) to another passage . . ." (*Commentary on I Corinthians*, Edinburg: Calvin Translation Society, 1848; p. 356).

Others have tried to solve this by assuming that Paul in I Corinthians 11 did not speak about worship services, but rather of evangelistic meetings. Robertson, however, warns against this "solution"; "Praying and prophesying must be understood in the same way in both verses; it is arbitrary to say that the man is supposed to be taking the lead in full public worship, but the woman in mission services or family prayer" (*op. cit.*, p. 230).

The point is that, despite the fact that women do participate, Paul opposes revolutionary feminism. Robertson comments, "In Corinth anything questionable in Christian wives was especially dangerous, and the Gospel had difficulties enough to contend against without shocking people by breaches of usage. Christianity does not cancel the natural ordinances of life . . ." (*ibid.*, p. 231). Hering explains, "If, as we think, it is accepted that Greek women normally were veiled in the street, the full reach of the argument can be grasped: do not come before God dressed in a way considered elsewhere as indecent" (*op. cit.*, p. 109).

When we keep in mind that Paul is dealing here with an early Christian manifestation of an emancipation movement which believes that equality means denial of all differences in roles, then the rest of the passage falls easily into place.

The synod of the *Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland* published a booklet in 1966 entitled "*The Place of Women in the Ministry of the Church*" to explain to other denominations, especially those belonging to the Reformed Ecumenical Synod, their decision to admit women to ecclesiastical offices.

Dealing with I Corinthians 11:2-16, this booklet states:

"For some women, however, this spiritual liberation proved to be too much. The new wine of Christian liberty went to their heads motivated apparently by the apostolic teaching that in Christ there is neither male nor female (Gal. 3:28), they proceed to behave in a fashion generally considered unfeminine. During the church service they take off their veils and pray and prophesy like the men with head uncovered. There are others who during the dialogue-type instruction at the service, do most of the talking (I Cor. 14:34, 35; Greek "lalein," cf. Dutch "lallen") and in unrestrained behaviour try to lord it over the men (I Tim. 2:12).

This bold department of some women disturbed the church. It was thought to be a disgrace.

At this point the apostle intervenes (I Cor. 11:2-16; 14:34-36 - cf. vs. 26-40; I Tim. 2:11-15). The disorder caused by the conduct of these sisters is in itself sufficient reason for that. This can never be right - God is not a God of disorder, but of peace. Paul therefore commands the congregation in the name of the Lord to put an end to these disturbances (I Cor. 14:37). With the situation itself he has no patience either. For this is beyond dispute: woman should remain womanly in her conduct. In the given cultural pattern this implied that she ought to wear a veil in public. Putting this away in public is just as unwomanly for her as cutting off her hair or shaving her head. For the same reason she ought not to take part in doctrinal discussions in public meetings. In spite of her spiritual equality she ought not to lose sight of her subordination as a woman (I Cor. 11:3; 14:34)" (p. 3, 4).

As was stated before, the apostle wants to emphasize that in the Christian congregation women should not abuse their new freedom in Christ, but should behave at all times with modesty and prudence. He uses in the main three arguments for his conviction:

- a. man is the head of the woman (vs. 3).
- b. we must observe the creation order (vss. 7-10)
- c. we are bound by the laws of nature, which includes culture (vss. 13-15)

Let us consider these three arguments.

a. Man is the head of the woman (vs. 3). Paul wants us to understand that the head of every man is Christ, the head of a woman is her husband, and the head of Christ is God. The last part of this verse has often been quoted by followers of Arius for their doctrine that the Son is subordinate to the Father, but Calvin counsels, "Let us, therefore, bear in mind, that this is spoken of Christ as mediator" (*op. cit.*, p. 353). Even so, it is quite clear that all three relationships are not of the same quality. Christ is as well the head of the Christian woman as he is of the Christian man. But there is a similarity in these relationships between Christ and man, husband and wife, and God and Christ, which provides the argument. Yet Grosheide points out that also the text itself wants us to observe the differences between these relationships, "... with the second kephale (head) the article is missing (literal translation: of every man the head is Christ, but head of a woman is the man) and with *gunaikos* (of a woman) *pantos* (every) is not added. This implies that the man is not the head of the wife in such an absolute sense, as Christ is head of all things" (*op. cit.*, p. 365). Calvin summarizes, "Hence, as regards spiritual connection in the sight of God, and inwardly in the conscience, Christ is the head of the man and of the woman without any distinction . . . but as regards external arrangements and political decorum, the man follows Christ and the woman the man, so that they are not upon the same footing, but, on the contrary, this inequality exists" (*op. cit.*, p. 354; cf. the excursus on the concept of "head").

Hence the conclusion from the first argument, that of the headship, can be only that the difference in position between husband and wife

must be honored at all times. The text does not indicate that women are to be excluded from ecclesiastical office or from active participation in public worship, but rather that if she participates she must do so as a female human being or even more precisely, as a married woman who on account of her position must observe certain rules of decorum. The text states that the married woman must know her place in public worship, not that she is to be excluded from certain functions. Not the "what" but the "how" is under discussion. If she behaves unwomanly she "dishonors her head" and this can refer to her husband as well to herself.

b. We must observe the creation order (vss. 7-10). In Genesis we are told that God created man, male and female, to be his image and likeness. Spiritual equality before God comes first. Later we are informed that the man was created before the woman, and also that man was created directly from the dust, but woman indirectly from man. It shows the deep and irreversible relationship between man and woman. She is out of and for the man.

It is clear that Paul could not write that woman is the image and likeness of man. He therefore changes the word *likeness* into *glory* (perhaps under the influence of a Greek translation of the Old Testament). Now the argument regarding the relationship of man and woman makes sense.

Verse 10 adds that this irreversible relationship is expressed by the veil. Under a veil means under a cover, being subject, being under an authority.

If a woman disobeys the creation order, she will be "shocking to the angels, who of course, are present at public worship" (Robertson, *op. cit.*, p. 233).

Note, however, that the apostle immediately adds, in parentheses, verses 11 and 12, in which he mitigates or almost neutralizes the differences. One might say, after the apostle has stressed the order between man and woman as revealed in Genesis 2, he hastens to return to their equality as testified to and described in Genesis 1. In the Lord neither man nor woman is independent and self-sufficient; even if woman was created after the man, now every man is born from a woman. They need each other. Harmonious relationship is more important than an endless debate about authority. Husband and wife, man and woman, find their place when they keep in mind the final admonition that "all things are from God."

Robertson comments, "This mutual dependence of the sexes is shown by the fact that, although originally woman sprang from man, yet ever since then it is through woman that man comes into existence: if he is the initial cause (*ek*), she is the instrumental cause (*dia* with *gen.*)" (*op. cit.*, p. 234).

This "neutralizing" effect of the verses 11 and 12 is also well explained by W. Schmithals as he writes in his major work dealing with the congregation in Corinth:

"... in vss. 11-12 Paul in effect takes back all that he has previously asserted with reference to the inequality of the sexes. And the stressing of the equality of man and woman doubtless corresponds to

Paul's actual judgment . . . But this means that in vs. 3-9 the apostle is not arguing with full freedom, but is pressured in a certain direction by the view of the adversaries. This view can only have been that with a reference to the equal status of the two sexes some were declaring the custom regarding covering the head during worship, which was different for men and for women, to be irrelevant. Over against this, Paul takes his stand on the inequality of the sexes." (W. Schmithals, *Gnosticism in Corinth*, translated into English by John E. Steely. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1971; p. 238).

Our conclusion at this point is quite similar to the previous one regarding the headship of man. The creation order as Paul explains it in verses 7-10 stresses strongly how men and women must behave in accordance with and with respect to their sexual differences, also in public life; it does not divide the area of public life into two segregated mutually isolated areas. Paul does not want to lead the Christian church back to the customs of the Jewish synagogue.

c. We are bound by the laws of nature. "Nature" can be understood to include culture. Much has been said already about this in our introduction to these passages. Nature is, as Calvin admits, "the mistress of decorum." Even Calvin was aware of the fact that Paul here expresses agreement with Roman or Greek culture, for he wrote, "Historical records bear out that in all countries in ancient times, that is, in the first ages, men wore long hair . . . And at the time when Paul wrote these things the practice of having the hair shorn had not yet come into use in the provinces of Gaul or in Germany" (*op. cit.*, p. 361, 362).

The point is, Christians in Corinth should not ride roughshod over existing traditions, as Bengel said, *Naturae debet respondere voluntas*, - will must obey nature. Robertson adds, "While fanaticism defies nature, Christianity respects it and refines it" (*op. cit.*, p. 235).

Verse 16, like 14:36, adds a concluding warning: that the apostolic authority be acknowledged by the congregation.

In these passages Paul also spells out a rule for Christian behavior. A Christian's behavior should not conflict with what "nature" teaches, that is, with accepted tradition and cultural patterns. But to conclude from these words that women ought to be excluded from ecclesiastical office is not justified.

Looking back on the entire section of I Corinthians 11:2-16, we conclude that Paul most emphatically affirms and maintains the right and practice of women to take part in acts of public worship, viz. in prayer and prophecy.

#### d. *I Corinthians 14:33b-36*

At first glance I Corinthians 14:33b-36 seems to be a section which without doubt justifies the practice of excluding women from ecclesiastical office. Does not the apostle Paul state clearly that "the women should keep silence in the churches" (vs. 34)? Grosheide points out that these words do not refer only to possibly exceptional situations in Corinth, but to accepted procedures "in all the churches of the saints" (vs. 33b). He comments, "We cannot read here anything else but an absolute in-

junction forbidding women to speak in worship services" (*op. cit.*, p. 484).

Other exegetes, however, are not convinced that the matter is that simple. They struggle with the apparent contradiction between 11:5, where Paul allows women to prophesy as long as the veil is worn, and this passage in which he orders women to refrain from speaking in the churches. Many attempts have been made to explain this contradiction. Calvin suggests that the apostle legislates in stages (cf. section 3c). Of course, no one can deny the apostle the right to deal with a problem in stages, yet it does not seem likely that in chapter 11 he would neglect to mention the rule of chapter 14 if it was indeed his intention to deny women the "vice" of prophesying. Huls mentions six different ways in which a solution has been sought. We note the three most important ones:

- a. This passage is a later insert from a time of strong anti-feminism.
- b. There is a difference in the types of meetings Paul had in mind. Women may prophesy in worship services in the home (11:5) but should remain silent in the larger regular worship services of the entire congregation (14:34).
- c. Chapter 11:5 permits women to speak in case they have charismatic gifts enabling them to do so, whereas 14:34 refers to the regular preaching of the office bearer (*op. cit.*, p. 43). Grosheide states, "Our text, which occurs in a context in which worship services are discussed, is in this regard an addition to chapter 11 in which worship services were not mentioned" (*op. cit.*, p. 483, n. 1).

However, solutions such as these are not very convincing. To think of verse 34 as a later insert does not seem possible on textual-critical grounds. As to the second argument, women may not speak in the regular worship services, chapter 11 does not forbid women to prophesy and there is no reason to assume that this could not take place during the regular worship services (vss. 29, 30). The argument that women may speak in exceptional situations but not in normal worship services, is equally weak. The preceding verses (26-33) do not picture a conventional situation in Corinth to begin with. Jean Hering uses the distinction between exceptional and usual situations, however, when he writes, "So there is a clear distinction between a preaching woman (using the term in its widest sense) who has the right to bring the message—and a woman who is merely present at worship as an ordinary member of the congregation. The latter should be silent. Hence the so-called contradiction between 11:5 and 14:33ff disappears . . ." (*op. cit.*, p. 154). Now the argument is almost reversed: give woman an ecclesiastical office, then she may speak!

It is clear that such reasoning does not do justice to the text. Let us look at this short passage in the light of its context.

Verse 26 describes the congregation of Corinth as being very lively. Its worship services were not dull assemblies but rather very animated gatherings of enthusiastic believers: "each one has a hymn, a lesson, a revelation, a tongue, or an interpretation." Because of this full program the worship services tended to become endless affairs which finally broke

up in confusion. This the apostle wants to prevent. Therefore, he says that if there is tongue speaking, let it be limited to "only two or at most three" and let tongue speaking be done only if there are interpreters who understand that particular tongue. In the same way verse 29 prescribes that only two or three prophets should speak and that all others, many of whom might also think themselves to be prophets, should keep silence in order to "weigh what is said." Only the person who suddenly is gripped by a revelation may interrupt the flow of prophecy. Thus it should be done: "one by one, so that all may learn . . . for God is not a God of confusion . . ."

A lively congregation is a blessing, but such a blessing can become a problem. Calvin writes: "From this passage . . . we may conjecture how very illustrious that church was, in respect of an extraordinary abundance and variety of spiritual gifts. There were colleges of prophets, so that pains had to be taken that they might have their respective turns. That was so great a diversity of gifts, that there was a superabundance. We now see our leanness, nay, our poverty . . ." (*op. cit.*, p. 465). Indeed, there is something exciting about the Corinthian church, something that can make present-day Christians jealous. However, the other side of the coin is shown in verse 36: "they seem to be claiming a monstrous amount of authority and independence" (Robertson, *op. cit.*, p. 326). The apostle is compelled to say: "Let there be nothing of ambition—let there be nothing of obstinacy—let there be nothing of pride and contempt for other churches—let there be, on the other hand, a desire to edify—let there be moderation and prudence . . ." (Calvin, *op. cit.*, p. 470).

Now after Paul has told many to keep silence and to let others speak, he adds a special warning for the women: "they are not permitted to speak, but should be subordinate." It is interesting to note that Paul in verse 34 does not use a word with a more definite meaning as *propheteu-ein* (prophesying) or *didaskein* (teaching) or *legein* (to give an address or to preach). He used the word *lalein* which is synonymous with talking. True, *lalein* can be used in the sense of "*legein*" (it even can be combined with this word as in Matthew 13:3, where the RSV translates: "he told them . . . saying"), yet, often it retains something of its original meaning which stresses speaking as an action. Hence it can indicate activities like prattling, babbling or chattering, and, although we cannot decide with certainty in this case, it remains noteworthy that the apostle here chooses exactly this word. What actually happened was that women were allowed to participate in all parts of the worship services, "but at the discussions (of the prophecies) they became so involved that they disturbed the order and therefore they should keep silence, just like prophets and people who can speak in tongues also must keep silence on behalf of the order of the congregation" (Huls, *op. cit.*, p. 46).

To support his injunction, the apostle uses two arguments: 1. women should be subordinate, "as even the law says," and 2. it is shameful for a woman to speak in the church.

His first argument refers most likely to Genesis 3:16: "your husband shall rule over you." Robertson also mentions the Roman law: "Had the apostle heard of Gaia Afrania, wife of Lucinius Buccio, a contentious

lady who insisted on pleading her own causes in court, and was such a nuisance to the praetors that an edict was made prohibiting women from pleading?" (*op. cit.*, p. 325).

Paul's second argument refers to accepted custom. A woman should not immediately interrupt when she does not understand certain matters: her questions should reach the congregation via her husband. Huls writes, "Here too, as in chapter 11, the apostle appeals again to the prevailing opinion which holds that women who take part in public discussions give offence, since this in the Greek world was done only by the *hetares* (public woman). Especially in Corinth, which had a very bad name in this respect, one had to be very careful" (*op. cit.*, p. 47).

All of which motivates Calvin to make the sober observation: "... it is part of the prudent reader to consider, that the things of which he here treats are intermediate and indifferent, in which there is nothing unlawful, but what is at variance with propriety and edification" (*op. cit.*, p. 469.)

These words of Calvin should be kept in mind today. When I Corinthians 14 is quoted, it is done in a different situation. Now all women may speak freely in public. There is no offence in this. Hence, in the true liberation of women, that is, in the restoration of woman to her original status of being a partner with the man in the service of God, the church today should not lag behind, but rather take the lead.

#### e. I Timothy 2:8-15

This is the fourth and final passage which we will analyse in detail. It also seems to be the most difficult one. Those who defend the practice of excluding women from ecclesiastical office find here their strongest argument, since the apostle does not merely refer to the women's habit of taking part in the discussions during the worship services (the *lalein*) but explicitly discusses teaching (*didaskhein*) by women.

It is clear from verse 8 that in this passage the apostle gives guidelines for the public worship services. The pastoral epistles have the character of an apostolic church order. The passage begins with Paul's statement "I desire then . . .," using the word "*boulomai*," which indicates "the proclamation of a royal decree . . . (hence it expresses here) apostolic authority" (Bouma, *Commentary on I and II Timothy and Titus*. Amsterdam: Bottenburg, 1942; p. 117). Lock, in his commentary on the Pastoral Epistles establishes the fact that we deal here with public worship services, for the following reasons: 1) the words occur between 2:1-8 and 3:1-13, passages dealing with the instituted church and worship; 2) these words are analogous with I Corinthians 11:2-16 and 14:33-36, the passages we discussed in 4c and 4d; 3) these words subsequently influenced the ancient church orders; 4) similar rules were known for heathen worship in those days. What is the underlying motive of this passage? Does it discriminate against women? Certainly, woman was not always sufficiently recognized in the early Christian church as being equal to man, equal as a human being. Tertullian reminded the woman of the fact that she carries around with her in her heart a deceptive Eve by saying, "Don't you remember that you are Eve? You are the gate of the devil." Even Bengal expressed this type of feeling, saying about the

woman "facilius decepta, facilius decipit" (easier deceived, she deceives easier).

Women render service to God as equally as do men; this does not mean, however, that there is or should be identity between them e.g. in public worship. The question is, "What does Galatians 3:28 mean for the congregational practice?" Paul's answer in I Timothy 2 is that he wants men to pray in the public worship service. It is therefore impossible to suggest that verse 9 deals only with the way women should dress themselves. Verse 9 begins with a strong "also" (*hoosautoos*), which indicates that the apostle is not changing the subject. We concur with the suggestion of Dibelius, "In this connection I also want to make some rules for women when they pray in every place of worship. They should come to church dressed neatly and modestly, etc." (*Die Pastoral Briefe*, Handbuch zum Neuen Testament, Tübingen, 1931).

Therefore, verses 8 and 9 do not suggest that women be excluded from participation in public prayer in the meeting of the congregation for worship. Rather, the apostle Paul here designs a new way in which women can live in their Christian freedom. On the one hand there is the old model of the Jewish synagogue, in which women were segregated from men and were not allowed to participate in any way; and on the other hand there were the heathen temple feasts in which women, especially the sacred temple whores, played a prominent role. Paul was probably moved to give these directions against abuses in the various local churches. "It had become customary in the Pauline churches such as Corinth, for women who had the gift of prophecy to be allowed to speak in the liturgical assembly. However, this custom led to dangerous consequences. Such women easily neglected their housework and it seems there were efforts to throw off the yoke of submission to their husbands and give them orders . . ." (Joseph Reuss, "The First Epistle to Timothy," *New Testament for Spiritual Reading*. London: Burns and Oates, 1969; p. 32).

That the apostle Paul here speaks of public worship and includes women in the exercise thereof does not only follow from the context, but also from the concluding words of verse 10. Women must adorn themselves as "befits women who profess religion." The word used in Greek for "to profess" (*epaggellomai*) has the meaning of professing in church, professing in the worship service. This would tie in logically with verse 8. In these public worship services women should take part, especially in prayer, but as they do so, they must be warned against the type of behavior that would detract from the edification of the entire congregation. They may and should adorn themselves, but only with modesty. The emphasis should not be on outward glamour, but on inner goodness.

After the mode of participation in public worship for men and women has been established, Paul proceeds in verses 11 and 12 to make some exceptions, or restrictions.

In verse 11 women are instructed to "learn in silence." Donald Guthrie finds this admonition "in full accord with I Corinthians 14:34, 35" (*The Pastoral Epistles*, Tyndale Commentary, p. 75). We noted before that

Paul in I Corinthians 14 deals with situations in which the women became so involved that they disturbed the order. As I Corinthians 14:34, 35 so I Timothy 2:11 refers to public worship. Paul warns against excesses. Women began to abuse their new-found freedom in Christ. "The equality of the sexes, so much in the foreground of modern thought, received little recognition in ancient times. Not only was the prevailing Greek attitude against it, but Hebrew thought was equally unsympathetic" (*Ibid.*, p. 76). Women should not interrupt the discussion period needlessly. They should listen and learn in silence. The Greek word for silence is *hesuchia*, quietness. As such it does not have to indicate absolute silence. Schlatter thinks that Paul here mitigates the stand which he took in I Corinthians 14. Bouma, however, is of the opinion that the word quietness here indicates stillness in the sense of taciturnity (*op. cit.*, p. 123). We don't have to decide between the two possibilities; whether women had to be absolutely silent, or whether they were only allowed to speak with great restraint and without distracting emotionalism; they should behave in church "with all submissiveness." And again, the word "*hesuchia*" says more about the manner of female behavior than about the actual *content* of it, it is more a formal than a material directive.

Verse 11 deals with women's learning, and verse 12 deals with her teaching. The latter the apostle does not allow. It is noteworthy that Paul who in I Corinthians permits prayer and prophecy in public worship, puts a stop, a "*non liquet*," (it is not allowed), to women's teaching in I Timothy. Yet in Titus 2:3 older women are encouraged to teach what is good. Is there a contradiction here?

If there were one, this does not have to be solved the way Calvin proposes, viz. ". . . if women at one time held the office of prophets and teachers, and that too when they were supernaturally called to it by the Spirit of God, he who is above all law might do this; but, being a peculiar case, this is not opposed to the constant and ordinary system of government" (*op. cit.*, p. 67).

The difficulty diminishes when one looks at the "*didaskein*" (teaching) in the light of "*authentain*" (to have authority) over men. The two words are closely connected by an "*oude*," which means "nor," or "also not." *Authentein* is somewhat like "being bossy." It is a word that occurs only here in the New Testament, and it indicates a special form of authority. We may assume that "to teach" had a richer meaning in Paul's days than it has now. "In public meetings Christian women must refrain from laying down the law to men" (Guthrie, *op. cit.*, p. 77). Paul does not prohibit women from prophesying or praying, but they are not allowed that kind of teaching which is almost synonymous with "telling off." Also in verse 11 the word for silence is the word that usually means peacefulness, calmness. Women must know their place and may not "lord it over" the men.

The following three verses contain the two arguments Paul uses to support his admonitions. Women have to behave as was outlined to them because of the creation order (vs. 14) and the fall (vss. 14, 15). In referring to the creation order Paul repeats what he said earlier in I Corinthians 11:8. The story of the fall explains that she who was

created later fell sooner. Man and woman are both guilty, but whereas Adam was deceived (*apatao*) Eve was terribly deceived (*exapataoo*). However, the difference is one of degree only, not of principle; both need salvation. It seems strange that Paul states that women "will be saved through bearing children." Many exegetes have tried to understand these words as a reference to the coming of Christ since he was "born of woman," but it is not necessary to stretch these words that far. Paul stresses the role of women in childbearing and in the education of their children. This was necessary since, here too, women sensed a new freedom in Christ. Joseph Reuss comments, "It seems likely that in this passage (2:11-15) Paul adopts a position in sharp contrast to that of the heretics in the community, who rejected marriage (4:3) and gave a wrong explanation of the position of women in the Christian church. Paul is determined to maintain the dignity of Christian marriage and restates that the duties laid on Christian women by God lie in the home and with the family circle" (*op. cit.*, p. 34). That childbearing does not save *per se*, apart from Jesus Christ becomes clear from the concluding words: "if she continues in faith . . ." (vs. 15). The word *continues* makes clear that Paul here speaks of believing women. "Even child-bearing" is obedience acceptable to God, only in so far as it proceeds from *faith and love*" (Calvin, *op. cit.*, p. 72).

We conclude that this passage certainly curtails to some extent women's activities in the worship services, for reasons which were perhaps better understood at the time Paul wrote this letter than they are now. But it is clear that from this passage as well that one cannot extract strong arguments in defense of the practice of excluding women from ecclesiastical office. In the light of this passage and of what Paul says further about the function of women, especially that of the older widows, one can find arguments here which are more *pro* than *contra* women holding office in the church.

The following paragraphs from the report of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands confirm our findings.

"The fact remains that, for the apostle, the subordination of woman to man which he has in view, including the symbolic veil, proceeds naturally from her being woman.

Anyone who thinks that this notion is still valid, must be consistent. He must start requiring again that women should only appear veiled in public. Furthermore he must not allow her to take part in any public discussion. In general he must protest, too, against the equal rights of men and women in state and society. For the apostolic argumentation proceeds precisely from the subordination of woman everywhere in the public organization of life.

In point of fact nobody completely follows the apostle anymore in this train of thought. Some adhere with desperate legalistic tenacity to a few distinct conclusions of the apostle. However, the apostolic argumentation as a whole cannot have reference to us anymore. For in our cultural pattern womanhood (what is inherent in being a woman) is no longer determined by subordination to man. In our society woman's natural position has developed into one of

equal participation, doubtlessly also under the influence of the Christian preaching of the spiritual equality of woman.

Nevertheless the actual apostolic admonition that woman should remain woman in her entire behaviour retains its accent and lasting significance. The obliteration of the distinction in conduct between man and woman in church, state and society is, as in Paul's days so today, unacceptable. Man and woman should mutually complement one another even in public life, each in accordance with his/her nature" (*op. cit.*, p. 4, 5).

#### 4. *Excursus on the concept of "head" (kephale).*

In the ongoing debate about the status and role of women in the instituted church one almost invariably meets references to the texts in which man is called the head of the woman, viz. I Corinthians 11:3 and Ephesians 5:23.

I Corinthians 11:3 reads: "I want you to understand that the head of every man is Christ, the head of a woman is her husband, and the head of Christ is God." Ephesians 5:23 states: "For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Saviour." Dealing with the first mentioned text in our discussion of I Corinthians 11, we pointed out that the parallelism is not fully consistent and is not without small qualifying elements, both in its literacy formulation and in the actual meaning of the words. (One cannot really think of God's and Christ's headship being on a par with that of man.)

In both texts the headship of the husband over his wife is compared with that of Christ over the church (most likely this is meant also in I Corinthians 11:3a). Hence it will be of importance to explore at this point the meaning of Christ's headship as revealed in the epistles of Paul to the Ephesian and Colossian Christians. In Ephesians 1:22 Paul writes: "And he (God) has put all things under his feet and has made him the head over all things for the church." Ephesians 4:15, 16 adds: "we are to grow up . . . into him, who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body . . . makes bodily growth." Colossians 1:18 is even more explicit: "He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the first-born from the dead, that in everything he might be pre-eminent." In Colossians 2:10 the apostle states, ". . . he is the head of all rule and authority," whereas 2:19 is very similar to the words in Ephesians 4:15, 16. These texts prompt a dual observation about Christ's headship:

- a. Christ is head not only of the congregation, but of all things,
- b. The word "head" is distinct from words as "lord" or "king."

Colossians 1:18 states: "Christ is the head and the beginning." This is the key to a right understanding of the idea of headship. Christ as head certainly has authority (Colossians 2:20); yet, it is not the authority of the absolute ruler, but rather that of the first-born one, the one who in the midst of his brothers is pre-eminent. The term "head" refers to Christ as mediator, as the Messiah, not to Christ as the second person of the Trinity, the Eternal Word. Christ is the head of the church, since he is "the Saviour" of his body (Ephesians 5:23). We agree with

Herman Ridderbos that the headship of Christ over the church indicates "that she (the church) has her origin in him and that she therefore is dependent upon him, since he has prepared for her the way and since she owes her very existence to him" (*Paulus*, Kampen: J. H. Kok N. V., 1966; p. 426). First Corinthians 11 also refers to the origin, viz. "woman was made from man . . . hence she is the glory of man as the congregation is of Christ." Ridderbos concludes, "Hence head does not indicate only superiority, control (*zeggenschap*), authority, but it indicates first of all a *relationship of origin (aanvangs-relatie)* which is determinative for the entire existence" (*ibid.*). Schlier in Kittel's *Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament*, New Testament Dictionary, states, "Paul could also have used the word *arche* (beginning), but since he dealt with persons he chose the word *kephale* (head)" (Vol. III, p. 678). Clarence Vos quotes Schlier in this connection, who states that "Paul's use of *kephale*—instead of *kurios*—is no coincidence" (*op. cit.*, p. 29).

Christ's authority over the church is rooted in his sacrifice and resurrection: he is the first-born from the dead. Similarly, Christ's authority over all of creation is explained by two facts: first by the fact that he is the first-born of all creation, and secondly that in him all things were created; he is before all things, and in him all things hold together.

A good understanding of Christ's headship over the creation and the church will help us in understanding the headship of the husband over his wife and of man over women.

Much misunderstanding has been the result of the overlapping of the two figures of speech—*Christ as the head and the congregation as the body*. That these are two different figures of speech becomes clear from their comparison with the creation. As Ridderbos points out, one can hardly say that in the creation "all things" are also the body of Christ. Yet, many of the traditional explanations take "head" in a physical sense. We agree with Ridderbos that one should not form an idea of head that is derived from a body, but that the term has to be understood "as related to the structures and relationships of the human society." The word "head" is used figuratively as e.g. in the expression "the head of an association." Newer investigations, especially those of the gnostic tendencies of New Testament times, have confirmed this. Hence, it would be completely wrong to think of the wife as the body of the man, or to deduct that the wife is some other part of the body, e.g. the heart, as so often is done.

The question which we still must answer is, what authority is given to the man by the fact that he is the head of his wife? According to Clarence Vos there is very little evidence in Genesis 1-3 of man's authority over the woman. We can only point out that after the fall God calls the man first. The man is the representative of both, the one who was created first, the beginning. Clarence Vos comments further, ". . . as we follow the narrative it becomes evident that the *headship* degenerates into *lordship* (vs. 16c), which *lordship* becomes woman's burden" (*op. cit.*, p. 30, 31).

The authority of Adam over Eve—and this agrees with our findings in the I Corinthians 11 passage—is that of the *primus inter pares*, that of the first one among his equals. The God-given marriage model is not

that of monarchy, but more that of democracy. A democracy can never function without one who functions as its head. Calvin was told by his Roman Catholic opponents, "Nature bears this, man's natural constitution demands it, that in any assembly, though all are equal in power, one should be the moderator, as it were, to whom the others look. There is no meeting of the Senate without a consul, no session of judges without praetor or persecutor, no committee without a chairman, no association without a president" (*Institutes* IV, 6, 8).

Paul forbids women to teach if this would mean that they would "boss" over men (I Timothy 2:12). Scripture always clearly delineates a woman's status and place in society and opposes wild excesses of both sexes in the exercise of their *exousia*, their power and freedom.

But the consistent pattern of cooperation between men and women within the framework of their God-given relationship, does not seem to warrant the practice of excluding women from ecclesiastical office.

#### E. *General Epistles and Revelation.*

To conclude our New Testament study we will examine the last books of the Bible, especially I Peter and Revelation.

We look in particular at I Peter 3:1-8, a passage which must be understood against the background of the times in which it was written. This does not mean, of course, that its admonition is limited to the Christians who were Peter's contemporaries. We must keep in mind that the Christian woman whom Peter addresses in his epistles during the second half of the first century did not have a very influential position in the cultural pattern of that time. To them applies the situation that is described in Section II, A of this report. It is even possible that women in Asia Minor had a lower status than the women in the larger Greek and Roman cities.

Over against this existing pattern of women being practically without rights, the Gospel promised new freedom (Galatians 3:18). However, Peter, just as Paul did, hastens to add a word of warning, lest the enjoyment of the new freedom might lead to misunderstanding and even rejection of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. Even in the days of the New Testament it was clear that, although the Gospel has its horizontal dimensions, its first and main objective is to restore man in Christ into a new, redeemed relationship with God.

It is not wrong to state that the Gospel of Jesus Christ placed dynamite under the existing social structures, but it is also true that the New Testament authors wanted the Christians to remain in control of these new explosive powers at all times. The inspired writers were afraid that not liberation and freedom but destruction and chaos might result.

On the other hand, it seems likely that the advice of Paul and Peter attempted to repel influences of a beginning Gnosticism that combined old pagan and new Christian elements. This Gnosticism proclaimed a complete equality between male and female and described salvation in terms of sexual intercourse rather than in terms of God's grace, given through Christ's sacrifice. Gnosticism does not seek deliverance from sin, but teaches that man "has reached the goal of his history, when he has released his true self, the divine *pneuma* (spirit, soul), from the

bonds uniting it to the lower, *sarkical* substance (the substance of the flesh), when he has been *set free* from the world" (Walter Schmithals, *Gnosticism in Corinth*, translated by John E. Steely. New York: Abindon Press, 1971; p. 218). A Gnostic's salvation is not the restoration of his relationship to God, but rather the *pneuma's* discovery that his *sarx* (flesh) is only nothingness. From there the Gnostic can proceed in either one of two directions: "the Gnostic in strict asceticism avoids all contamination of his pneumatic substance by the sarkical sphere, or, in the consciousness of the invulnerability of the pneumatic quality, he demonstrates his freedom in unrestrained libertinism" (*ibid.* p. 219). Of the Simonians, for instance, was said: "... they have no scruples about doing, as free people, whatever they will" (*ibid.*).

In contrast both to the almost complete denial of women's rights in the existing culture and to the women's liberation movement in the sub-culture of Gnosticism, the Epistles of the New Testament assume a *balanced position* which allows women to participate in many ways in Christian worship and church life, limited only by the prerequisite that the proclamation of the gospel must benefit from such participation. This balanced position is thus summarized, "All things are lawful, but not all things are helpful. All things are lawful, but not all things build up" (I Corinthians 10:23); (Cf. I Corinthians 6:12). Christians often possess an *exousia*, an authority, which is not reflected in the actual use of power. True freedom does not always claim all its rights to the full.

Against the diverse opinions about women's status current at the time of Peter's writing, it is more easily understood why in the passage under discussion he uses *six* verses to describe the duties of women and only *one* for those of men. The position of the Christian woman married to an unbeliever was much more difficult than that of the Christian husband of a pagan wife. That mixed marriages were quite common is evident from verse 1: "... so that some, though they do not obey the word, may be won without a word by the behaviour of their (believing) wives." Many new Christians did not have the blessing of marriages in which both partners could be described as "joint heirs of the grace of life" (vs. 7).

In verse 1 Peter emphasizes the submissiveness of the wives to their own husbands. It is remarkable that he expresses himself here in much the same way as Paul does in Ephesians 5:22-33. The first sentence of I Peter 3:1 is almost identical with Paul's opening statement even though "the treatment of the subject is altogether different. Paul is mystical... Peter is very simple and practical" (Charles Bigg, *Epistles of St. Peter and Jude*, *International Critical Commentary*. Edinburgh, T & T Clark; 1901; p. 17).

The submissiveness about which Peter writes is best defined by "voluntary selflessness." (Cf. the excursus on submissiveness.) C. E. E. Cranfield explains, "... this submissiveness is to be very much more than the conventional submissiveness that the ancient world expected of a wife... it is... quite different, the expression of that Christian attitude of self to others... freely given, active, not passive, drawing its strength not from the fear of man but from the gospel of Christ... He (Peter) does not embark on any disquisitions on the rights of women, but gives

them some pastoral advice. They must conform to the social conventions of the day, in as far as these do not directly conflict with their obedience to Christ" (I and II Peter and Jude, *Torch Bible Commentaries*, London, SCM Press: 1960; p. 88). Similarly, Archibald Hunter writes, "There is nothing said about inferiority and superiority," and "outward conformity (to existing modes of relationship) is to be infilled with new meaningfulness" (*Interpreter's Bible*, Vol. 12, p. 121).

For the correct interpretation of verse 1 it is necessary to understand the meaning of the first word, *homoioios*, which means "likewise." Does it refer to the section in I Peter 2:18-25 dealing with the servants, or to 2:13, "be subject for the Lord's sake to every human institution," which formulates a much more general rule? If *homoioios* refers to 2:18 (the slaves) submissiveness is much deeper than when it refers to 2:13.

If Peter refers to the immediately preceding paragraph, as Bigg suggests, it means: "Slaves are to show honour to masters, likewise women to husbands" (*op. cit.*, p. 150). Yet, the apostle Paul says to the slaves, ". . . if you can gain your freedom, avail yourself of the opportunity" (I Corinthians 7:21). To decide that these injunctions are parallel, limits rather than deepens woman's submissiveness. Peter wrote 3:1 likely with reference to Genesis 3:16, ". . . he shall rule over you." These words do not describe God's creation order, but the distortion of this order caused by sin and its punishment. Hence, as slaves may strive to become free, wives may strive for an improved marital relationship to which they are allowed to contribute their own share.

However, the opening word of this first verse, *homoioios* (likewise), may also connect 3:1 with 2:13. In this case it would serve to distinguish one group from others and would ask all groups to be humble and submissive to each other: free men live as servants of God (2:13); servants, be submissive (2:18); wives, be submissive (3:1); husbands, be considerate (3:7); all of you, have a tender heart and a humble mind (3:8); elders, be not domineering (5:3); younger ones, be subject to the elders (5:5); and all of you, clothe yourselves with humility (5:5).

This is the opinion of J. N. D. Kelly, who states, "The opening words are not intended to equate the submissiveness due from wives with that expected of slaves. Rather as in vs. 7, the Greek adverb (*homoioios*) harks back to 2:13, implying that the patriarchal principle of the subordination of the wife to the husband is not a matter of human convention but the order which the Creator has established" (*A Commentary on the Epistles of Peter and of Jude, Black's New Testament Commentaries*. London: Adam Black, 1969; p. 127). Slaves and women, but also free men and husbands, must "be subject to every human institution for the Lord's sake" (vs. 13). The fact that we deal with human institutions makes submissiveness less absolute. The submissiveness to human institutions is defined by our absolute submissiveness to the Lord. Hence we often meet in human institutions a pattern of reciprocity, as in Ephesians 5:21; "(husbands and wives) be subject to one another out of reverence to Christ." In the Christian home the husband may yield to his wife, and parents to their children for the Lord's sake.

Peter advocates the same conduct in chapter 5. He admonishes the elders to "tend the flock . . . not as domineering over those in your

charge but being examples to the flock," which is followed by a *homoioos* (likewise) addressed to the younger ones. Peter wants to say in this epistle, which is so strongly aimed at peace, "if older ones must yield to the younger ones how much more should the younger ones acknowledge the authority of older ones." In summary Peter re-emphasizes what he has said before. "Clothe yourselves, all of you (older and younger ones) with humility towards one another . . ." (5:5).

*Homoioos* at the opening of 3:1 formulates a rule, but one that is flexible and qualified as not-absolute by a potent reference to the driving motive of all Christian obedience: do it for the Lord's sake!

It is important to note at this point that Peter formulates the rule or principle of submissiveness for married women not with reference to their place in the home but to the end that their "husbands may be won without a word by the behavior of their wives. . . ." This does not indicate that women should be reluctant to speak about Christ to their unbelieving husbands. "But to persist in talking to someone who does not want to listen only hardens. Then the beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit may, without words being spoken, be more effective than what might only seem a continual nagging . . ." (Cranfield, *op. cit.*, p. 89). The same author remarks, "Sunday by Sunday there are many in church whose life partners seldom come, and men are still liable to be hardened, if they feel their wives are 'getting at' them" (*ibid.*).

The call for submissiveness in I Peter 3:1 is missionary. Submissiveness does not imply the superiority of the man over the woman, of the husband as her master, and did all she could to win him for you, speaking but it demands her willingness to serve, and, if necessary, to suffer (cf. 2:21ff). A classic example of this attitude of submissiveness in marriage is given by Augustine when he describes his mother, "She served her husband as her master, and did all she could to win him for you, speaking to him of you by her conduct, by which you made her beautiful. . . . Finally when her husband was at the end of his earthly span, she gained him for you" (Confessions IX, 9, 19 and 22).

Verse 6 refers to the example of Sarah. Some have pointed out that Sarah certainly is not an example of mute docility. Archibald Hunter writes rather colorfully, "And she (Sarah) was no submissive lamb to the father of the faithful—Abraham! She assumed her place at his side with dignity and with grace. She granted that 'Abraham was the head of the house,' but in her was not one shred of the groveling dumbness of a browbeaten wife" (*op. cit.*, p. 122).

Peter refers to Sarah calling Abraham "lord." The title Sarah gives her husband refers not only to the cultural pattern of her days, but also to her understanding of the marital relationship. Everywhere the Scriptures teach us the headship of the husband in marriage. (Cf. the excursus on head.)

To Sarah Abraham is not only her "head," but even her "lord" and she "obeyed" him. This is customary behavior. This is the way in which the patriarchal family functioned; it required self-denial from the woman.

Although Sarah did not act like a "submissive lamb," her entire life style showed submissiveness and obedience to her husband. She followed

him and accompanied him, leaving the security of Ur of the Chaldeans—and later of Haran—for the insecurity of a nomadic existence.

There is equality between man and woman as partners and, as Peter states it, as “joint heirs of the grace of life.” This equality is honored by the Lord himself when he supports Sarah by telling Abraham, “. . . whatever Sarah says to you, do as she tells you . . .” (Gen. 21:12). Peter refers to Sarah showing how she conformed to the practices of her time and thus possessed a spirit of humility and modesty which still is a precious adornment for those who are “now her children.” (Sarah is the mother of believers, as Abraham is their father.) It is noteworthy that in verse 6 Peter does not state that Sarah’s daughters also ought to call their husbands “lord,” but rather that they should “do right.”

When comparing verse 1 to verse 7, a very small difference can be noted. In verse 1, Peter omits the article, but in verse 7 he uses it again, also in verse 18. According to S. Greydanus, Peter in this way communicates a fine point. “Although he now admonishes the woman, he does this as if it were less directly, but he chooses such a form as if he was speaking about them (rather than to them)” (*Kommentar op de Brieven van de Apostelen*. Amsterdam: Bottenburg, 1929; p. 120). The apostle Peter himself does not enforce the rule of submissiveness without formulating this in an indirect and most considerate manner.

Finally, Peter does not only address the women, but also the men, admonishing them to live considerately with their wives and to bestow honor on the woman as the weaker sex (vs. 7). The Revised Standard Version has substituted the word “vessel” for “the weaker sex.” This may be more easy to understand, but it changes the meaning of the original considerably. The Greek word for vessel, *skeuos*, may have the meaning “wife” or “body.” The decision as to which is intended depends on the meaning of the word “weaker.” If we translate it as “rather weak”—which in itself would be possible—the noun “vessel” could refer to “wives” or female human beings. However, the verse expresses togetherness in at least three expressions: “live with,” being “joint heirs,” and “your prayers,” which makes it a striking parallel to I Corinthians 7:1-7. It seems therefore the better course to understand the noun “vessel” here in the same way as it is used in Romans 9:19f, II Corinthians 4:7 and II Timothy 2:20. The Anchor Bible suggests the translation: “as it is a weaker element, you ought to have esteem for womankind.” Both the words *gnosis* (considerately), literally “with knowledge,” and the *skeuos* (vessel), are quite common in the gnostic vocabulary. However, we agree with Bo Reicke that “Christian knowledge does not consist in the egoistic spirituality characteristic of Gnosticism, but in consideration for those who are weak . . . Gnostic teaching represented a quite different view” (*The Epistles of James, Peter and Jude, The Anchor Bible*. Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, 1964; p. 102, 103).

Peter’s admonition to the husbands emphasizes the element of partnership and togetherness in the Christian marriage. This is evident in the words that express the living together of husband and wife, their sharing together in the grace of life and their praying together. It is noteworthy in this connection that there are two different readings of the Greek text: the one makes the men joint heirs with the women and the

other, the women with the men. The order does not make any difference, it only shows a pattern of equality.

Peter states in this verse that men must live considerably with their wives, since "they are joint heirs with you" of the grace of life. Before the face of God and with respect to the gift (and the graces) of life, there is no difference between man and woman, male and female (Galatians 3:18). Failing to recognize this equality in grace will have adverse influences upon the prayers of the partner who wants to dominate the marital relationship.

Two quotations from Cranfield's commentary are helpful to understand the passage in its entirety.

"Here is the true foundation of the emancipation of women. Where it is recognized that husband and wife are spiritual equals, there is an end of domestic tyranny. It means that women are taken seriously as persons, and can no more be thought of, or treated, as mere drudges, mere child-bearing machines, or mere play-things" (*I and II Peter and Jude*, London: S.C.M. Press, p. 92).

The second quotation reads:

"One general point which this section makes clear remains to be mentioned. Peter is all the time talking about duties rather than rights. Both the wives in v. 1-6 and the husbands in v. 7 are told what they are to give, not what they are to claim. He does not say to the husbands: 'Your wives ought to be in subjection to you'—that would be a charter for domestic tyranny! Nor does he say to the wives: 'Your husbands owe you honour, because you are the weaker vessels'. Instead, he bids both think of their duties. A marriage, in which both partners are obsessed with their rights, is hardly likely to prove successful" (*Ibid.*).

In summary we make the following observations regarding I Peter 3:1-8

1. The submissiveness recommended to the married woman does not differ basically from the submissiveness asked of all believers in various relationships.
2. The submissiveness of the married woman is essentially missionary in character.
3. The submissiveness of Sarah is used as a model, not so much of the ideal relationship in marriage between wife and husband, as of the ideal pattern of behavior for a woman who finds her place in the setting of a patriarchal family.
4. Husbands must at all times honor their wives as equal partners in the realm of grace in which both men and women work and pray.

In conclusion, we find that there is nothing in I Peter 3:1-7 which states that women must be excluded from ecclesiastical office. On the contrary, one might well ask whether the spiritual equality and partnership of men and women—so strongly expressed especially in Peter's admonition to the male members of the congregation—does not provide the Reformed churches with a strong argument to consider anew the existing practice of excluding women from office.

The other General Epistles and the book of Revelation do not contain much material that has a direct bearing upon our subject of study.

We should include, however, one remark in the second Epistle of John. In verses 1 and 5 the church is called "the elect lady." Both times the Greek text has the word *kuria*, which, as Bengel observed, indicates "a lofty title rarely used even for queens" (quoted by Herbert Lockyer, *op. cit.*, p. 257). It proves that as Christ is called *kurios*, Lord, so the church is called *kuria*, the (lordly) lady. The point we want to make here is that the word *kuria* would not have been used by John, if he had not had a deep respect for women. John reminds us of the figure of speech of bridegroom and bride commonly used in the Old Testament for the relationship between God and his people, and in the New Testament for the relationship between Christ and his church.

The same symbolism appears in the book of Revelation, and is further expanded. Over against Christ and his bride we meet Satan and Babylon, the mother of harlots (Revelation 17:5).

The concluding chapters of the book show that the bride is not just waiting passively for the end to come, but she is an active partner in the struggle for the final fulfillment. "The Spirit and Bride say, 'Come'" (Rev. 22:17).

There are no specific references in the book of Revelation to the "offices" except what we read in Revelation 2:20, 21 in the letter to the church of Thyatira:

"But I have this against you, that you tolerate the woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess and is teaching and beguiling my servants to practice immorality and to eat food sacrificed to idols. I gave her time to repent, but she refuses to repent of her immorality."

God gave this prophetess, this woman with the symbolic and revealing name Jezebel, time to repent. He did not tell her that she could not prophesy or that a woman should not do this. She is not punished because of her prophesying, but because of the content of her prophecies, which beguiled God's servants.

Since there is always the contrast between the virgin-woman of Revelation 12 and the whore of Revelation 17 and 18, we may deduct from the Jezebel passage that believing women are encouraged to prophesy, provided they proclaim the healing and saving Word of God.

#### F. Summary of the Position of Women in New Testament Times.

Having completed our survey of the New Testament, it seems appropriate to pause a moment for a review of our observations and findings regarding the status and role of women in New Testament times. We feel that the following points give a fairly accurate reflection of what has been said so far.

1. At the beginning of the New Testament times, the fulness of times, we meet women in positions of social inferiority. All activities in public life are male centered. Women are mainly active in the home and to some extent in the manufacturing of goods. The Jewish, the Greek and even the Roman culture, be it to a lesser degree, do not allow woman her rightful place.

2. The Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles show a marked improvement in the status and role of women. In the question of divorce the Lord Jesus refers to what was in the beginning. His own dealings with women prove how much they were included in his work to restore the order of creation. Jesus' attitude towards the traditional view of the place of women in society reflects the same critical quality as, for example, his dealings with Rabbinistic theology with regard to the Sabbath and tithing.

3. As could be expected, much attention is given in our report to what Paul wrote in his epistles to the early Christian churches. We first give a general survey and then deal with several passages that are of specific interest to our subject and are often quoted in connection with it.

In the general survey it is our main thesis that one cannot deal rightly with the status and role of women according to God's Word if one does not accept Paul's proclamation of the new freedom in Christ as the focal point. All discussion must be guided by what Paul expresses so beautifully in Galatians 3:28: "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ." The discussion about the status and role of women in the church must begin with the acknowledgement of the spiritual oneness of men and women in Christ. This does not do away with the differences. After one has become a Christian, the Jew remains a Jew, the Greek a Greek, the man a man and the woman a woman, but there is no discrimination. They are all equals in Christ.

4. There are two types of official functions in the early Christian church, the charismatic and the institutional ones. In the charismatic ones, originating from direct intervention of the Holy Spirit, as in the ministry of healing, prophecy, tongue-speaking and interpretation, we see that the Holy Spirit "apportions" these gifts "to each one individually as he wills" (I Corinthians 12:11); men and women are both active. In the institutional functions women usually do not participate officially, although there are a number of indications in the Pauline letters that women held such positions (Romans 16:1, 2; Titus 2:3).

5. The oneness in Christ finds its expression in the early Christian church in that both men and women are called to salvation and faith, to Christian action and worship, and to leadership, whenever this was demanded of them. Their oneness is also apparent in that both are called to order to prevent that their behavior in an objectionable exercise of their *exousia*, might prove to be a hindrance for the development of Christ's church.

6. A special study of the concept of "submissiveness" makes it clear that this word indicates a voluntary act of yielding to someone else. Submissiveness is not a status of a certain class, group, or sex, but the attitude of Christian freedom which characterizes all groups and classes and both sexes, first in the Christian community, but also in the society at large.

7. In his epistles the apostle Paul defends the idea of Christian freedom over against a narrow rabbinistic legalism on the one hand, and an unrestricted gnostic libertinism on the other hand. Christian freedom

is real freedom, yet it confesses, "All things are lawful . . . but not all things are helpful" (I Corinthians 6:12).

8. In the first one of the specific passages, I Corinthians 7, we discover a pattern of spiritual equality of men and women. This chapter could be mentioned in another example of the "complimentary parallelism" about which Helmut Flender wrote (see under the Gospels).

9. The passage of I Corinthians 11 shows clearly that the Apostle allows women to prophesy, he only protests against "revolutionary feminism."

10. The section of I Corinthians 14 does not require that women be excluded from participation in worship services. Their prophecy and revelations are acceptable, although, with the men they are called to voluntary restrictions, especially with regard to one particular part of the worship services, viz. that of the discussion. They have to refrain from participation since this would be against the decorum of public meetings in general (vs. 35: it is shameful for a woman to speak in church).

11. I Timothy 2 makes this even more clear. Women may participate in the worship services not only as listeners, but also as active participants in prophecy, and otherwise. Yet, they may not "lord it" over man. Their teachings may not be domineering.

12. The authority of headship in Paul's epistles has been found to be that of the *primus inter pares*, that of the first (-born) among his equals. It is used in distinction from lordship and should not be understood in analogy with a physical body. Hence there is no biblical ground why a woman can not hold positions of headship or share such positions with men as equal partners.

13. I Peter 3 places women as well as men under the general rule: "be subject for the Lord's sake to every human institution" (I Peter 2:13). The rule which is explained by the example of him who "when he was reviled, did not revile in turn (and) when he suffered, he did not threaten" (I Peter 2:23). Here too the behavior recommended for women does not reflect the apostle's teaching concerning the ideal and ultimate relationship between husband and wife, or men and women in general, but it finds its strong motivation in missionary considerations. However, missionary situations are often exceptional.

14. Closely connected to the previous point is the overall conclusion that the New Testament shows an exceptional, missionary situation in the Christian church. It is a time in which the "word grew" rapidly and which has to be followed by a period of consolidation and normalization. This does not mean that the New Testament does not contain the norms and principles for a later period. The teachings of the New Testament have to be understood against their own historical background in order that the true biblical normativity for later centuries may be discovered.

In view of all this we have not found anything that substantiates the practice of excluding women from ecclesiastical office. On the contrary, the Scriptures provide much evidence that partnership of men and women in ecclesiastical offices is possible and even desirable.

### III. WOMEN IN THE CHURCH

In writings about the early Christian church mention of both "widows" and "deaconesses" can be found. The function of the deaconess appears to be quite similar to that of the deacon, although the service of the deaconess was primarily related to women. She assisted at baptisms as well, and visited the sick. The Syrian writings, *Didascalia Apostolorum* (300 A.D.), relate that the deaconess might carry the sacrament to the sick, but no mention is made of her administration of this sacrament. Another book, entitled the *Constitutions of the Holy Apostles* and written between 200 and 250 A.D. by Clement, Bishop of Rome, deals also with the place and function of the women in the church. In the eighth book certain commandments are put into the mouths of the several apostles:

"Philip lays down a rule regarding the ordination of a deacon. Bartholomew gives another concerning a deaconess. 'I, Bartholomew, make this constitution. O bishop, thou shalt lay thy hands upon her in the presbytery and shalt say:

'O Eternal God . . . who didst replenish with the Spirit Miriam, and Deborah, and Anna, and Huldah, who also in the tabernacle of the testimony, and in the temple, didst ordain women to be keepers of thy holy gates,—do thou now also look down upon this thy servant, who is to be ordained to the office of a deaconess, and grant her thy Holy Spirit . . . !'" (Lina Eckenstein, *The Women of Early Christianity*. London: The Faith Press, 1935; p. 153)

This is as close as the church came to the official recognition and ordination of deaconesses. Yet, Lina Echenstein is perhaps right when here she already discovers a disapproving trend of the work of the deaconesses which led to a gradual fading out of this office, first in the West and later in the East. The fact that the prayer proceeds from prophesy to doorkeeping seems to indicate a reduction of the work of the deaconess to a task of simple subservience.

The function of the widow was to help supervise the female members of the congregation. She gave instruction, and, in cases of discipline, she worked in co-operation with the presbyter. Great value was attached to her intercessory prayer.

The decline of mission work among adults resulted in the decline of the special services by women. During the third and fourth centuries the function of the women was reduced to their being doorkeepers at those church entrances which were primarily reserved for women. As time progressed, women were more and more regarded as inferior beings. The church father Tertullian (150-222 A.D.) wrote about several services that women rendered in the midst of the congregation, yet he also spoke about women in a very degrading manner and called them "the gateway to hell."

The fact that women played a large role in the sects, which developed shortly after the New Testament times, was one of the reasons that the church in the course of history frowned upon the women's services, and associated these with heresy.

The service of the deaconess disappeared completely in the Western section of the Christian church during the 6th century. In the Eastern part, however, the "services of the women" flourished at least until the 11th century. Although the women in the West lost their task in the congregations, they did obtain a prominent and valued position once again with the rise of monasticism. In the convents women could have religious vocations denied to them in other areas of the church. They could study and teach. They boarded children and taught letters, hygiene, and domestic arts. For centuries they provided the only type of higher education open to girls. Many of the women served as nurses in hospitals. Famous for their work of charity were the Poor Clares, founded by Santa Clare of Assisi in 1216 A.D. Among the abbesses, some of whom were great administrators, was St. Teresa of Avila, a Spanish mystic of the 16th century. We may not underestimate the work the nuns performed in serene devotion and cheerful ministry. Due to the Protestant Reformation several convents were closed. Thus many girls, who had formerly been taught by nuns, were denied an education.

With the Reformation new significance was placed on the priesthood of all believers. The deaconate received renewed emphasis. John Calvin re-opened the deaconship to women.

"Women could fill no other public office than to devote themselves to the care of the poor. If we accept this (as it must be accepted) there will be two kinds of deacons: one to serve the church in administering the affairs of the poor; the other, in caring for the poor themselves" (John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion* Vol. XXI, ed. John T. McNeil. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1960; III, p. 1061).

This ideal was put into practice at the hospital in Geneva, of which Calvin was a boardmember. Although John Calvin advocated the deaconess in his *Institutes*, he did not mention them in his *Ordinances Ecclesiastiques*.

From the Church Order of Geneva several churches adopted the idea of two kinds of deacons: one for the collection and distribution of alms, and the other for the care of the sick and of prisoners. In the church of Wezel four women were elected by the presbyters and ordained for the period of one year. Problems arose when married women (not only widows), and some of them even younger than sixty years of age, also were elected, this being contrary to what Paul wrote in I Timothy 5:9. When the matter was brought to the Synod of Middelburg in 1581, it was decided not to introduce women into the office of deacon "for the sake of several inconveniences," except in times of danger, e.g. plagues (G. Huls., *op. cit.*, p. 84). Thus the Reformation was not able to bring the matter of "women in office" to a generally acceptable and principal conclusion.

The Reformation did have a profound influence on women in another respect, however, through the translation of the Scriptures into the languages of that time. The invention of the printing press facilitated the widespread distribution of the Bible, which stimulated literacy and the desire to read. As women increased their knowledge of the

Scriptures, their spiritual influence was greatly felt in the homes. Some women emerged who through their strong faith played an influential role in public life. At the time of the Reformation it was rather unusual for women to seek their work outside the home, but gifted women gradually began to take more prominent roles. During the 17th century some Baptist and Quaker women, less restrained because of their churches' greater freedom from ecclesiastical dogmas and control, began to preach. Noted for her prison-reform work was the English Quaker preacher, Elizabeth Fry.

On the American continent, women began to disturb the common practices during the 19th century. Many of these women were committed Christians, and some were preachers. They worked for the education of girls, and they spoke against slavery and against the injustice of the denial of women's right to vote.

The Women's Christian Temperance Union was an influential organization and won much respect. The goal of this union was to work for women's suffrage, child labor laws, and reforms which would preserve the solidarity of the home. The vigorous women preachers of this era belonged mainly to the Quaker, Universalist, Congregational and Methodist circles. They did a phenomenal amount of evangelistic preaching and conducting of meetings. Women finally received the right to vote in 1920. From then on opportunities for women in the business and professional fields began to increase.

Due to the fact that their services were not required in the ecclesiastical work of the church, women now initiated voluntary organizations, which functioned mainly through lay women in the local congregations. The voluntary work created a spiritual and social fellowship in the congregation, while on a wider scale it brought with it a sense of belonging to a world wide fellowship in Christ. Through the diligence of Women's Boards of Foreign Missions, many missionaries were sent out and supported.

In the present century there have been both advances and retreats in the matter of ordination and ministry of women in North America. Although women have been given representation in church assemblies, their number remains small, and at times their position is no more than a token participation. Contrary to the expectation of the women at the turn of the century, the number of women ministers did not increase in the 20th century. Exact statistics are not available, but there are probably fewer women serving congregations today than at the beginning of this century. However, the number of women with some kind of theological education is larger. For many years the protestant seminaries have admitted women students without protest, but having a degree in theology does not ensure that one will preach, be ordained, or enter a religious vocation as a profession. A very small percentage of all persons employed as clergymen are women. By no means are women taking over the leadership! Georgina Harkness describes the attitude that ordained women office-bearers should have: "We must maintain our femininity, never forgetting that we are women, be cooperative in spirit, working with men on all suitable occasions, choose our priorities. The Gospel

is more important than women's rights, keep up with the times. Do not forget the lessons of history, but look to the future. Be faithful to our calling" (*Women in Church and Society*. New York: Abingdon Press, 1972; p. 33).

On the European scene the work of the deaconess was revived around 1830. At this time the Motherhouses in Germany were founded by Theodore Fliedner. The Sisters belonged to a community motherhouse and worked in hospitals, kindergartens, orphanages, and in youthwork. These deaconesses did not work under the authority of the church, but formed a separate community. Recently the emphasis has changed somewhat, and to a great extent they are now regarded as belonging to the ministry of the church. The Presbyterian Church of Scotland introduced the "commissioned" deaconess almost a century ago. Some time later in a number of churches of Reformed persuasion in England, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, the United States, and Canada, the deaconess received a recognized function or "order." Many of the deaconesses chose to prepare for their work by special training, or by taking the same courses in theology as the men who prepare for the ministry. The commissioned deaconesses experienced that they could better represent their church as ordained workers.

Similarly, the Reformed Bible College in Grand Rapids trains women for services in the churches. Graduates of the college do work in areas such as parish work, home missions, foreign missions and professional leadership of church organizations. We wonder if our denomination has fully developed the scope of the work these graduates could do, and if enough congregations make use of the trained help that is available.

Besides the position of the commissioned deaconess, the Presbyterian Church in many countries, including the United States and Canada, has opened all the ranks of the ministry to women. One of the results is that the separate Women's Boards of Missions are being dissolved, and men and women in partnership work for the mission outreach of their church. This cooperation has enriched the work greatly.

The women of today are well qualified to work in partnership with men for the return of the Lord Jesus Christ and the upbuilding of his church. Many women also have more time, due to labor-saving devices in the home. They can complement the work of the men in the church. Women fully recognize that when the church accepts their work in any type of role or function, for which they have the spirituality, personality, training and experience, they will still perform these functions as women, not as disguised males. They also agree that women should be elected according to the spiritual requirements that are expressly mentioned in the Bible (Titus 2:3-5; I Timothy 5:9, 11, 14; I Peter 3:2).

The churches belonging to the Reformed Ecumenical Synod have studied and are continuing the study of "women in ecclesiastical office." All the churches rejoice in and speak of the indispensable auxiliary services of dedicated women, in Sunday school and catechism classes, social service committees, funds for the needy, fund raising, women's missionary unions, and ladies aid societies, which are often an extension

of diaconal activities in the churches. The Dutch Reformed Church of South Africa speaks very highly of women who try to combat feelings of estrangement and loneliness by visits and guided friendships, and who for many, pave the way back to the fellowship of the church of Jesus Christ (R.E.S. Acts, 1968; p. 325).

The majority of the churches have not admitted women to the "offices" of the church because of traditional interpretations of scriptural data. It must be realized that in some churches, mission groups and underdeveloped areas, women may not be ready to participate in public or culturally it might be improper for them to do so. Others, e.g. the Reformed Church of Argentina, The Christian Church of Sumba, the Gereformeerde Kerken in the Netherlands, have seen fit to open one, two, or all three of the ecclesiastical offices to women. Their decisions were taken in the light of the spiritual, social, and economic conditions in which the church of today is called to minister. These churches affirm that God in his Word opens up the possibility, desirability and necessity of women's place in the ecclesiastical work of the church. They find that women with their God-given unique identity have enriched and broadened the understanding and exercise of the official "offices."

The 1972 Reformed Ecumenical Synod studied the report on "Office in the New Testament" and recorded its decisions in articles 94, 102, and 108 of the Acts. With regard to the matter of "Women in Ecclesiastical Office," synod decided at first:

"that synod reaffirm that it is the teaching of Scripture that women are excluded from the office of ruling and preaching elders" (Art. 102, p. 59).

The grounds given for this weighty decision were derived from I Timothy 2:11-15 and I Corinthians 14:33-37b and included arguments such as "women are not permitted to teach nor to have dominion over men on the basis of God's order of creation, the implication of the fall, etc."

After the main recommendation was adopted an amendment was added to this decision and adopted. The amendment reads:

"nevertheless, recognizing that there are member churches who at present hold a position and practice contrary to the above affirmation, synod requests the member churches to study this question *on the basis of Scripture* and in the light of the reports of the study committee and advisory committee, send copies of their studies to all member churches not later than January, 1975, and that the matter be placed on the agenda of the RES 1976" (*ibid.*).

It almost seems that the RES was not as sure about its decision as it appeared at first glance. Furthermore the Acts themselves inform us of different views in Sumba and in Argentina, whereas synod, of course, was well aware of the different situation in the Netherlands in this regard.

The same hesitancy is apparent in the motion which was adopted next:

"Member churches who have already studied this matter are requested to send copies of their study materials to other member churches and for information to the General Secretary" (*ibid.*).

After this, synod dealt separately with the office of deacon and women and reached the following decision which looks like a compromise:

“That synod did not have before it sufficient evidence to enable synod to make a satisfactory decision for or against the entrance of women into the office of deacon, synod reaffirm its decision in 1968, viz: ‘that member churches should be cautious to proceed in the direction of the entrance of women into the diaconal office. Each church must make its own responsible evaluation of its situation and decision’ ” (Art. 108, p. 60).

Yet even after this carefully worded decision still another motion was passed, this time not excluding, but rather including women. Synod decided:

“That synod recommend to the member churches that they make full use of the gifts and services of women in the diaconal service, in auxiliary capacities and in appropriate teaching situations” (*ibid.*).

It is upon the request of the RES that the synod of the Christian Reformed Church decided to appoint a study committee. In view of these decisions mentioned above, the committee is of the opinion that our discoveries in the Scriptures may still serve the RES and the member churches. The last Reformed Ecumenical Synod has not closed the door completely to the admission of women to all ecclesiastical offices. Since the diaconate for women is still under discussion, it is well possible that also the other offices may be considered anew, especially since the evidence from the quoted scriptural references is not beyond dispute.

#### IV. SUMMARY

The mandate given to our study committee by synod demands that we look at the “general Reformed practice of excluding women from the various ordained offices in the church” in the “light of Scripture.” One of the first discoveries we made was that the Scriptures seldom, if ever, deal directly with the problem under consideration. For one thing, the offices in the times described in Scripture were not as clearly delineated as in later Reformed practice and in the Church Order. The situation in Scripture is a more fluid one. There is not such a sharp distinction between the special office and that of the believers as in later days, and the special office is not as clearly distinct from the use of the gifts of the Holy Spirit in a number of charismatic ministries as is the case in Reformed practice today. Has this Reformed practice stressed the importance of the specific ecclesiastical offices to such a degree that often not much as been left for the ministry of the office of believers? Has the idea of the laity thrown out of the front door by the churches of the Reformation, re-entered the church through the back door or side door?

The committee expresses agreement with H. Kraemer’s statement:

“It is, therefore, of the greatest importance that this woman question is seen as a part of the whole problem of the place of the laity in the church, i.e. both men and women, as the ‘new creature in Christ.’ From that angle all questions and arguments about superi-

ority-inferiority automatically fall out . . ." (*A Theology of the Laity*. London: Lutterworth Press, 1958; p. 71).

Since the Reformed practice in church life differs much from situations described in the Scriptures, the committee could not just concentrate on "women in office," but found itself compelled to undertake a study of the status and role of women in the Scriptures in general. Here we encountered some very important hermeneutical problems (questions regarding the principles of the explanation of the Scriptures). In this connection Kraemer makes the following somewhat controversial observations:

"Nobody denies the great significance and contribution to the life of the church on the part of women. This does not, however, alter the fact that, generally speaking, the place and rights of women in the church are treated on the basis of non-Christian and sub-Christian ideas. It is striking that in recent years in many churches in the world the question of the place and rights of women has been debated with great force. The recognition of the equality of women with men in society, economic and political life, and the growing realization of this recognition shows up in the inferior position of women in the church more and more as an unbearable anomaly. The inferior position of women (in the sense of an inferiority inherent in their sex, i.e. in nature) is, however, not only a cultural lag, still dragging on in the church, but is chiefly so deeply rooted in the churches because it depends on the question of what should be considered the right interpretation of the Scriptures. This puts the whole dispute on the status and rights of women and of their inherent inferiority on a different level. Not on the level of nature, but on that of God's ordering of nature and of obedience or disobedience to the Word of God.

The fierce debate, fiercer than ever before in history, on the rightful place of women in the church is thus inextricably intertwined with the still undecided inner debate within the church about the interpretation of Scripture, either according to the line of the letter that killeth or according to that of the spirit that vivifies. Behind these debates about disobedience or obedience to the divine Word there are, of course, hiding themselves also all the sociological and psychological inhibitions which together build up the deeply entrenched masculine superiority assumption. This still prevailing lack of decision in regard to the right scriptural interpretation, and the general conservative temper in the church as to the status of women, are consensative to ministry and laity (many women included)" (*ibid.*, p. 70, 71).

The results of our study of the Old and the New Testament with regard to our mandate can be summarized as follows:

1. In our study of the creation we found that God made man, male and female, to be his image and his vicegerent, or representative. Both being the image of God, they were to serve him in togetherness, and in their relationship of mutual helpfulness they were to develop to the full what God had given them as equal partners.

2. Sin broke man's covenant relationship with God and led to a state of broken harmony, of misery and death. As obedience brings life and joy, so sin leads to death and sorrow.

3. In the covenant of grace God forgives and saves, hence a pattern of restoration of the original relationships develops. For the woman this in principle includes restoration of the equal partnership with the man.

4. We were amazed by the many signs of this pattern of restoration which were found already in the times of the patriarchs and also in the times of Israel's existence as a nation. We also noted repeated downfalls from this upward trend. In this respect we spoke of a "checkered pattern." Even among the heathen nations around Israel, free women often held high positions.

5. In our socio-cultural view of New Testament times we discovered that women at the dawn of Christianity had no influence in society, were bound to the home, and were limited to their roles in the family. Soon afterwards, however, there is a new upward trend which found its roots partly in Roman civilization and partly in religious movements such as Gnosticism, and in the Gospel of Christ.

6. Though throughout the New Testament the emphasis is on the oneness of men and women in Christ, yet from time to time the congregation, both men and women, are called to order. Excesses are to be avoided. The main purpose of the organization of the congregation is not so much to define the status and role of woman in the kingdom of Christ, as to create the climate that is most conducive to the carrying out of the great commission of the Lord. In contrast to the Gnostics, Christians do not claim the full exercise of their "*exousia*," freedom, but they rather devote themselves to their missionary tasks of ministry to the world.

7. In our third part, entitled *Women in the Church* we briefly discussed the two thousand years that passed since the birthday of the church on Pentecost. We discovered a recurring pattern, viz. that in times of great development, in times in which the presence of the Holy Spirit was very much felt in the church, there invariably is an attempt to give to women a more meaningful place in the church, whereas in times that the church resembles a slow flowing river rather than a foaming cataract, women lose much of their newly obtained influence and are being pushed to the corner of complete silence. We also noticed that women, even in the most unfavorable situations, find ways and means to make an active contribution in the work that Christ demands from all.

In the early Christian church women were very active and influential, later in the battle against heresies, women lost even their diaconal office. For those who were motivated to take sacrificial vows, monasticism opened new ways of ministry and service in the church and the world. The Reformation seemed to open up the possibility for women to hold an official function in the church, but this did not materialize and women were again confined to indirect participation in the life of the church. Later, in newer denominations and through women's organiza-

tions, women found new opportunities to do their share in the ministry "to which all believers are called" (Ephesians 4:12).

8. Finally, in the light of our reading of the Scriptures the question arose in our committee whether the word "male" should not be deleted from Article 3 in the Church Order. This article reads: "Confessing male members of the church who meet biblical requirements for office-bearers are eligible for office." We believe that also confessing *female* members of the church could meet the biblical requirements for office-bearers. If so, the formulation of Article 3 would be discriminatory in nature. If female members of the church cannot be office-bearers, then no female member can meet the requirements either, and then the word "male" in the article is indeed superfluous. Idzard Van Dellen and Martin Monsma agree with the article as it stands, and they believe that "the induction of women into the ministry and other ecclesiastical offices is an innovation of more recent date" (*The Revised Church Order Commentary*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1967; p. 26). It seems that the matter is brought to a decision by an illegitimate argument when they continue, "And it is noteworthy that this innovation has thus far found sympathy and support especially with churches which are inclined to be shallow in their doctrinal understanding of the Bible, and with those who are modernistic in their approach toward biblical Christianity and who fail to take the Word of God seriously" (*ibid*). The authors admit that during the time of the Old Testament "there were a couple of exceptions" to the rule that women could not serve in the prophetic or kingly offices, but they conclude, "The fact that a woman occupied the place of a prophet and judge in Israel was surely not the normal situation, and was doubtlessly due to Israel's sin" (*ibid*).

#### IV. CONCLUSIONS

1. The practice of excluding women from ecclesiastical office cannot conclusively be defended on biblical grounds.

2. The biblical teaching regarding the place and role of women in relation to ecclesiastical office can be summarized in the following principles:

- a. Christ's redemption and restoration results in a oneness of the sexes and does not allow for any discrimination in the congregation (Galatians 3:28).
- b. The Scriptures warn repeatedly against the idea of complete sameness between the sexes and their roles and functions in the church.
- c. During the times of biblical history women have in fact officiated in many ways and in many offices.
- d. The Scriptures stress continually the *modus* (way) in which women should function in the church. This *modus* may not give offence and ought to be conductive to the ministry of the church.

3. The question as to whether or not women should be given the privilege to serve in ecclesiastical office must be answered in the light of the biblical principles, defined above, taking into consideration the local situation in the churches and the cultural pattern of our times.

## V. RECOMMENDATIONS

A. That synod give the privilege of the floor to the chairman and the reporter of the study committee, Dr. Remkes Kooistra and the Rev. Dirk Habermehl, when the report is discussed at synod.

B. That synod adopt the following conclusions of the study report:

1. The practice of excluding women from ecclesiastical office cannot conclusively be defended on biblical grounds.

2. The biblical teaching regarding the place and role of women in relation to ecclesiastical office can be summarized in the following principles:

a. Christ's redemption and restoration results in a new equality between the sexes and does not allow for any discrimination in the congregation (Galatians 3:28).

b. The Scriptures warn repeatedly against the idea of complete sameness between the sexes and their roles and functions in the church.

c. During the times of biblical history women have in fact officiated in many ways and in many offices.

d. The Scriptures stress continually the *modus* (way) in which women should function in the church. This *modus* may not give offence and ought to be conducive to the ministry of the church.

3. The question as to whether or not women should be given the privilege to serve in ecclesiastical office must be answered in the light of the biblical principles, defined above, taking into consideration the local situation in the churches and the cultural pattern of our times.

C. That synod present this report to the Reformed Ecumenical Synod and to its members for further study, in keeping with their request (Acts 1972, Art. 108, 2: "(Synod) request the member churches to send their studies and decisions on this matter to one another and to the General Secretary promptly").

D. That synod appoint a committee to study whether the word "male" in Article 3 of the Church Order should be deleted.

### Women in Ecclesiastical Office Committee

Remkes Kooistra, Chairman  
 Dirk N. Habermehl, Reporter  
 Dick C. Los  
 Jane Malda  
 Aukje G. J. Masselink  
 Walter J. Vos

The committee member Peter M. Jonker agrees with most of the report, but since he does not agree with our main conclusions and recommendations, it was impossible for him to sign this report. He asked the committee the privilege of the following *postscript*.

## POSTSCRIPT

With the following I do not intend to submit a formal minority report. I just want to give account of the fact that I cannot in good conscience subscribe to the report as submitted above. One of the rea-

sons why I consider it less advisable to present a minority report is the fact that synod will have at its table the Acts of the Reformed Ecumenical Synod, 1972. Those acts contain a report on "The Office in the New Testament," part of which is dealing with "The Ministry of Women" (p. 196 vv.), which part reflects quite well my view on the matter under study. The second reason is that I do think that the study of this matter by our committee is ill-timed in view of the ongoing study on Ecclesiastical Office and Ordination (see further the last part of my observations).

Although there are portions of the report as submitted above with which I can agree, there are some areas in which I have reservations and even pertinent objections.

The area of disagreement centers mainly around those passages of Scripture which give pertinent instructions regarding the place of women in the church.

It is beyond doubt that many of the instructions or commands given regarding the behavior of men and women have to be understood in the light of the historic-cultural situation in which the New Testament church had its place, and which for that reason are not in the same way binding for the church of all ages.

A difficulty arises, however, when the apostle Paul makes reference to the order of creation (I Tim. 2:13), to what the law says (I Cor. 14:34), and to the fact that woman was the first who fell in transgression (I Tim. 2:14). Paul concludes from these references that the woman ought to accept a place of submissiveness within the church.

I fail to see that this reference to God's revelation in the Old Testament can be considered as time-conditioned, i.e. as being related to the social structure of the time in which Paul lived and in which the early church had to find its place.

As I see it (without reference to the report) there are two avenues of approach along which one could try to defend that those commands are no longer binding for our times.

The first one is the assertion that Paul was influenced by a rabbinistic view on the woman. The hermeneutic principle by which we have to approach the Scriptures, as I understand it, forbids us to make this conclusion. The Lord Jesus distinguished between what had been said according to tradition and what was written in the law of God (Matt. 5:17-48; 15:3-9), and rejected any rabbinistic addition to faulty commentary on the law of God. Paul claims in defense of his apostleship over against Judaistic allegations amongst the Galatians that he received the gospel not from man, but through a revelation of Jesus Christ (Gal. 1:11, 12).

Furthermore, if Paul in the disputed passages would have been influenced by rabbinistic conceptions about the woman and her place in the church, then we would have to conclude that there is a serious inconsistency in Paul's teaching when in Galatians 3:28 he stresses the equality of male and female in their fellowship with Christ and so with God. This is certainly not congruent with a rabbinistic view on the woman.

Another effort to explain Paul's references to the order of creation, to the law and to the fall into sin could be the assertion that the apostle in a haphazard manner used data from the Old Testament in order to add some Scriptural weight to an injunction which as such is only based on practical considerations.

Nobody who adheres to a scriptural view on the inspiration of the Bible authors by the Holy Spirit can accept this as a possible explanation. The Lord Jesus himself and the apostles Paul and Peter have given clear evidence of their great respect for the Scriptures of the Old Testament to which they ascribed divine authority (cf. Matt. 5:17-19; 2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Pet. 1:21).

The question about the place of women in the church could also be approached from another angle. The apostle Paul clearly does not envisage women in the office of elder. In many texts where elders are mentioned there is no indication that also women were involved (Acts 11:30; 14:24; 15:2, 6, 22; 21:18). However, in the epistle to Timothy it is beyond doubt that the apostle thinks only of men as candidates for eldership (*episcopos*): they should be "the husband of one wife" (1 Tim. 3:2). On this score there is no doubt among the exegetes.

The question may rightly be asked why Paul did not permit women to be appointed as elders. The argument that he never appointed women and did not think of women for the eldership in the church because of his Jewish background, or because of the offence it might have caused in the society of those days can hardly be maintained.

Again the effort to explain this from his Jewish background has to fail in the light of the radical change in the position of the woman brought about by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. The prophecy of Joel was fulfilled that also on the maidservants the Spirit would be poured out and that the daughters would prophesy (Acts 2:17, 18). The four daughters of Philip prophesied (Acts 21:9), Priscilla and her husband Aquila are Paul's "fellow workers in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 16:3) and gave private instruction to the Jew Appollos (Acts 18:26). Many more women are mentioned who labored in the Lord, did the work of evangelizing and teaching and accompanied Paul and his fellow workers on their missionary journeys. These facts certainly do not indicate in the least Paul's being influenced by rabbinistic traditions. Correctly D. G. Hulst, *De Vrouw in de Kerk*, concludes, "It is evident from what happened with regard to the women on the Day of Pentecost that the breach with the synagogal practice has become fundamental and radical" (p. 26).

In the light of Paul's view on the woman as equally sharing in the gifts of the Holy Spirit and of his practice to make full use of her gifts as co-laborers in the kingdom of God, he has clearly proven that he was one of those who made the complete breach with the rabbinistic traditions.

Furthermore, when in Gal. 3:28 Paul states that "there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus," it should be noted that the proclamation of the oneness in Christ of man and woman is preceded by

the statement about the oneness of Jew and Greek, another evidence of his total breach with any rabbinistic concept. We can understand that Dr. Hulst, dealing with this text adds, "we can conceive of it that such a statement must have meant for the rabbis something like the downfall of society" (*o.c.*, p. 33).

From this direction the exclusion of women from the eldership cannot possibly be explained.

Another attempt to explain the exclusion of women from the office of elder tries to see this exclusion in the light of the social-cultural structure of society in Paul's days, so as to prevent that the church would give offense by having women as elders (*episkopoi* or *presbyteroi*) in the church.

However, the New Testament scriptures give every evidence that the position of the women in the church and their co-operation in the spreading of the gospel was such that radical inroads were made into the socially acceptable place of the woman. It is unnecessary to repeat the examples given above and the many more adduced in the report. There is no reason to assume that women were not participants of the "varieties of gifts" and the "varieties of service" in the congregation (I Cor. 12:4, 5), or that they were excluded when it says, "to each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good" (vs. 7) and that "the same Spirit . . . apports to each one individually as he wills" (vs. 11). In I Corinthians 14 the apostle pictures a worship service in which "all speak in tongues" and in which "all prophesy" (vs. 22). Here again is no indication nor any reason to assume that he only thinks of men. If in such a gathering outsiders or unbelievers enter, Paul foresees that they might say, "you are mad"; however, not because of the participation of women, but because of the disorder out of which nobody can get any message.

If this radical change in the position and *public* activity of the woman is acceptable to Paul, why would her place in the eldership be more offensive? We may assume that the gifts of speaking in tongues, of prophecy, of healing, etc. were used or demonstrated not exclusively in the worship services. As such they had a more public nature than the eldership which, as far as we can understand from the New Testament data, was mainly intended for the internal supervision and ruling of the congregation.

Also this attempt to explain the exclusion of women from the office of elder cannot stand the test.

It seems to me that the solution can only be found in the way the Scriptures repeatedly stress the God-given order of submissiveness of the woman to her husband. That this demand to submissiveness has been misused by men in the history of the church has sufficiently been demonstrated in the report. Yet this sinful misuse does not nullify the scriptural ordinance for marriage in which the man is the head of the woman (I Cor. 11:3). The demand for submissiveness of the woman to her husband can be found six times in the New Testament, and that certainly not only in reaction to an exuberant spirit in the church of Corinth, nor only from the side of the apostle Paul (I Cor. 14:34; Eph.

5:22; Col. 3:18; I Tim. 2:11; Tit. 2:5; I Pet. 3:1, 5). Dr. N. J. Hommes, who is convinced that a more active part in church life should be given to the woman, nonetheless states in his concluding chapter, "the submissiveness of the married woman over against her husband is founded in the order of creation, in the will of God, and stays unassailable also if the social relations fully have been changed and the wife also in the family has become much more a colaborer, a partner of the husband within modern society" (*De Vrouw in de Kerk*, p. 164).

Whatever may be said about the notion *head*, it cannot be denied that it also indicates a position of authority and representation. In the relation between Christ and his church (Eph. 5:22) one might say that the idea of authority is more heavily present than in the relation between husband and wife, where the representative element has to receive the greater emphasis. Headship includes two important elements, a sharing of and participation in a unity of life, and a certain inequality within that unity. The latter element receives special emphasis when the unity in life has to be related to life outside of its own sphere of fellowship, in this case outside of the marriage relation. That happens both in the community of the church as the visible expression of Christ's body, as in society. It is there that the representative nature of the husband as head of the woman comes to its full expression. It is particularly in that area that Paul emphasizes the demand of submissiveness of the wife to her husband.

Recognizing that the Spirit gave the gifts of prophecy, prayer and teaching to women as well as to men, if the motive to exclude women from a position of leadership within the church had to be sought only or mainly in a possible adverse reaction from the side of the contemporary society, one might have expected that Scripture had warned the woman to refrain from using those gifts in public, much more than prescribing that women should not be appointed as elders, since the latter function was more of an internal nature (namely for the church) than the using of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. It seems to me that the only reasonable explanation for this exclusion is the command to submissiveness based on the order God made and prescribed in creation and which order he upheld after the fall into sin.

The question may arise whether the injunctions concerning the place of the woman in the church hold only for the married woman. If so, the unmarried woman (single or widow) would not just because of her being a woman be excluded from certain functions in the church.

That Paul speaks repeatedly about the husband-wife relationship has a good reason. To say it in the words of someone else, "The apostle thinks in his epistles generally of the married woman, which is obvious since in his time the 'problem of the unmarried woman' as we know it, did not exist" (Hommes, *o.c.*, p. 49). In the report of a study committee to the synod of the Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland, 1965, it is observed:

"In the contemporary society (of Paul's time) the unmarried woman was indeed an exception. Yet there were in the congregation also virgins and widows. In the given situation it must have

been strange to the train of thought of the apostle silently to permit to those women what he denies to the (married) sisters in general. Moreover, . . . in the disputed passages the point obviously is not the relationship of the married woman to her husband but the attitude of the woman in the worship service. The natural position of the woman, according to the apostolic train of thought, has not only bearing on the relationship in marriage. Also in her service to the upbuilding of the congregation she is not allowed to deny her being complement.”

And further,

“This time-conditioned nature of special injunctions does not mean, however, that we can pass by the deeper motive on which they are founded. In I Corinthians 14:34 Paul clearly gives account of this. He makes the point that the woman should remain ‘submissive,’ literally ‘subordinated,’ ‘as also the law, the Torah, says.’”

And further, it belongs to the underlying motive,

“that the woman is not allowed to reverse the order set for her by acting (*optreden*) with authority over against the man” (p. 3, par. 7 and 9; see also H. N. Ridderbos, *Paulus*, p. 517).

I can only agree with the reasoning followed in the quotations above. It is deeply ingrained in the scriptural pattern of thought regarding the relation between man and woman that there is a deeper dimension to it than is expressed in the husband-wife relationship. This dimension cannot be measured in terms of certain roles accepted in any given culture, nor be regulated according to roles which happen to prevail in our rapidly changing society.

Any societal structure is bound, due to the fall into sin, to reflect the apostacy from the harmonious relationship between all creatures as created by God. The healing of society can only be expected from the influence of the saving revelation in Jesus Christ, thus according to the Word and through the Spirit of God.

Although we should thankfully admit that God in his common goodness still preserves much that vaguely reflects creational order, the inherent tendency to apostacy forbids us, in judging the fundamentals of human existence, to find our norm in a changing society, in this case in the changing position of the woman in our modern culture.

My conclusion can only be that underlying principles in the Scriptures concerning the relation between man and woman confirms the soundness of the position maintained in the Reformation of excluding women from the place of authority over the whole of the congregation.

Note: It should be observed that we are dealing here with a matter which does not touch upon anyone’s personal relationship with Jesus Christ our Lord. The problem in question is of a church-orderly (not meant as technical term) nature, or in other words, deals with the well-being of the church. This does not make it of lesser importance. It is striking that Paul in fact gave shape to some principles of a “church order” when he precisely concerning the matter under study twice states that his injunctions should be the practice

in "the churches of God" (I Cor. 11:16) or in "all the churches of the saints" (I Cor. 14:33).

Having said this I want to make it fully clear that with the committee I am convinced that in ecclesiastical practice the women have not always been given due recognition for their God-given gifts and talents. In many ways the church can and should make greater use of these talents, as is also gradually being done. Positions of occasional leadership in ruling and teaching (f.i. as counselors of the Calvinettes, girls clubs, etc.), in administration and the work of mercy (i.e. bookkeeping, social worker, etc.) are rightly entrusted to women, since for such work they are often better equipped than men. Many women are now so much more competent than in preceding centuries for a valuable contribution to the upbuilding of the church that it would only be detrimental to the church if it would not recognize and use these gifts and talents to the fullest extent.

Finally, two additional comments should be made.

First, I question whether it is scripturally tenable to consider the threefold office of elder, deacon and teaching elder as exhaustive. It seems to me that the Scriptures leave room for what perhaps may be called "auxiliary ministries" in which also women should have a place and should serve the church in a variety of official functions, according to the gifts given to them. However, since this belongs to the field of study of the committee on Ecclesiastical Office and Ordination, it seems not proper here to elaborate on this possibility.

Lastly, in its report to Synod 1972 (Acts, p. 401) our committee expressed its regret that we had to deal with the matter of the place of woman related to the ecclesiastical office, while at the same time an extensive report on Ecclesiastical Office and Ordination would be submitted. Synod 1972 did not make a conclusive decision on the latter report, but gave an additional mandate, in which one of the questions to be answered was, "What is the nature of the authority involved in the specific office in its relation to what is known as "the office of all believers?" (Acts, p. 95). It seems to me that this question has direct bearing on the matter of the place of women, and that our committee can not feel itself "better equipped to deal with their specific mandate" (p. 401) as long as synod has not dealt with the report on Ecclesiastical Office and Ordination.

I can see that our committee did not want to ask synod for another year of delay before submitting its report, yet I am also convinced that the question about the place of women hinges so much on the broader concept of office in general that the two studies should not have been conducted simultaneously. It has to be considered redundant and possibly confusing if two study committees have to cover largely the same material about the fundamentals of the matter under study.

Peter M. Jonker

**REPORT 40**  
**MARRIAGE GUIDELINES**  
(Art. 62)

**DEAR MEMBERS OF SYNOD:**

The Synod of 1971 appointed the undersigned to serve as a committee on Marriage Guidelines. The mandate for this committee reads as follows: "That synod appoint a study committee to evaluate the material of Classis Toronto and to compare it with the 1956 decisions of synod on divorce and remarriage with a view towards establishing guidelines for pastors and consistories in their care of (a) couples contemplating marriage, (b) couples involved in marital difficulties, (c) divorced persons, and (d) those who have been divorced and contemplate remarriage; and to report their findings with recommendations to synod.

*Grounds:*

- a) The approach of the Toronto study to marriage, divorce and remarriage is significantly different from the approach of the Synod of 1956.
- b) The Toronto overture requests guidelines that merit serious consideration."

Our mandate is thus twofold:

1. to study and evaluate the issue of divorce and remarriage in the light of the 1956 synodical decision as compared with the Toronto overture (cf. Overture 18, 1971), and
2. to formulate guidelines for pastors and consistories in dealing with the problems of:
  - (a) couples contemplating marriage
  - (b) couples involved in marital difficulties
  - (c) divorced persons
  - (d) divorced persons contemplating remarriage

The synodical decisions of 1956 which we are to consider are the following:

1. The consistories are urged most earnestly to guard the sanctity of marriage, and warn unceasingly against every violation of the marriage bond through unbiblical divorce or through adultery, keeping in mind the need for true repentance on the part of all who seek admission to the church.
2. The consistories are advised that people who are guilty of unbiblical divorce, or who are divorced as the result of their own adultery

and having remarried, seek entrance or re-entrance into the church, shall be expected to show their sorrow and genuine repentance during an adequate period of probation. Such cases shall not be settled without the advice of classis.

3. These declarations are referred to the consistories for their guidance so that they may deal with the concrete cases which come before them in accordance with the given situations, the demonstrable teaching of Scripture on marriage, divorce, repentance, and forgiveness, and the general provisions of the Church Order.

Some of the conclusions of the Toronto study which require our attention are:

a) The term *biblical* and *non-biblical* grounds for divorce are not biblical and ought not to be used.

b) The church acknowledges that marriage is essentially indissoluble.

c) Since we live in a broken world, the church ought to recognize divorce in cases of a complete breakdown of the marriage relationship.

#### *Historical Background*

In this report we need not trace anew all the steps and periods in the history of our church on this matter. In 1968 the last decision on divorce and remarriage was reached. Synod adopted the following (Acts 1968, pp. 60, 61):

“That synod declare that admitting or readmitting to membership in the church persons who have been divorced on unbiblical grounds, and have remarried, or who are divorced as the result of their own adultery and have remarried, is the task of the consistory and is the responsibility of classis only in case of appeal.”

### I. TORONTO OVERTURE AND 1956 SYNODICAL DECISION

The committee judges that, although the Toronto overture and the synodical decisions of 1956 differ somewhat in approach, they are not in basic disagreement. On the contrary, the committee is of the opinion that the Toronto overture is an attempt to fill out in more positive fashion the biblical context for the decisions of 1956.

Further study of the specific decisions of 1956 in light of the Toronto overture makes clear that, although the Toronto overture would agree with the thrust of the decisions, it questions the validity of the concept, “unbiblical divorce,” as well as its counterpart, “biblical divorce.”

In general, as will become evident in the second part of this report, the committee considers the report contained in the Toronto overture to be in accord with biblical testimony.

### II. BIBLICAL VIEW OF MARRIAGE, DIVORCE AND REMARRIAGE

In attempting to formulate guidelines for pastors and consistories in dealing with marital problems, the committee soon realized the importance of understanding the nature of marriage itself. It became clear that the norms for marriage were not only the guidelines for living in marriage, but also were most important guidelines relevant for all those relating to marriage whether as friends, family, state, professional

counselors, or church. Only after these guidelines are clear is it necessary and worthwhile to focus on the specific way in which the institutional church ought to fulfill its pastoral responsibility. This part of the report thus deals with the biblical view of marriage, divorce and remarriage. Section three outlines the pastoral considerations in implementing the biblical view.

1. Marriage is a mutual, permanent, exclusive, one flesh union between husband and wife characterized by fidelity. In marriage "a man leaves his father and mother and cleaves to his wife, and they become one flesh" (Gen. 2:24).

It is important for our purposes to note that this "cleaving" (clinging) and becoming "one flesh" is not, as is often the case, to be read in only a physical, sexual way. Clinging points to the unique kind of living together (fidelity) which ought to characterize marriage in general as well as physical intercourse. Only when one interprets "to cling" in terms of fidelity rather than physical intercourse can one rightly understand that "the men of Judah followed their king steadfastly" (clung) (II Sam. 20:2). In the same way Israel is often urged to "cleave" to the Lord in all his ways (e.g., Deut. 11:22; 30:20; Josh. 22:5). The Psalmist confesses "I cleave to thy testimonies, O Lord" (119:31). In similar vein flesh (basar, sarx) in one of its basic meanings in the Scripture refers to the whole man as a creature of the Lord (e.g. Gen. 6:3; Ps. 56:4; Is. 40:6; John 3:6, 17:2).

Although physical intercourse is important as part of being "one flesh," fidelity is the key concept in marriage. Obedience in marriage to the central love-command means fidelity to one's partner. Fidelity involves loyalty, trust, love, devotion, reliability: a husband can count on his wife, and she on him. In marriage, fidelity is not an act which occurs now and then but marriage is a state in which fidelity ought to characterize all marital relationships. Fidelity in marriage involves communion in many ways. As a good gift of the Lord in marriage, physical intercourse grows out of this fidelity-intercourse and consummates it. Without masks or pretences, husband and wife grow together and strengthen the bond of love between them. "Wives, be subject to your husbands, as is fitting the Lord. Husbands, love your wives and do not be harsh with them" (Col. 3:18, 19; cf. Eph. 5:22-33; I Peter 3:1-7).

2. Husband and wife together live under the Word of God for marriage. This means not only that marriage is not a human invention or convention, but also that marital fidelity is not subject to the arbitrary whims of the partners. Marriage is a permanent trust for life. "What therefore God has joined together, let no man put asunder" (Matt. 19:6).

3. Marriage is between one wife and one husband. Polygamy is not strictly a husband having many wives, but a husband involved in many marriages. One cannot be joined in the fellowship characteristic of marriage with more than one woman. "Do you not know, that he who joins himself to a prostitute becomes one body with her?" For it

is written, "The two shall become one flesh" (I Cor. 6:16). The biblical norm is monogamy.

4. In marriage the husband is the head of the wife (Eph. 5:23). Headship does not mean that in every detail the husband leads or decides. The husband is to take the lead in setting the religious direction of the marriage, its meaning, goals, and purposes. Once the basic question is settled as to which vision of life is going to norm activities, who decides and leads in the day-to-day affairs of the marriage depends on the persons and situations involved.

5. Since marriage is a bond of fidelity in which two people marry (betroth) each other before the Lord, it may not be considered basically a legal (civil) or ecclesiastical institution. Even though in God's plan marriage is made serviceable for and enriched by beginning a family, a marriage is not, as in traditional Thomist doctrine, a legal institution whose "essence" is in its natural purpose of procreation. It is not, whether conceived sacramentally or legally, a "remedy for sin." Further, even if sanctioned by civil or canon law, it is not a contractual legal agreement giving two persons the right to each other's body.

The roles of the state and church, although important, are external to the relationship of fidelity itself. In more recent times by means of a marriage license (and bill of divorce) the state, concerned to safeguard marriage, simply acknowledges the life (or death) of a marriage. If the couple are in Christ, they further seek the blessing and support of the worship community. A minister does not marry a couple: he only acknowledges that in their vowed promise God marries them. A wedding ceremony is the rite by which a couple, seeking support and sharing joy, publicly pledge their fidelity in the presence of God, friends, family, church, state, and enter marriage.

6. Marriages can be broken in as many ways as they can be built. Due to the structure of marriage in which physical intercourse affirms communion on other levels, infidelity of various kinds often leads to infidelity on the physical level. Adultery covers *all the ways* in which infidelity in marriage can take place. Adultery is wrong, period: continual adultery finally destroys a marriage and there is total, prolonged marriage breakdown. There are no grounds or justification for such breakdown as if infidelity can sometimes be right.

"You shall not commit adultery" is an Old Testament way of republishing the word for marriage and not a prohibition aimed at holding down man's evil sexual lusts. It emphasizes that only in marriage can physical intercourse be the totally joyful culmination of daily life activities together. Adultery is warned against because it breaks God's word for marriage, destroys mutual trust and leads to unhappy people. The word is a cryptic warning protecting marriage.

Just as positively (cf. point 1) the norm for marriage demands more than physical fidelity, likewise the norm for marriage in its negative form (you shall not commit adultery) demands more than mere physical fidelity. For that reason reduction of adultery to physical intercourse as is common misses the biblical meaning of

marriage as a total love communion. The basic meaning of adultery is breaking of trust or fidelity, unfaithfulness in marriage. Physical unfaithfulness is only one typical form of adultery.

With this full meaning of adultery the meaning of Christ (Matt. 12:39, 16:4; Mark 8:38) rings clear when he talks of an “adulterous and sinful generation” (cf. James 4:4). The people have broken trust with their father. Jeremiah calls false prophets “adulterers” (23:10) and refers to Judah as the land of “adulterers” because “they bend their tongue like a bow, falsehood and not truth has grown strong in the land” (9:2, 3).

7. Every infidelity need not foster and eventually lead to total marriage break-up. Every husband and wife has been unfaithful in diverse ways and in various degrees. He who looks lustfully at a woman, says Christ, has already committed adultery with her in his heart (Matt. 5:28). However, even in cases where infidelity leads to physical intercourse outside of marriage, divorce ought not to be automatic. A spirit of forgiveness should rule. There should—as in the case of any marital difficulty—be repeated, concentrated efforts by various outside parties to heal the marriage.

8. Nevertheless this does not mean that decrees of divorce are impossibilities from a biblical viewpoint. Sometimes in spite of every possible effort to heal the breach between husband and wife, the marriage continues to flounder and eventually the bond of fidelity is nonexistent. In such broken situations, when in fact the marriage is dead, the state rightfully but regretfully acknowledges the fact. A bill of divorce (like a marriage license) is simply the legal recognition that the marriage is dead (or alive).

When total, prolonged marriage breakdown has taken place and the marriage is dead, the church too must acknowledge this fact even as it continues its ministry of reconciliation to the persons involved. In such circumstances to still talk of “marriage” ignores the reality of death due to sin and often multiplies the sin by the pretence and hypocrisy involved in maintaining an “empty shell” as a marriage.

In this context the committee feels the necessity to re-examine whether continued use of the traditional concepts “biblical” and “unbiblical divorce” is meaningful. It is generally said that whereas divorce in general is wrong, in some cases, due to the physical adultery and/or sometimes the physical desertion of one of the partners, the other partner is said to have “biblical grounds for divorce,” is declared “innocent” and granted a “biblical divorce.”

a. Generally a so-called “biblical divorce” functions as an excuse and justification for one of the parties involved. Is that proper? The Scriptures never condone or justify marital breakdown.

In some cases indeed, when the marriage has died, divorce as a last resort may be the best way out. But then it is the best way out of a broken situation, a situation which ought not to be.

\*\*To clear up the ambiguity involved the committee recommends that we begin to distinguish clearly “marital breakdown” and “divorce.” Marital breakdown is always a wrong and can never be

justified. However, in situations where breakdown has taken place, where it is prolonged to the point that the marriage is dead, a decree of divorce as the legal recognition of the complete marital breakdown may be necessary and as such justifiable.

b. Furthermore, the prevalent view assumes that in the involved, intimate relationship which is marriage one partner can be "innocent," morally as well as legally, if breakdown takes place. Is that really (except perhaps in extremely rare instances) possible? Is there not rather guilt on both sides, be it in degrees and granted that it may show itself in diverse ways? Which husband or wife involved in marital difficulties can claim that he or she has not contributed to the breakdown?

If, as is often the case, the innocence or guilt is determined by whether or not physical intercourse with a third party has taken place (or whether or not physical desertion is involved), it makes some sense to talk of innocence and guilt. But then serious questions arise. What justifies the preoccupation with and limitation to physical intercourse when determining guilt? Why the neglect of the host of other reasons which are at least equally involved in the breakdown?

Such limitation leads to situations in which, although both parties have been unfaithful in a number of ways, the spouse who has not had physical intercourse with a third party is considered "innocent." A partner who through nagging, ignoring, provoking, drinking, mistrusting, lying, etc. is equally guilty in the marriage crisis is exonerated because his or her partner has also been physically unfaithful. This has led to situations in which the church has refused to recognize divorce on the grounds that, although the marriage is dead, no physical intercourse with third parties has taken place.

This preoccupation with physical infidelity has contributed to what is known as the "big lie": arranged physical adultery in order to fulfill state and church demands for issuance of writ of divorce. More seriously, it ignores the fact that physical infidelity is more often a symptom of marital problems than the cause of breakdown. Physical adultery more often results from rather than initiates marital breakdown.

\*\*At this juncture the committee re-emphasizes that adultery must be viewed in its broad meaning as marital infidelity—the breaking of fidelity which can happen in many ways. In that case it is extremely difficult, if not impossible, to declare that one marriage partner is guilty and the other innocent in marital breakdown.

c. In addition to what was said above, the idea that physical adultery by one's partner is ground for divorce ignores the biblical demand for forgiveness as well as repentance. Infidelities ought to be occasions on which partners change their ways, forgive and make up. At present it can happen that a divorce is granted to an "innocent" spouse who refuses to forgive and be reconciled even though his or her partner is repentant and is willing to make amends. Who in such situations is really innocent?

d. Since traditionally talk of biblical grounds for divorce has been based on Matthew 5:32, 19:9, a brief consideration of these passages is in order.

In Mark 10:11 and Luke 16:18 the norm of marital fidelity is affirmed without exception. Matthew 5:32 and 19:9 are parallel passages except for the insertion of the clause "except on the ground of unchastity" and "except for unchastity." The thrust of these four passages is unmistakable: marriage is of the Lord and is not to be broken. If a man has a wife it is the height of infidelity to break the covenant with her and marry another woman. Any attempt to put away one's wife to marry another is simply condemned. The clauses added in Matthew's account do not take away anything from this emphasis on the life-long nature of marriage.

Taking into consideration the lax Jewish divorce policy in effect during Jesus times, usually applicable to men only, Jesus' words condemn with emphasis any who take advantage of the divorce provisions with adulterous motives. At the same time the exceptive clause makes clear that Christ is not overlooking situations where divorce appears to be the only way out. In this reading, the abuse - not the last resort use of the writ of divorce - is condemned.

\*\*Although the texts do allow the reality of decrees of divorce in certain instances, the committee emphasizes that they cannot be read as justifying marital breakdown. As such there can be no biblical grounds for marriage breakdown.

There are, however, difficult exegetical problems involved. Exegetes are still divided as to the exact meaning of *porneia* (fornication or unchastity). *Porneia* is not the same as *moicheia* (adultery). In Matthew it is the Greek translation for the "some indecency" of Deuteronomy 24:1. This itself causes problems when the passage is read to make adultery a ground for divorce: it talks of fornication.

What then is *porneia*? Rabbinical scholarship was divided on this score. The school of Hillel interpreted some indecency to be "any and every cause," even letting the food burn, while the rival school of Shammai limited its meaning to physical licentiousness. At present many exegetes tend to consider *porneia* distinct from adultery in that it refers to infidelity within marriage. If that is true, the interpretation above would be strengthened. Jesus would be condemning the breakup of a marriage for adulterous reasons, even as he recognizes situations in which marriages are internally broken (fornication). He is not referring to such cases of fornication in this instance. As the context makes clear, Jesus is responding to the Pharisees of the school of Hillel who are seeking to force him to admit that a man can put away his wife for any and every cause. In any case, it is not possible to limit fornication to physical infidelity.

9. Remarriage is a viable option for those previously divorced. Since persons who have been divorced are no longer married, and since God in his mercy forgives the sin involved in such marital failures, they have

the freedom to remarry with the guidance and the blessing of the church. At the same time, since marital breakdown in the past left no innocent parties, there should be evidence of sincere repentance for previous failings and at the same time genuine insight into as well as obvious intent to live up to the vows to be taken anew.

The biblical passages (Matt. 5:32; Matt. 19:9; Mark 10:11; Luke 16:18) that we considered above as well as I Corinthians 7:10-16 also require attention here. It is difficult to use the Gospel passages as definitely excluding remarriage. Jesus condemns the putting away of a spouse for adulterous purposes. That is adultery. But what about the different situation in which the person is in fact no longer married. Then, he or she is in principle free, no doubt with scars, to make new efforts to serve the Lord in marriage.

I Corinthians 7 can only be interpreted understanding that Paul is speaking in a time of great distress (vs. 26). He counsels his readers not to enter into new relationships because they tend to pull people away from the Lord's business (vss. 23-35). Thus he even counsels widows for their happiness to remain as they are (vss. 39-40). God has "called us to peace" (vs. 15). Paul's sanctions in verses 10-16 are his efforts in those critical times to regulate with the least upheaval marital life in light of the norm of lifelong fidelity.

He opposes separation (vs. 10) but at the same time recognizes that this may not always be avoidable (vss. 11, 15). And even when separation takes place, he attempts to reconcile by declaring that such a woman may not remarry. Although here too he ends up under certain circumstances in allowing separation without forbidding remarriage. In fact he says that they are not "bound" (vs. 15). From this chapter it is as faulty to conclude that desertion always justifies divorce as to conclude that remarriage is always wrong.

### III. PASTORAL CONSIDERATIONS IN IMPLEMENTING THE BIBLICAL VIEWS

1. The church has its own task in respect to life in marriage and family. Through its preaching and pastoral ministry the church is to strengthen the faith-confession and life-commitment of its members. Since it is mandated to preach the Word for all of life, the church ministry also points the way to obedience in marriage and family.

2. Since a healthy, vibrant fellowship of believers cannot be built up if there is a marriage failure and family breakdown, the pastoral ministry of the church has a special concern with life in these central areas.

3. The church in its pastoral care may not only busy itself with situations which are clearly in need of special help, it must above all be concerned to help its young members find the right way in their life activities. In this light the committee recommends to synod a four-fold approach.

#### a. Education for Living or Family-life Education:

Increasingly the teaching ministry of the church which follows out of the preaching should emphasize how one's confession of his

Lord integrates his life. Concern should center on leading young people to come to grips with themselves as people, giving them the freedom and responsibility to take up their task in God's world.

Education for family living is a broader concept than preparation for marriage. It includes a child's total life experience through all the developmental stages of maturing to the point of assuming responsibility for self direction—at which juncture consideration of preparation for marriage is appropriate. The *conscious* aim of this broader education should be the development of a clear understanding of the real meaning of love in relation to *all* of life, pre-requisite to its application in marriage.

A plan should be developed whereby church, school, and home would make conscious, coordinated, consistent and ongoing efforts to explicate the Christian concept of love and help all individuals at all age levels to interpret and apply this most basic principle as their primary motivation in all their various interactions. In guiding the young person through the successive developmental stages, the same message of love must be consistently presented by church, school, and home, each reinforcing the other. This foundation would make the superstructures of specific programs such as pre-marital counseling, more effective and therefore should be given priority.

The committee wishes to underline the obvious but often neglected consideration that church, family, school, peer groups, etc. together share in the responsibility for this general preparation for life. For that reason churches ought to be aware of and stimulate families, schools, etc. in their programs to lead children in the direction of the Lord.

As part of such general education for living, both church and school should pay specific attention to family and marriage in their education programs. The content of such courses should include the basic material described in Part II as well as treating in some detail the matters of physical sexuality, emotional compatibility, economic budgeting, common interests, division of household tasks, etc. How and in what detail such matters should be treated is dependent on the developmental stage of the children and young people involved.

\*\*The committee recommends that the Education Committee of the church be encouraged to continue and if necessary expand, its work of preparing Family-life education programs, including sections on marriage and family.

b. Pre-Marital Counseling:

1) The burdens and responsibilities of marriage and family today are such that young couples contemplating marriage who have not been exposed to a good family-life education course should under the leadership of a qualified person or team of persons consider the nature of marriage and family. Marriage breakdown often results because marriages are begun with only superficial, if any, preparation. Immediate steps need to be taken to prevent such situations

which often lead to tragedy. The instigation of pre-marital programs would be an important positive step. The content of such programs should cover the material of Part Two as well as certain other specifics mentioned in "a" above.

2) In addition, all couples contemplating marriage should be involved in a small number of private sessions in which there is ample opportunity to discuss more personally and individually the ensuing marriage. In this way the church becomes aware, as it should, of the nature of the marriage it is acknowledging and pledging to support.

c. Marital and Family Counseling:

1) Due to the stress on life in marriage and family today, there is much to be said in favor of marriage and family enrichment programs. In such programs husbands and wives, fathers and mothers as well as children, can explore together ways to strengthen marital and family ties and help each other face marital and family conflicts. Such programs would also be concrete ways in which Christ-confessors can show genuine concern for each other's welfare. People would learn that every marriage and family has its tensions and period of crisis. They would learn that ignoring or hiding the problems only further complicates the situation.

In such ways along with those suggested under "a" and "b," a more healthy climate would be created in which concern, compassion and help can be more freely offered and more freely received. People involved in difficulties would then feel free to seek help at the onset of problems or at least at an earlier stage in their development.

2) For couples involved in marital difficulty counseling should be helpful rather than judgmental. The specific steps to be taken depends very much on the nature of the persons involved and the specific difficulty.

In general, the counselor should attempt to help the partners face up to the problems and discover ways to rebuild and heal. Openness, concern, understanding, trust, authenticity, and patience are required.

Often it will be advisable for pastors and consistories to enlist the help of marriage counselors or other professional personnel both for consultant and referral purposes. Only when it becomes apparent that nothing can be done to heal the marriage because it is dead is a divorce a way out.

\*\*Due to the time, knowledge and expertise required to be an effective counselor, the committee recommends that:

1) the present seminary pastoral training program be examined as to how it can be strengthened to increase the pastor's sensitivity to marital problems and their solutions.

2) church programs be initiated in which members, especially office-bearers are assisted in gaining sensitivity to the nature of interpersonal relationships and the personalities involved.

3) more attention be given to delineating the differences as well as similarities between pastoral counseling and other types of specialized counseling.

4) more attention be given to developing Christian Counseling centers to which pastors can both refer parishioners and from which they can enlist various resource personnel (psychologists, psychiatrists, social workers, ethicists, etc.) as consultants.

5) more attention be given to making it possible for churches to more readily use the various counseling resources, both referral and consultant, which are already in existence.

d) Remarriage Counseling:

1) Since the previous marriage has failed, persons contemplating remarriage should be doubly aware of what they are doing. The basic material as to the nature of marriage and its obligations which has been emphasized should be openly discussed. In addition to acknowledging his or her responsibility in previous marital failure, the couple should show evidence that they are seeking a mature understanding of marriage in the Lord.

At the same time, divorced persons require special understanding. They have experienced marital failure and frequently strong feelings of guilt, shame and anger linger. Thus the pastor has the difficult task to help them realize that God's forgiveness is also possible for them. The pastor can do this by accepting them as they are. He does not set them apart by virtue of their past failures, but points them to the possibility of new life, also in a previous area of failure, in Jesus Christ.

2) One more matter remains in this context to be considered. According to point two of the 1956 synodical decision requiring unbiblically divorced to "seek entrance or re-entrance into the Church," it has been practice in our church to exclude from membership those who are "unbiblically divorced." However, having recognized that there are neither "biblical divorces" nor "innocent" parties in marriage breakdown the church must also reconsider its stance on this matter. The committee is of the opinion that formal ecclesiastical discipline procedure should not begin *automatically* upon the writ of divorce. Persons involved in marital breakdown require of course, intensive pastoral care. Such care should begin as soon as the problem becomes serious—not when a decree of divorce is or is about to be a reality.

But exclusion from the Lord's supper and subsequent excommunication from the church should only follow when, in hardness of heart refusing to heed the admonitions of the consistory, the persons involved do not acknowledge and repent of their sins. In instances where persons have shown genuine repentance, gained insight into the causes of their previous marital failure and divorce and experienced the reality of Christ's mercy and forgiveness, the church may not withhold its blessings from an eventual remarriage.

In conclusion, in all situations of need there should be concern, compassion and love to help the persons involved re-order their lives

so that the shalom which comes from obedience to the Word of God may more and more be an experienced reality.

#### IV. CONCLUSIONS ESPECIALLY PERTAINING TO CONSISTORIES

In view of sections II and III, the consistories are urged to be especially aware of the following matters:

1. The consistories are urged most earnestly to maintain the biblical view of marriage, and to warn unceasingly against every violation of the marriage bond through whatever form of infidelity.

2. The consistories ought to promote a forgiving, sympathetic, open fellowship in which concern, compassion and help can be more freely offered and more freely received.

3. The consistories ought to ascertain whether those who seek entrance into the marriage state are sufficiently aware of the nature of marriage and the "common trials and perplexities" which so often occur before they extend the blessing of the church.

4. The consistories are called to include in the pastoral visitation from time to time a discussion about the biblical directives for marriage. The elders must be sensitive to the marital health of the families entrusted to their care.

5. The consistories ought with patience and understanding to seek to heal situations of marital breakdown employing all the resources at their disposal.

6. Consistories ought to recognize that there are neither "innocent" parties in marital breakdown nor "biblical" grounds for such breakdown.

7. The consistories ought to recognize that in some cases of total prolonged marriage breakdown the proper approach may include legal acknowledgment of the death of the marriage by means of a writ of divorce.

8. Consistories should understand that marital breakdown and divorce must not necessarily entail loss of church membership but ought to be pastorally dealt with in the same way as any other serious shortcoming.

9. Consistories ought to remember that divorced persons require first of all help rather than condemnation and are urged to support divorced persons pastorally in a way similar to the manner they support members involved in other personal difficulties.

10. Consistories should feel free to extend the blessing of the church to a second marriage if the persons concerned respond positively to pastoral guidance and care.

#### V. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. In general the committee recommends that synod accept Part II as in accord with biblical teaching on marriage and offer it to the churches as a guideline in their pastoral task.

2. More specifically, the committee recommends that:

a. A clean distinction be made between "internal marital breakdown" which is always wrong and "legal divorce" which can be a last resort way out (cf. II 8).

- b. Adultery be viewed in its broad meaning as marital infidelity (cf. II 6, 8).
- c. Talk of “biblical” and “unbiblical” divorce be discontinued as at best confusing (cf II 8).
- d. The practice of necessarily excluding a person guilty of so-called “unbiblical divorce” from church membership be dropped (cf III 2d).
3. In general, the committee recommends that synod accept Part III and IV and recommend it to the churches as a helpful guideline in their pastoral ministry.
4. More specifically, the committee recommends that:
- a. Churches be reminded of the need to proclaim the full-orbed Gospel, also for marriage.
  - b. The Education Committee of the church be encouraged to continue preparing Christian life courses and that it investigate the possibility of coordinating its efforts with those of schools, etc.
  - c. Churches be made aware of the need and importance of family life education as well as pre-marital education programs.
  - d. Churches be made aware of the need and importance of marriage and family enrichment programs.
  - e. The present seminary pastoral training program be examined as to how it can be strengthened to increase the pastor’s sensitivity in pre-marital counselling and to marital problems and their solutions.
  - f. Church programs be initiated in which members, especially office-bearers, are assisted in gaining sensitivity to the nature of interpersonal relationships and the personalities involved.
  - g. More attention be given to delineating the differences as well as similarities between pastoral counseling and other types of specialized counseling.
  - h. More attention be given to developing Christian counseling centers to which pastors can both refer parishioners and from where they can enlist various resource personnel (psychologists, psychiatrists, social workers, ethicists, etc.) as consultants.
  - i. Increased attention be given to making it possible for churches to more readily use the various counseling resources, referral and consultant, which are already in existence.
5. This committee finally recommends that a committee be appointed to implement and work out the various matters contained in recommendation 4.
6. The committee requests that its members be granted the privilege of the floor during discussion of the report.
7. The committee recommends that synod declare the committee’s mandate fulfilled and therefore discharge the committee.

Marriage Guidelines Committee

Klaire Kuiper	John Ribbens
Jayne Moore	Carl Tuyl, Convenor
James H. Olthuis	H. Velzen, Secretary

**REPORT 41**  
**LODGE AND CHURCH MEMBERSHIP**  
(Art. 22)

**DEAR BROTHERS:**

The committee to study the matter of Lodge and Church Membership is continuing its study as mandated by synod in 1972. It became apparent rather early in our meetings that the committee would not be able to prepare a report for the synod in 1973. The grounds for this decision were: 1) the late initiation of the official work of this committee due to the incomplete composition of the committee in the early stages of investigation; 2) several members of the committee had particularly heavy winter schedules; 3) the magnitude of the task assigned is much greater than it first appeared—as evidenced by the results of the preceding committee dealing with the matter.

The work of our committee has been further hindered by the tragic automobile accident sustained by our reporter, the Rev. Allan Dykstra. At this writing it appears that he will be permanently paralyzed, and he has therefore submitted his resignation to the Synodical Interim Committee.

Our committee has continued to meet regularly in order to delve into the complex issues that are facing us. We sincerely hope that we can present a report that will enable the church to deal with the practical question of lodge and church membership. The assumption which stands at the basis of our work, and which was given in our mandate, is that simultaneous membership in the Christian Reformed Church and the lodge is contrary to Scripture. We stand committed to this position. We are attempting to understand the position of the lodge from their own teaching, going back to original sources as much as possible. Therefore with the help of God, and the patience of the church, we hope to have a report at next year's synod.

Lodge and Church Membership  
Committee

Gerard Van Groningen, Chairman  
Allan Dykstra, Reporter  
John B. Hulst  
Henry Vanden Heuvel  
James Admiraal  
Abe Geurkink  
Stewart Kanis

**REPORT 42**  
**COMMITTEE TO STUDY HOMOSEXUALITY**  
(Art. 53)

**DEAR BROTHERS:**

Our study committee, appointed by the Synod of 1970 to advise synod what our church's position on homosexuality ought to be, presents the following two-part report.

The first part is a report of our study. We recommend that synod submit this part of the report to our churches as providing guidelines for our understanding of the problem of homosexuality and the formulation of a Christian position.

The second part presents pastoral advice regarding homosexuality in the light of the report which we recommend for synod's adoption as pastoral advice to serve the churches.

We request that the Rev. Clarence Boomsma, our secretary, be given the privilege of the floor when our report is being considered by synod.

**I. STUDY REPORT RE HOMOSEXUALITY**

*A. Our Mandate and the Present Scene*

Our committee was appointed by the Synod of 1970 with the mandate "to study the problem of homosexuality and to delineate the church's position on this matter" (Acts, p. 121). In the "grounds" supplied for the mandate, synod declared that homosexuality "is a growing problem in today's society" and it therefore deemed it advisable to appoint a study committee to advise synod what the church's position ought to be.

The occasion for synod's concern with the problem of homosexuality was the reception of an overture from the Council of the Christian Reformed Churches in Canada (Overture 23, Acts 1970, p. 540). That Council requested synod "to appoint a study committee to prepare a report in which: a) the attitude of the Christian Reformed Church towards its homosexual members is critically examined, and b) proposals as to what our position re a) should be are submitted." In addition it asked that "proposals for setting up counseling and rehabilitative services for homosexuals, possibly in cooperation with other Christian groups" be presented. The Council adduced as grounds that "we do in fact have homosexual members in our churches" and that "there are different attitudes toward these members." The Council is convinced that we "ought to develop a genuinely Christian and rehabilitative attitude toward these members."

The Council in Canada became involved in the problem of homosexuality because legislative changes regarding homosexuality were under consideration by the government of Canada. The advisory committee

of the Council on "Contact with the Government: re Homosexual Acts" supported with Council approval the proposed changes in the laws of Canada. It supported the proposal that homosexual behavior between consenting adults in private should no longer be considered criminal offence. The ground on which the Council based its approval of the legislative changes was that "it is not the task of the government to legislate private morality" and in support of this position it cited Article 36 of the Belgic Confession. While the Council went on to say that the new legislative "provisions change the conditions under which the sinful act of homosexuality is deemed punishable by law," it wished to be clearly understood that by its support of these changes, it was not expressing "approval of the act of homosexuality itself." In fact, the Council refers to the act of homosexuality as "sinful."

The Canadian Council's involvement in the question of homosexuality and synod's concern about the problems of homosexuality must be seen in a larger context. In recent years there has been an increasing tolerance toward homosexuality and lesbianism. This fact came into focus in 1957 when the Wolfenden Report was published in England. This report was the result of a study by a committee under the chairmanship of Sir John Wolfenden, appointed by the British Home Secretary. The most significant statement of this thorough study was the recommendation: "That homosexual behavior between consenting adults in private be no longer a criminal offence." The report further advised "that questions relating to 'consent' and 'in private' be decided by the same criteria as apply in the case of heterosexual acts between adults." This recommendation was adopted and it subsequently became the law in England and Canada, as well as in at least two states of the United States. As a matter of fact, this position is practised in almost every city today, regardless of the law. Vice-squads and prosecutors take the attitude that if the homosexual is not disturbing others by his sexual acts there is little point in arresting and prosecuting him. Various reports, both secular and ecclesiastical have appeared recommending this procedure. In general, it may be said, there remains three areas in which the law prosecutes the homosexual: when youths are corrupted (pederasty), when the acts are offenses against public decency (indecent exposure), and when others are exploited for the purpose of financial gain (prostitution).

With the growing tolerance toward the private practice of homosexuality as evidenced by legislative changes as well as by the suspension of law enforcement, there has been a growing awareness of homosexuality in society. Reports, books, magazine articles, stage plays, movies, radio and television programs have all contributed to a new openness and public acknowledgement of homosexuality and have evoked a widespread discussion of its problems. No doubt all of this is part of the "sex revolution" that has been taking place in recent years. As a consequence of this "revolution" there has been a changing attitude toward the homosexual, from disapproval and condemnation of both his person and practice, to a growing acceptance of his person and an approval of homosexual behavior.

Homosexuals have become more vocal than hitherto in acknowledging

their condition and defending it and their life-style. Radical gay activist groups have been organized in nearly every city. Through their publications they are urging homosexuals to take pride in themselves and to deny that their condition is an illness or abnormality. They are working to repeal laws that discriminate against them and to win social acceptance of themselves as they are. They hold that it is up to the individual to choose his sex orientation, and they decry society's attempt to "change" him by punishment or treatment. In Los Angeles a church openly organized for homosexuals has attracted considerable publicity.

We assume it is the new openness and awareness of homosexuality and the changing social attitudes toward it that synod had in mind when it declared that homosexuality is a growing problem. We know of no evidence supporting the position that the number of homosexuals is actually increasing.

When synod mandated us "to study the problem of homosexuality and to delineate the church's position on this matter" it did not tie us to the specific proposals of the Canadian Council's overture. It simply gave us a general area to explore. It will be apparent to synod that the subject of our study is so broad and involved and the literature on it so voluminous, that we could not enter exhaustively into every aspect of the problem. We have assumed that synod was concerned that we should study the problem as it relates to and involves the church and the Christian. To this our report is limited. In it we are summarizing the fruit of our study and presenting in comparatively brief scope the position we recommend to synod and the advice that we think should be passed on to the churches. We are including a list of books at the end of this report that we believe are valuable for those who wish to study the subject in greater detail.

#### *B. Definition of male and female homosexuality.*

The Scriptures teach us that God created us male and female, but it is important to observe that it is by a process beginning at birth with our physical differentiations that we develop through childhood and adolescence to an identity of ourselves as males and females. Through this maturation process, involving chemical and psychological changes, most of us come to an awareness and acceptance of the opposite sex and of the relationship of our sexuality to the sexuality of the other. This leads us to erotic feelings that motivate us to seek gratification in sexual union. This normal pattern of growth leads to the sex orientation known as heterosexuality. Sexuality is, of course, much more than a physical differentiation producing physical attractions. It is the desire to give and receive in intimacy so that the "aloneness" of a person is abrogated in the love relationship between man and woman as Genesis 2 teaches us. Sexuality is a mysterious and basic dimension of human existence and of great importance to us as persons.

Homosexuality is the condition in which the process of maturation does not result in an adult who is heterosexual, that is, sexually orientated to the opposite sex: it is instead the condition in which an adult's sexuality is directed to his own sex. It is well to keep the wider dimension of sexuality in mind as we evaluate the phenomenon of homosexuality.

The direction of the homosexual's desires is not to be regarded as merely physical attraction. His desires cover the whole range of the rich interpersonal relations associated with the heterosexual form of sexuality, including love, understanding, friendship, the desire to belong to someone and to develop one's humanity in constant companionship with another human being. What is different for the homosexual is that these feelings are experienced with respect to a person of the same sex.

The distinction between the two conditions of heterosexuality and homosexuality is not clear-cut. Some persons are completely heterosexual, never having homosexual feelings, while others are exclusively homosexual, feeling no attraction for the opposite sex. But there are varying degrees of both conditions in many adults. Some persons are predominantly heterosexual but occasionally have homosexual feelings that they may or may not allow to come to expression in practice. Again there are those who are primarily homosexual, but are able to engage in heterosexual acts. Such persons, known as bi-sexual, may marry and have children but continue to experience erotic attraction for members of their own sex. A precise definition of homosexuality is impossible, and to say who is homosexual and who is not is a matter on which there is no unanimity.

It should be observed that homosexuality is not confined to certain types of vocations and professions, although homosexuals for various reasons may be more attracted to some vocations and professions than to others. The condition is not limited to certain strata of society, nor is it limited to any race, culture or type of society. It was known in ancient times and in every subsequent era. It may come to expression in the early life of a person, but then again it may be latent in the earlier years and manifest itself in middle age or even later. Homosexuality develops in Christian homes as well as in non-Christian homes and religion is no barrier to its presence.

It is conservatively estimated that 7% of American males have more homosexual experiences than heterosexual for at least part of their lives, and that 2% of the male population is exclusively homosexual throughout their life span. Figures for lesbians are somewhat less than for males. For convenience sake we are and will be referring to both male homosexuals and lesbians as homosexuals and use the masculine pronouns to refer to both in our report. No one knows the number of homosexuals in our denomination, but even if we take the most conservative statistical estimates we may conclude that our report concerns several thousand members who are living with this condition.

An important distinction that must be made is the difference between *homosexuality* as a condition of personal identity and *homosexuality* as explicit homosexual behavior. That is, we must distinguish between the person who is homosexual in his sexual orientation and the person who engages in explicit sexual acts with persons of the same sex. It is a well-known fact that men who are basically heterosexual in their personal identity, when separated from women for long periods of time may nonetheless engage in homosexual practices until they have opportunity for heterosexual experiences again. This is not uncommon in prisons, re-

formatories, and the armed services. We may assume this occurs because sex is a strong drive that seeks satisfaction and is social in its very nature. But persons who engage in homosexual acts under such circumstances are not usually considered homosexuals, i.e. as being in the condition of homosexuality.

On the other hand, it must be pointed out that there are people who have strong erotic attractions for members of the same sex who nevertheless never engage in homosexual acts for various reasons, such as, for example, their religious convictions. They are homosexuals, that is, they are constitutionally (by either biological or psychological conditions or both) predisposed to homosexuality, but do not engage in homosexuality. This difference between *homosexuality* as a condition and *homosexuality* as its practice is an important distinction for our study.

### C. *The cause of homosexuality*

A homosexual (male or female) is an adult who is motivated by a definite preferential erotic attraction to members of the same sex. The question arises: what causes this condition? Why do some persons develop constitutionally at variance with their physical gender, resulting in a disordered sex orientation?

Experts are not agreed on what the causes of homosexuality are and today probably most of them, if not all, admit that we cannot give a definitive account of why the condition develops. In fact, its origin is so unclear as to be finally a mystery. The general opinion tends to play down genetic factors, but that it may have an inherited basis cannot be completely eliminated. The view favored by modern research is that the condition is precipitated in the early life of a person by environmental factors. Studies of homosexuals repeatedly show abnormalities in the parent-child relationship in which the child does not develop a normal identification with the parent of the same sex. It is also possible that some chemical or hormonal imbalance or some other as yet unknown physiological factor not necessarily genetic in origin is involved. It is also very possible that the cause is the result of a combination of various factors. The fact is that homosexuality is deeply rooted in the complex development of personality during the formative years of a person's growth.

It is important to understand that homosexuality is not the result of any conscious choice or decision on the part of the person to be homosexual, just as the heterosexual person does not become heterosexual because at a certain age he determines to be so. Whether a person becomes homosexual because of some innate condition or because of his early environment and his response to this environment, or because of a combination of these, the fact is he is not responsible insofar for his resulting homosexuality. This is an important point for both the homosexual himself to understand and for those who know the homosexual. Having said this we must recognize that there are those with mixed homosexual-heterosexual drives who may have encouraged their homosexuality by willful choice and insofar bear responsibility for their condition.

As the cause of homosexuality is uncertain, so is the possibility of correcting it. Experts again differ in their judgment about the help that can be given to a homosexual by which he may be redirected to a heterosexual orientation. The possibility of change depends on the degree of homosexuality to begin with, the age of the person involved and thus the duration of his problem, the amount of experience he has had, and the motivation within the person himself to want to change. There are of course many homosexuals who have come to accept their homosexuality and do not desire to have it redirected. It is encouraging to learn that more recently psychiatrists are reporting more successes in their therapy of homosexuals.

#### D. *The plight of the homosexual*

It is imperative for us to enter sympathetically into the plight of the homosexual. It is one of the great failings of the church and Christians generally that they have been lacking in sympathy and concern for the plight of the homosexuals among them. Fortunately the attitude of condemnation and discrimination that has multiplied the misery of these often unhappy people is changing now that we are learning more about their condition, but we have far to go in achieving a Christian awareness of the homosexual's problems and his need for love and acceptance as a person.

The plight of many homosexuals is a tragic one. The homosexual is caught in the dilemma of a disordered sex relationship between his own body and his person. In the case of the male homosexual for example, he is physically a male and yet he recognizes that he is not attracted to the female form for which his body is adapted. This disharmony within himself is accented by what he has been taught by society to expect of himself as a male, but what he does not experience himself to be. As a result he disapproves of himself, experiencing not only guilt for his feelings, but disrespect for himself as a person and a deep sense of his inferiority and, often, his feeling of degeneracy. Knowing of society's disapproval of him he experiences a dreadful loneliness and a deep fear of being exposed and rejected. He must live a lie, unable to be himself in society, hurt again and again by the judgments he hears about homosexuality that reflect on his person. Is it any wonder that the homosexual's life contains great potential for demoralization, despair, self-hate and personal disintegration? It is understandable that a homosexual runs the risk of more unhappiness and is more likely to become alcoholic and mentally ill than others. It is not surprising that many young homosexuals leave their homes, their churches, their communities and flee to the cities where they can live with others of their own kind and openly be what they are. And many find that that society brings no happiness and affords them no future.

It must be said that much of the suffering of the homosexual is caused by the strong disapproval and often harsh condemnation that society imposes upon him. If anyone judges the matter of homosexuality lightly and speaks easily of it, it only reveals that he has never experienced the tragedy and agony of the person who is struggling with his condition. It is true that some, maybe many, homosexuals have been able to accept

their sexuality and live comparatively happy and constructive lives, although times of agony and painful adjustment have marked their lives. Much probably depended on the support and acceptance they were able to find from their family and some friends.

We can have only the greatest admiration for those in the church who have lived with their condition in loneliness, but have called upon the grace of God to enable them to live constructive Christian lives in spite of their problem. They are among the true saints of the church and deserve the greatest respect of their fellow-believers.

Before we consider how the church should look upon the problem of homosexuality and serve those who suffer this condition, we must ascertain the teaching of the Scriptures.

### E. *The teaching of the Scriptures*

It is all-important for us as Christians and as a church to learn what the Bible teaches us about the subject of homosexuality. We present in brief what we believe the Scriptures tell us, in the light of our reading of the Bible and in the light of the various studies made by biblical scholars who have dealt with the relevant scriptural passages which bear upon our problem.<sup>1</sup>

#### 1. *Old Testament Data*

*Genesis 1:26-28; 2:18-24* In the opening chapters of the Bible we have the account of the creation of the world and of man's place in that world. Man is made male and female, a physical differentiation according to Genesis 1 by which man and woman are able to multiply and propagate the human race. But turning to Genesis 2 we learn that the male-female polarity is by no means only for the purpose of biological reproduction. The account stresses the role of sex differentiation for the purpose of fulfilling the individual man's fundamental need for companionship and personal wholeness. Woman is created as a complement to help man so that the two cleave to each other in love and form a unity in marriage. This is the created order in which male and female polarity form an integral part of being human. In the light of the created order heterosexuality is the pattern of human existence. Homosexuality, therefore, must be seen as a disordered condition, in which the reproductive

<sup>1</sup> We present the principal studies used by our committee in formulating this part of our report, in addition to commentaries, etc.

Bailey, Derrick Sherwin—*Homosexuality and the Western Christian Tradition*, Longmans, Green, 1955

Cole, William Graham—*Sex and Love in the Bible*, Association Press, 1959

Jones, H. Kimball—*Toward a Christian Understanding of the Homosexual*, Association Press, 1966

Rapport aan de Generale Synode van Dordrecht 1971-'72 *Over Mensen Die Homofiel Zijn*, Kerk Informatie van de Gereformeerde Kerken, 1972 NR 1  
Ridderbos, S.J.—*Bijbel en Homosexualiteit*, *Bezinning* Vol. XIV, No. 3 (1959) pp. 137-152

Thielicke, Helmut—*The Ethics of Sex*, Harper, 1964

Treese, Robert L.—*Homosexuality: A Contemporary View of the Biblical Perspective*, Glide Urban Center

Van Veen, Jan—*Wat Zegt de Bijbel over Homofiel*, Dekkers, 1972

function of sex cannot be fulfilled and the companionship of sex cannot be properly achieved in the union in which a man cleaves to his wife.

Homosexuality must be interpreted as a consequence of our broken world due to the invasion of sin in the creation. It is an evidence of the disharmony and disorder that sin has brought into every area of man's existence, including his sex life, and in which all men share. Homosexuality therefore is one of several disorders of man's sexual nature, along with problems such as impotence, frigidity, and hypersexuality. It is the result of sin in the world as in blindness, lameness, and retardation. But as the victims of these consequences in a broken world are not personally responsible for their handicapped conditions, neither is the homosexual responsible for his disordered sex orientation, his sexual handicap, insofar as it was not of his choice and decision. To lay blame on the homosexual for his condition can be as cruel and unjust as to blame the cripple for his deformation.

It is well to bear in mind, however, that a comparison between such defects as blindness and lameness on the one hand, and homosexuality on the other, only partially applies. A physically blind person, for example, is deprived of the function of sight, but the homosexual is not deprived of the function of sexuality. On the contrary he constantly experiences the full range of feelings associated with human sexuality, extending all the way from a feeling of mild interest in another person to that of the most intimate personal attachment. The point of comparison employed above applies only in that the homosexual is handicapped in experiencing a normal sex relationship.

Responsibility and the possibility of personal guilt for the homosexual arises at the point where he must decide what he will do with his sexuality. It is here that the Christian homosexual must ask what God's will for him is in the same way as the Christian heterosexual must ask what he must do in obedience to God with his sex drive. Obviously for the heterosexual there are restraints that are often hard to bear. To take but one example, he may not gratify himself with his neighbor's wife, however appealing she is to him. The homosexual is presumably placed under similar restraints. What is the will of God for him, a victim of the broken world? What do the Scriptures say? What significance does redemption through Christ have for him? How does the New Testament law of love to one's neighbor bear on homosexuality? What counsel must the church of Christ give to him? How shall they support, help, and admonish him in his disordered state? These are the questions he asks and which we need to ask.

We now turn to those Old Testament passages which on the surface at least deal directly with both homosexuality and homosexualism.

*Genesis 19:4-11.* That the story of Sodom and Gomorrah deals with homosexualism, that is homosexual acts, is accepted by nearly all Old Testament scholars. The men of Sodom were demanding that the two guests be brought out in order that the Sodomites might "know" them, a "knowing" that Lot considers a great wickedness. We believe it is particularly evident that the word "know" here refers to sex relations from

the offer of Lot to give the depraved men of Sodom his two virgin daughters to "know" in the place of his guests.<sup>1</sup>

From this story read as an isolated incident we cannot conclude however that homosexuality is here condemned. The evil that the men of Sodom were planning with Lot's guests was sexual assault and violence, which is always wrong, also in heterosexual contexts. From this account therefore it does not follow that homosexuality under other circumstances is wrong. It may be observed that it is less than likely that all males of the city were homosexuals as we have defined them. The desire to "know" at least in part arose from simple lust in general and the desire to practice a sexual variant with the strangers, revealing the perversion of the whole population.

We may not conclude from this account that it was only because of the sexual depravity in Sodom and Gomorrah that these cities were destroyed. All the passages of Scripture that make reference to Sodom speak of a wickedness that included a general corruption and degeneracy. (Genesis 13:13; 18:20; Deuteronomy 32:32; Isaiah 1:10; Jeremiah 23:14; Lamentations 4:6; Ezekiel 16:46ff; II Peter 2:6; Jude 6, 7; Revelation 11:8). The incident related in Genesis 19 typified the depravity of the city which caused it to fall under the judgment of God and be destroyed, but the rest of Scripture does not single out the sexual degeneracy of Sodom as a form of evil worse than other sins.

In the light of the whole Old Testament view of homosexuality, however, it is reasonable to suppose that by the inclusion of this episode the writer of Genesis did wish to disclose the wickedness of the city by recording the double affront of homosexuality and sexual advances on unwilling guests.

The story in Judges 19 bears similarities to the account of Genesis 19 and since it adds nothing to our purpose requires no further discussion.

*Leviticus 18:22; 20:13.* Both of these passages clearly forbid sexual intercourse between males, both texts calling such acts an abomination. The passage in 20:13 prescribes the death penalty for those who take part in such practices. While that demonstrates the seriousness that attaches to homosexuality in the Old Testament it must be noted that the same penalty is exacted for other sexual offenses such as bestiality (18:23), adultery (18:20), and incest (20:12).

The difficulty that confronts us with these texts is the question in what distinguishable respects they are normative for us. It is the difficulty we encounter with much of the Old Testament legislation. For there are three aspects to Mosaic regulations: the ceremonial or cultic, the civic, and the ethical. In Israel these three aspects are intertwined to form one whole, and therefore the problem that the Christian Church has wrestled with ever since its beginning is the unraveling of the ethical from the cultic and civil to determine what is binding for us (Cf. Belgic Confession, Article 25).

<sup>1</sup> Bailey who argues against this interpretation on the basis of use of the word "know" ignores the use of the same word in the immediate context where the meaning is unmistakable. (p. 2f).

It would appear obvious that in 20:13 the death penalty was a civil requirement which clearly is no longer in force in the Christian era. There remains the question whether the offense itself is a moral or a merely cultic offense. Different scholars give different answers to that question. Some maintain that the prohibition of homosexuality was instituted because of the cultic practices of Israel's pagan neighbors and was intended to forbid Israel's participation in such heathen worship practices. That male prostitution was practiced among the neighbors of Israel and strictly forbidden to Israel is seen in Deuteronomy 23:17. If this was indeed the intent of the legislation then it is addressed against a specific (cultic) type of homosexuality, and it may be questioned whether homosexuality in non-cultic (e.g. moral) contexts is condemned by these passages. In favor of this interpretation we must call attention to 18:21 which clearly refers to the pagan ceremony of sacrificing children to Molech, whatever form these sacrifices took. It is also pointed out by scholars that 18:23 may have reference to cultic practices. It may have reference to an Egyptian goat cult (Keil and Delitzsch on the Pentateuch, Volume II, p. 418). From Canaanite literature we also know that the god Baal was thought to copulate with a heifer and it is possible that a Baal priest symbolically acted out this fertility rite. If 18:23 has reference to either or both of these cultic rites then 18:22 (our passage) is bracketed by cultic and not necessarily moral prohibitions.

We are not persuaded however by the argumentation that 18:22 is merely a cultic prohibition. The text appears in the context of laws regulating marriage, family, chastity, incest, etc. which certainly involve ethical demands, as for example 18:20 which forbids adultery with a neighbor's wife. The supposition that 18:23 is cultic in orientation is admittedly speculative. The interposition of verse 21 may possibly be accounted for "by remembering the condemnation of idolatry under the figure of unfaithfulness to the marriage ties" (Cambridge Bible, Leviticus, p. 105). Martin Noth suggests that "perhaps it was only the key-word 'seed' which brought this verse into the present context" (Old Testament Library, Leviticus, p. 136). The context would favor an ethical interpretation of the passage.

The argument from context, however, is lessened if those interpreters are right who believe that verses 21-23 are meant to be an appendage and thus are not directly and intimately related to what precedes. But we would point out that the ethical dimension in the prohibition against the sacrifice of children to Molech is surely not missing. For along with the religious opposition to the Canaanite fertility cultus this prohibition must also have been based on moral considerations and must have aimed at the prevention of the destruction of the family. What immediately follows in verses 24-30 stresses that the judgment upon the inhabitants of Canaan was because of their iniquity in practicing such things. We need not assume that because an iniquity is practiced as a cultic rite it is any less a moral issue.

In conclusion, while we grant that a cultic interpretation may be given to 18:21-23, to do so to the exclusion of the ethical aspects of the prohibitions appears to us unwarranted, and we therefore hold that 18:21 forbids homosexuality and the same is true of 20:13.

On the other hand we must recognize the temporary character of much of the Old Testament legislation. One can hardly ignore the fact that the prohibition of homosexuality appears in the context of a regulation prohibiting intercourse during a woman's menstrual period (18: 19), a regulation which is not generally considered to be morally binding today. In how far the prohibition of homosexuality is binding on us is therefore a question that remains.

There are other Old Testament passages that bear on the subject of homosexuality: Genesis 9:21-27 which deals with homosexual incest; Deuteronomy 22:5 which opposes transvestism; Deuteronomy 23:17 which forbids male prostitution; I Kings 14:24; 15:12; 22:40 which relates the attempts of the kings of Judah to abolish male cultic prostitution and the like.

All scholars are agreed that the Old Testament condemns homosexuality, although they are not all agreed on the rationale for such condemnation, and on what ethical force it has for all forms of homosexuality as we know it today.

In summary we conclude that homosexuality is forbidden in the Old Testament. It is forbidden to those who engage in it by mutual consent as is clear from Leviticus 18 and 20. We must observe, however, that the Old Testament did not distinguish between homosexuality and homosexuality any more than it distinguished for example between kleptomania and stealing when it prohibited stealing. Whether the judgment which the Old Testament makes on homosexuality would be the same if such a distinction had been known we cannot say at this point. But therefore we cannot simply apply the Old Testament prohibition without considering whether our knowledge of homosexuality may not modify to some degree our moral judgment about the homosexual practices of such persons.

The question we must now face is how the New Testament views the problem of homosexuality and its practice (homosexuality).

## 2. *New Testament Data*

There are three references to homosexuality in the New Testament, all of them in the epistles of Paul. All scholars are agreed that the Apostle considered homosexual practice (homosexuality) as sin, a mode of behavior which is on par with adultery and murder.

*I Corinthians 6:9, 10.* In this passage Paul publishes a catalog of sinners in which he lists homosexuals along with those who are greedy, immoral, idolaters, adulterers, thieves, drunkards, revilers, and robbers. He declares that these people will not inherit the kingdom of God. The Revised Standard Version translates two Greek words denoting homosexual practices into the one word "homosexuals," the word *malakoi* referring to passive male partners and the word *arsenokoitai* indicating the active partners in such acts. It has been suggested that the use of these words stresses the activity rather than the condition of homosexuality. But Paul does not make the kind of distinction we have made earlier between homosexuality and homosexuality. He speaks only of those who practice homosexual acts. From this text it is clear that Paul considered

homosexualism as seriously wicked, though no more sinful than the others mentioned in his list.

In this connection it may be noted that Paul adds "and such were some of you." Knowing how widespread overt homosexual practices were in Corinth we may suppose there were those in the church who had engaged in such practices. But they too were forgiven, washed, sanctified, justified in "the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God" (vs. 11). Then Paul goes on to emphasize that the new freedom in Christ does not permit a Christian to abuse his body immorally, for it is a member of Christ, it is the temple of the Holy Spirit, and therefore Christians must glorify God in their bodies. He explicitly singles out joining one's self to a prostitute as contrary to the Christian's new status. He would, we may be sure, have said the same about homosexuality.

*I Timothy 1:10.* In this text Paul again includes homosexuals *arsenokoitai* translated in the Revised Standard Version as "sodomites," in a list of those who violate the law of God. This passage adds nothing new to our study.

*Romans 1:26, 27.* This is the classic passage that deals with homosexuality. It must be observed at the outset that it is not discussed as a subject on its own, i.e. as a particular problem in the church to which Paul is writing. He deals with it incidentally in the course of his argument that the perversion of the divine relationship results in a perversion of human relationships.

Paul is arguing that the wrath of God is revealed against all men who have denied their proper relationship with God their Creator. He is thinking here of the heathen who do not have the Old Testament but nonetheless have that revelation of God in creation which leaves them without excuse. Refusing to heed the revelation of God in the creation they have turned to idolatry, exchanging "the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man or birds or animals or reptiles" (vs. 23). As a consequence of their sin against their Creator they have been given up by God in his wrath to "impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves" (vs. 24). Then follows the pertinent passages, which emphasize and elaborate the meaning of verse 24: "For this reason God gave them up to dishonorable passions. Their women exchanging natural relations for unnatural, and the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passion for one another, men committing shameless acts with men and receiving in their own persons the due penalty for their error." Obviously Paul regards homosexuality, as he knew it, as evidence of moral perversion in the most intimate of human relationships. He speaks of it as an impurity or uncleanness. He considers it a dishonoring of the body and the result of dishonorable passions, and a shameless practice, that is, lacking in proper shame. It is an exchange of the natural use of sex for the unnatural. Homosexuality is the penalty for man's apostasy from the true worship of God resulting in the depravity of those who engage in it.

It has often been noted that Paul moves directly from idolatry to homosexuality which suggests that he may have had in mind the depraved cultic practices of the pagan world. This may be true, but we may not restrict Paul's judgment against homosexuality to cultic instances of it any more than we may restrict his condemnation of prostitution to its occurrences within pagan cultic practice. Homosexuality had a long history in the hellenistic world. It was already practiced and approved by Plato five hundred years earlier and it was engaged in apart from cultic worship. We may also note that immediately following verses 26 and 27, Paul declares that the basic cause of all the corruption in the pagan world was idolatry and he then proceeds to mention such anti-social sins as follow from defection from God, such as covetousness, malice, murder, strife, deceit, gossip, etc., none of which can be equated with cultic practice.

We conclude that the New Testament passages which make reference to homosexual behavior are in harmony with the judgment of the Old Testament: homosexual acts are sinful.

But again we need to ask whether the judgment of Paul applies to those who are homosexuals as we have defined them, i.e. those who are constitutionally homosexual in their sex orientation. Does the exchange from the natural to the unnatural which Paul deems dishonorable apply to such persons? A person who is homosexual, we have seen, has a disordered sex condition, so that what is "natural" to him is to have sex relations with a member of his own sex, and what is "unnatural" for him would be to have heterosexual relations. Is Paul not speaking of those who willfully exchange sex relationships and willfully give up their natural relations? What then of those for whom it is not a case of willful exchange or willful giving up of the natural? The male homosexual does not exchange his passion for a woman for passion for a man, nor gives up the natural attraction for a woman, for he does not have such passions, such are not "natural" to him. How then ought we to regard the acts of those who engage in what according to the creation order is judged "unnatural," but is in fact "natural" for them in their disordered condition?

We face the seriousness of our problem at this point. We must deal with the biblical data most seriously to learn God's will for us in this matter if at all possible, but at the same time we must be aware of the serious problem of the homosexual and be assured that we do not lay down prohibitions for him unless such prohibitions are clearly warranted from Scripture.

#### *F. The Hermeneutical Problem*

We must now ask the question in how far the judgment against homosexuality as seen in the explicit passages of Scripture is applicable to the problem of homosexuality today. There are several reasons why we must raise this question.

1. It is a good principle of interpretation that specific texts must always be read in the light of the Bible as a whole. To wrench a text out of its context and apart from the rest of the Scriptures is to do violence to the Word of God. A simple example can illustrate this important

principle. In Psalm 115:17 we read "the dead do not praise God, nor do any that go down into silence." Again in Ecclesiastes 9:5 we are told: "the dead know nothing, and they have no more reward." From these passages we might readily conclude that at death we are annihilated or at least that the soul is in unconscious state as some sects do declare. It is immediately clear to us that these passages must be read in their context and in the light of the whole of the Bible before we conclude what appears to be their plain teaching. It is also necessary for us to see the biblical data we have reviewed above in the light of the entire Scriptures before we make a final judgment.

2. There are many examples in the New Testament of regulations from the Old Testament that were abrogated by the coming of Christ and by the introduction of the new covenant, as is plainly taught for example in the book of Hebrews. But the church has also recognized that some New Testament regulations were of a temporary character applicable to a given situation in that era, but cannot be imposed on the church of today. As an example we need only to mention the familiar texts that require women to remain silent in the churches (I Corinthians 14:34), to wear a veil when praying (I Corinthians 11:6). In the case of these two texts the church has had to wrestle, and still does, to discover the permanent truth that lies back of the explicit regulation which is considered not binding on us today. In each instance it is the task of the church to make its judgment in the light of the whole of Scripture, i.e. to determine what is normative for us and what is not. We need to ask whether the prohibitions against homosexuality were of a temporary character or must be considered binding on us.

3. We need to remember that the Bible itself recognizes that the ideal cannot always be achieved in our sinful world and that therefore, exceptions are to be made. To kill is evil, but wars, self-defense and capital punishment are recognized in the Scriptures as exceptions to the commandment: "thou shalt not kill." Marriage is between one man and one woman as long as both shall live, but the Bible concedes that divorce may be allowed. Lying is contrary to the ninth commandment, but Rahab is rewarded for her falsehood on behalf of Israel. The Hebrew midwives are blessed of God for refusing to obey the order of Pharaoh to put to death all male infants even though they lied to the King of Egypt to spare their own lives (Ex. 1:15-21). Homosexuality is condemned, but are there any exceptions? A heterosexual who cannot exercise self-control is told that it is better for him to marry than "to be aflame with passion" (I Corinthians 7:9 R.S.V.). What must the homosexual do who is aflame with passion and cannot marry? Is there room for some kind of exception in his case?

4. A difficult but not irrelevant consideration for our study is the question in how far we may and must give weight to what we have learned from the creation itself through modern science when we are interpreting Scripture. Is it not our responsibility to bring the two together insofar as possible? Must we not recognize the authority of scientific truth even though we recognize the priority of the revelation of God in Jesus Christ and in the Scriptures?

For example in Matthew 17 we have the account of the healing of the epileptic boy. The passage states that Jesus rebuked the demon and it came out of the lad and he was cured. It would be improper for us to conclude that epilepsy is always caused by demons and that the proper cure of epileptics is exorcising the demons out of them. We know from medical science that epilepsy is a physical condition to be corrected or controlled by medication or surgery. Science has prevented us from drawing what might otherwise seem a reasonable conclusion regarding epilepsy from the scriptural narrative.

As we have seen in the earlier part of this report, we have learned from the sciences that homosexuality often is a condition which is rooted deeply in biological and psychological aberrations that create a disorder for which the individual can be held only partly responsible, if at all. What bearing has this information on our problem of seeking to determine the moral status of homosexuality?

In the light of these considerations we must now turn to a theological-ethical approach to the question of how we as Christians ought to regard homosexuality and its practice.

#### G. *A theological-ethical approach*

In order to properly evaluate homosexuality and homosexualism, we must bring three factors into focus: the explicit teaching of the particular Old and New Testament passages we have already considered, the message of the Bible as a whole in its bearing on the subject, and the light which modern science sheds upon it.

1. We begin with a consideration of the biblical understanding of the place and role of sex in human existence.

Paul in the first chapter of Romans sees homosexual acts as contrary to nature. We are not to suppose that Paul is here initiating a natural law theory such as was developed in the Middle Ages, in fact, his references to nature are in some instances no more than a reference to reigning customs or generally accepted notions as for example in I Corinthians 11:14 where he speaks about what nature teaches regarding the length of a man's and a woman's hair. In Romans one we may believe he is declaring that homosexualism is a distorted use of the increased sex differentiation. Homosexuals exchange the natural for the unnatural.

Accordingly homosexuality must be considered a disorder, a distortion of the sex differentiation implanted in the human race. This disorder is the consequence of the sin in which all men share. The homosexual, as constitutionally predisposed to erotic attraction to members of the same sex, bears the disorder of our broken fallen world in his person. The measure of his moral responsibility depends upon what willful contribution he has made to his condition. For the rest, the responsibility is partially on those who may have contributed to his disorder during his maturation, and on the human race which lies in sin and is under the curse of sin.

In opposition to those who wish to maintain that homosexuality is merely an accidental variation in nature such as the color of one's hair or lefthandedness, it must be said that Scripture clearly teaches that

man was originally created "male" and "female." The fact that a male homosexual can only fully experience his "maleness" in relation to another male and a female homosexual only in relation to another female is therefore a reversal of the created order. Although not explicitly stated, this may well be the reason why homosexual acts are forbidden and are considered loathsome in Leviticus 18 and 20. It is explicitly stated that their practice defiles those who practice them (Leviticus 18:24-30).

Turning to the New Testament we find the creation order of Genesis reaffirmed several times: by Jesus in Matthew 19:5, 6, and in Mark 10:6-8; by Paul in Ephesians 5:31 and I Corinthians 6:16. In the light of this constant reaffirmation we may assert that homosexuality is a disorder of human nature and more than a mere variant. Although the exact point of comparison ought to be properly observed, as we noted above, we may say that both from the perspective of Scripture and the general conclusion of modern research, homosexuality is a disordered condition and a handicap comparable to other abnormal physical and psychological conditions.

There are however several other scriptural considerations to which we must give our attention before we evaluate this form of sexual aberration.

We cannot ignore the fact that the New Testament projects a view of sex which is not found in the Old Testament. In the Old Testament it was normal for a man to be married and raise children. This state of affairs was intimately related to God's design to form unto himself a people who would be the bearers of his redemptive concern for all men and thus the vehicle for the coming of his kingdom. The Old Testament concept of the people of God was inseparably identified with the physical race of Hebrews. This intimacy is seen in the imprinting of a religious rite on the male reproductive organ in circumcision. Celibacy was an abnormal state and marriage was commanded by God for the Israelite in order for him to fulfill his redemptive purpose for God.

In the New Testament however there is room for the unmarried state as a special form of existence for service in Christ. Jesus in Matthew 19:12 speaks of those who are eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom, referring to those who choose celibacy for Christ's sake. And the Apostle Paul in I Corinthians 7:1, 8 commends the unmarried state for those who are able to bear it. In this connection it is also well to remember Jesus' statement in Matthew 22:30 that "in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like the angels in heaven." From an eschatological perspective the differentiation and use of sex does not demand that believers marry. The New Testament does not tie the coming of the kingdom to marriage as closely as does the Old Testament. Sex has been relativized by the New Order introduced by Christ; in the Kingdom of God there is neither male nor female (Galatians 3:28). For the sake of the kingdom a man must be prepared to forsake house and wife and children (Luke 18:29). And such will receive their reward (Luke 18:30).

Thus in the New Testament church we see the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy that eunuchs, who according to Deuteronomy 23:1 were barred from the assembly of the Lord, will be received in the house of God and know a higher fulfillment than in family relationships (Isaiah 56:3-5).

Sex therefore, has been so far relativized by the redemptive order that abstinence from sexual relations can be a feature of a good and proper Christian life. In Christ the unmarried, the heterosexual and homosexual are offered an alternative to the married state in the companionship provided by the redeemed community. Thus in the New Testament one of the purposes of sex—the achievement of personal wholeness—can be realized, at least in a significant sense, in Christ.

Homosexuals who are in their disordered constitution unable to fulfill the creation ordinances of sexuality need not be considered lesser persons in the New Testament church or the kingdom of God. In Luke 14:21 Jesus teaches that those forbidden from the service of the worshiping congregation of the Old Testament people (Leviticus 21:18-21), are welcomed in his kingdom.

Sex, nonetheless, has not been negated as a way of life as is abundantly evident from the New Testament. The unity and equality of the sexes in Christ may not be understood as doing away with the distinction between male and female. As Karl Barth has said in commenting on Galatians 3:28: "If they are one in him standing upon an equal footing, this means that they are what they are for themselves as they are ordered, related and directed to each other" (Church Dogmatics III, 4, page 164). The option of celibacy is only for those able to bear it. Those unable to exercise self-control should marry, says Paul in I Corinthians 7:9. Sex and marriage remain an important part of the Christian's life and responsibility. Paul declares: "The husband should give to his wife her conjugal rights, and likewise the wife to her husband . . . Do not refuse one another except perhaps by agreement for a season, that you may devote yourselves to prayer; but then come together again" (I Corinthians 7:3, 5).

The choice for the Christian is between marriage and celibacy. Sex relations outside of marriage are forbidden in the Scriptures. The Old Testament norm is that a man should leave his father and his mother and cleave to his wife. The prohibitions of the Pentateuch specify in detail various ways in which this norm may be violated and the judgments that are to be imposed for such infractions of the law. According to the New Testament the Christian is justified by faith and is freed from the law, but this freedom is not freedom from the will of God. As Paul says in Galatians 5:13, "For you were called to freedom, brethren; only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love be servants of one another." In the realm of sexuality this means that a man become free to be a man in relationship with a woman: free to be in obedience to God's purpose.

From the biblical understanding of the place and role of sex as we have outlined it above, several moral consequences follow:

a. Sex is a vital and significant part of human existence. But in the light of the Scriptures and especially the New Testament, which relativizes sex from the perspective of the kingdom of God, the Christian must resist the temptation to glorify sex as it is exalted in modern American society. The heterosexual unable to marry for one reason or another, and the homosexual because of his sexual inversion need not conclude that their lack of sexual fulfillment is as tragic as the modern emphasis on sex would imply.

b. From the viewpoint of the New Testament the inability of the homosexual to enter into a marriage relationship does not bar him from meaningful living in Christ, and the opportunity to be accepted as a person any less than that accorded the unmarried heterosexual.

c. In the light of the foregoing, the church and Christians generally have a great responsibility to the unmarried among them, heterosexual and homosexual. The church is required to be the body of Christ in which the unmarried may find fulfillment as persons in the fellowship and companionship of the congregation of believers. The church should recognize that being unmarried the single members are free to be "anxious about the affairs of the Lord, how to please the Lord" (I Corinthians 7:32). Therefore they must be given opportunity within the fellowship of believers to serve the body of Christ and experience the love and acceptance of the body of the Lord.

Within this fellowship of love the homosexual who has also been justified and sanctified by Christ (I Corinthians 6:11) must be accepted in his homosexuality, so that in the congregation he does not need to wear a mask and conduct himself like a hypocrite, living in constant fear of discovery and exposure. Nor, when his identity is known, should he receive the painful rejection and diminution homosexuals so often experience. He deserves the same acceptance, recognition, compassion and help that is given to any person.

Unfortunately the homosexual has not experienced this kind of love and acceptance of his person in either the church or society. It has been said that the homosexual has been far more sinned against than he has sinned. In the light of our understanding of homosexuality today, Christians bear a great burden of guilt relative to such persons.

d. Since, as we have seen, homosexuality is a disorder, and the gospel of Christ is the good news of God's saving concern through Jesus Christ, the church which is his body must be concerned to undo the results of sin everywhere. When John the Baptist asked Jesus, "Are you he who is to come, or shall we look for another?" Jesus replied, "the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good news preached to them" (Matthew 11:5). Christ came to bring healing and hope to a disordered world lying in sin. The church is his body to bring healing and hope in his name. This responsibility of the church extends to the homosexual too, who, we have seen, bears the disorder of our broken world in his person. What this means in a practical way we shall suggest later.

e. It follows, from the recognition that sexual inversion is a disordered sex orientation, that the Christian homosexual ought to seek in whatever

ways are open to him the healing of his disorder. If Christ came to forgive our sins, and heal our brokenness because of sin, we, as children of God in Christ, are duty bound to seek healing and restoration wherever and however we can.

This means that the homosexual who is a Christian will not adopt the interpretation of sexual inversion that the "gay activists" now give it, when they commend and celebrate homosexuality as a desirable condition and glorify the lifestyle of homosexual behavior. Instead, the homosexual must make use of the means of grace, the pastoral care of the church, and the therapy available to him from scientific sources.

2. We must now consider the problem of the homosexual who is in the unhappy dilemma of not being able to marry because of his homosexuality, but at the same time experiences all the desires and drive for sexual fulfillment that brings the heterosexual to marriage.

Of course, the first responsibility for the homosexual is to exhaust the possibility of sexual reorientation through all available means. But as we have learned, the success of being redirected in sexual orientation depends upon how deeply rooted and firmly fixed the condition is. There are those whose inversion is not changed by the application of present knowledge and therapy. In I Corinthians 6:9-11 Paul proclaims that those who had engaged in homosexual practices were also among the saved in the name of Christ and in the Spirit. We may believe that they were liberated from their homosexual behavior. But it does not follow that if there were constitutional homosexuals among the saved in Corinth, that they were also liberated from their inversion and became heterosexual in their sexual propensity. Many Christians who are sexually inverted know that their problem is not removed by prayer, any more than Paul's thorn in the flesh was removed in answer to his prayers. This is not to deny the value of prayer and the means of grace to enable a homosexual to resist the temptation of engaging in homosexualism. Christian commitment will help him live a continent life, and may strengthen him as he seeks to be orientated to heterosexuality. But to expect the means of grace and prayer to redirect a firmly fixed homosexual is to expect a miracle.

We may draw a parallel at this point with alcoholism. A person who is once an alcoholic is always an alcoholic. His condition according to present knowledge cannot be corrected. The only solution to his condition is total abstinence. So too in the light of our present understanding there are many whose homosexuality is so firmly a part of their personality that they will always be homosexuals. Having drawn the parallel between the alcoholic and the homosexual (male and female) it is also important to point out the differences between alcoholism and homosexuality. An alcoholic bears responsibility for having become an alcoholic by his drinking habits. Having become an alcoholic, however, he has lost his ability to use alcohol responsibly, and so afterwards is unable to regain his ability to be responsible in its use. But in the beginning a misuse of his responsibility contributed to his alcoholism. In the case of the homosexual, however, his personal responsibility for his condition is in many instances minimal.

A second distinction to be drawn between alcoholism and homosexuality is that in the case of the alcoholic he does not need alcohol in order for him to be a fulfilled person. In fact, drinking impairs his ability to be a well-ordered individual. By not drinking he is not a deprived and handicapped person. A homosexual, on the other hand, like almost all human beings, has a need for the fulfillment of sexual relationships. For him not to have sex relations is to be deprived of that which his body craves, a deprivation of which he is constantly aware. He therefore lives in a circle of frustration caused by unfulfilled physical desires and the unfulfilled need for interpersonal love and companionship. To demand continence of a homosexual is demanding much more than to require abstinence of an alcoholic.

What then do we say to the homosexual who cannot relate to a member of the opposite sex but at the same time is "afame with passion"? In the case of the heterosexual who cannot exercise control of his sexual need, i.e. finds continence too difficult, the advice of the apostle Paul is that he should marry, for "it is better to marry than to be afame with passion" (I Corinthians 7:9). This advice will not do for the homosexual, of course, because marriage is not an option for him. But if homosexual acts are in every situation prohibited, what must he do in his dilemma? Is celibacy the only option open to him?

This brings us to consider whether the prohibition of homosexuality as prescribed in the Bible is indeed applicable to the person whose condition is that of homosexuality which cannot be changed. Without question the prohibitions are binding on those who willfully engage in homosexual acts out of lust or out of the perverted desire for sexual experimentation and variety. Homosexuality is also prohibited to the homosexual who seeks gratification of his passion or lust in casual relationships, in the same way that heterosexual relationships outside of marriage are forbidden. The question is whether there are any circumstances in which the confirmed homosexual can have sexual relations as the heterosexual has relations in marriage. In other words, is there any exception to the prohibition of homosexuality for the homosexual? Does the fact that he is so disordered in his sexual orientation that it is 'natural' for him to have erotic propensities for a partner of the same sex, so change the moral situation that he is thereby licensed to fulfill his sexual need in a way that is 'natural' to him? It is important for us to explore this possibility lest we do the homosexual brother or sister a serious injustice by committing the error of the Pharisees who according to Jesus "bind heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on men's shoulders" (Matthew 23:4).

Can we therefore make any exception for the homosexual in his agonizing dilemma? The question is a legitimate one. We have pointed out in the section of our report dealing with the hermeneutical problem that the Bible recognizes that the ideal for man cannot always be achieved in our sinful world and therefore exceptions are made. Can there be an exception for the homosexual in his dilemma?

In seeking for an answer to this question it is important to understand why exceptions are justified according to the Scriptures. Only then can

we consider whether an exception to the prohibition of homosexuality can ever be consistent with the purpose for which exceptions are made.

It might be argued on the basis of Moses' exception in the instance of marriage that by allowing divorce because of the hardness of men's hearts a principle is enunciated in the Old Testament which allows for exceptions because of man's imperfections and personal limitations to achieve the ideal. Under such a principle it might be suggested that homosexuality as the only course open to a homosexual caught in the dilemma of the biblical disapproval on the one hand, and his own agonizing drive for sexual union on the other, might under some conditions be justifiable.

But Jesus repudiates the exceptions of Moses regarding marriage save in the extreme case of unchastity (Matthew 5:31, 32; 19:3-9). Moses granted the right of divorce as a civil law recognizing the facts of human existence, but Jesus calls his followers to obey the moral law as the pattern for them to observe. "You, therefore, must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Matthew 5:48). Jesus does not recognize man's weakness or man's self-interest as valid reason for exception in the case of marriage as the disciples immediately understand (Matthew 19:10). It must be noted that Jesus allows the one exception to the marriage ordinance in the situation in which the husband may not be able to fulfill his obedience to the will of God because of the actions of another over whom he has no final control.

Exceptions to moral prohibitions are allowable when two factors are present: first, circumstances beyond the control and responsibility of the individual, and secondly, moral demands that supercede the moral prohibitions that are at first appearance germane. Thus the aggression of an invader may make it impossible not to kill. The Nazi program against the Jews made it morally wrong for Christians hiding Jews to speak according to fact when questioned by Nazi authorities. We are to obey those who have the rule over us, but our obedience to God may exempt us from obeying rulers (Acts 4:19). The exceptions to moral prohibitions are permitted in order that a person may be obedient to a higher moral demand than that of the immediate demand. Exceptions are intended precisely to free one in the circumstances beyond his control to be obedient to the will of God.

But the exceptions, apart from the situation of external pressures and the obedience to higher demands, are not granted for personal relief from obedience or for achieving personal advantage. Scripture does not release a man from obedience to a moral requirement merely to lower the cost of discipleship or to lighten the burden of the cross he bears. Jesus calls us to take up our cross and follow him in obedience.

Thus a single person who is in the dilemma of not being able to marry and yet lives with the tensions of the drive for sexual union is not free to commit fornication. The single man or woman, the widower and widow, are not allowed exceptions to continence because of their personal need and discomfort. They may be in circumstances beyond their control but they are not thereby freed from the prohibition of sex relations apart from marriage, for obedience to the demand for continence

does not require them to forego obedience to a higher moral demand. Again, for example, a married man whose wife is unable to grant him conjugal relations because of her illness or absence (as when a husband is in military service away from home) is not free to fulfill his sexual propensity in extra-marital relationships by way of exception.

Much as we may sympathize with the individual, married or unmarried, who cannot fulfill his or her sexual needs in the marriage relationship because of the cost of discipleship, we cannot do other than maintain what we judge to be the teaching of the Scriptures in which God has revealed his moral demands. It is the task of the church to "teach them (disciples) to observe all that I have commanded you," says Jesus (Matthew 28:20). The task of the church is to come with compassion to those who bear a heavy cross and encourage them with the means of God's grace; bring them the saving word of forgiveness when they stumble and fall; admonish them in love so they may repent and be renewed; embrace them in the warmth of Christian fellowship so they may find strength and support to bear their burden.

Must we not conclude that the same judgment must be made in the case of the confirmed homosexual in his difficult dilemma? As a human being his entire person experiences the natural drive and need for sexual completeness, but due to conditions to a large extent, if not entirely, beyond his responsibility, he cannot relate to a member of the opposite sex in sexual fulfillment, and in fact feels drawn to members of his own sex. Marriage as an answer to his problem is not a viable opinion. The biblical injunction against homosexuality, as we have seen, forbids his entering a sex relationship with another person with the same propensity. His dilemma is comparable to that of the unmarried heterosexual who cannot obtain sexual satisfaction in marriage.

There is however one difference that we cannot ignore. What if a homosexual finds a person of the same sex with whom he could establish a life partnership, the equivalent of marriage for heterosexuals? Marriage is an option for an unmarried heterosexual who can find a life partner. Is "marriage" to a person of the same sex an option for a homosexual under the same circumstances? We ask this question apart from the practical and formidable difficulties of establishing such a relationship and the equally difficult problems of maintaining such an arrangement permanently.

Because Scripture does not allow exceptions to moral demands for reasons of personal relief and satisfaction it would appear that no exception to the law of chastity may be made in the case of homosexuals who "marry," even though we can sympathize with the desire of some of them to effect such a partnership on account of the fulfillment such an arrangement might bring. Such a homosexual life partnership arrangement, by way of exception, appears no more justifiable than the liaison of a married man with a mistress when he can have no conjugal relationships with an invalid wife.

The handicap of the sexual invert can no more justify his violating the moral order than those with other psychological handicaps are justified in committing immoral acts.

In view of the biblical position on homosexual practice, and in view of the fact that no exception to this position is scripturally defensible, obedience to God appears to require a homosexual unable to marry according to the divine ordinance to accept celibacy as his way of life and continence as his moral duty.

Love for the homosexual neighbor does not allow us to soften the severity of this demand. Love, it is sometimes said, seeks the fulfillment of the neighbor and is ready always to satisfy such wants as lie closer to the center of his being. When the satisfaction of these wants integrates his personality, reduces his suffering, and works no apparent social harm, love requires that this satisfaction be licensed; no veto from the side of law may here be tolerated.

It is not possible in this report to develop the intricate relationship between love and law, but it may be said that just as law needs love as a protection against harsh legalism, so love needs law as a protection against easy indulgence. Moreover, as has already been indicated, biblical injunctions and prohibitions are to be honored in every instance where they are not overborne by either external necessity or by a higher value. In the case of homosexuality there is no evidence that a person will in fact and from a long range perspective be helped by the practice of it, and it is clear both that the Bible condemns it and that love can discover no warrant in either necessity or value to make an exception to the prohibition against it. Obedience to the revealed will of God will bring its own reward.

## II. PASTORAL ADVICE RE HOMOSEXUALITY

In order that the churches may deal in a pastoral way with the problems of homosexuality we recommend that synod serve the churches with the following statements of pastoral advice.

1. Homosexuality (male and female) is a condition of disordered sexuality which reflects the brokenness of our sinful world and for which the homosexual may himself bear only a minimal responsibility.

### Books recommended for further study:

- Bailey, Derrick Sherwin—*Homosexuality and the Western Christian Tradition*, Longmans, Green, 1955  
 Bieher, Irving—*Sexual Inversion: The Multiple Roots of Homosexuality*, Basic Books, 1965  
 Cole, William Graham—*Sex and Love in the Bible*, Association Press, 1959  
 Hatterer, Lawrence J.—*Changing Homosexuality in the Male*, McGraw-Hill, 1970  
 Jones, H. Kimball—*Toward a Christian Understanding of the Homosexual*, Association Press, 1966  
 Oberholtzer, W. Dwight (ed.)—*Is Gay Good?* Westminster, 1971  
 Rapport aan de Generale Synode van Dordrecht 1971-'72—*Over Mensen Die Homofiel Zijn*, Kerk Informatie van de Gereformeerde Kerken, 1972, NR 1  
 Ridderbos, S.J.—“Bijbel en Homosexualiteit” in *Bezinning*, Volume XIV, No. 3 (1959) pp. 137-152  
 Thielicke, Helmut—*The Ethics of Sex*, Harper, 1964  
 Treese, Robert L.—*Homosexuality: A Contemporary View of the Biblical Perspective*, Glide Urban Center  
 Van Veen, Jan—*Wat Zegt de Bijbel over Homofiele*, Dekkers, 1972

2. The homosexual may not, on the sole ground of his sexual disorder, be denied community acceptance, and if he is a Christian he is to be whole heartedly embraced by the church as a person for whom Christ died.

3. Homosexuality—as explicit homosexual practice—must be condemned as incompatible with obedience to the will of God as revealed in Holy Scripture.

4. The church must exercise the same patient understanding of and compassion for the homosexual in his sins as for all other sinners. The gospel of God's grace in Christ is to be proclaimed to him as the basis of his forgiveness, the power of his renewal, and the source of his strength to lead a sanctified life. As all Christians in their weaknesses, the homosexual must be admonished and encouraged not to allow himself to be defeated by lapses in chastity, but rather, to repent and thereafter to depend in fervent prayer upon the means of grace for power to withstand temptation.

5. In order to live a life of chastity in obedience to God's will the homosexual needs the loving support and encouragement of the church. The church should therefore so include him in its fellowship that he is not tempted by rejection and loneliness to seek companionship in a "gay world" whose immoral life-style is alien to a Christian.

6. Homosexuals, especially in their earlier years, should be encouraged to seek such help as may effect their sexual reorientation and the church should do everything in its power to help the homosexual overcome his disorder. Members of the churches should understand that many homosexuals, who might otherwise seek therapeutic aid, are deterred from doing so by the fear of detection and consequent ostracism. Christian acceptance and support can in all such cases be a means toward healing and wholeness. On the other hand, to those who cannot be healed and who must accept the permanent limitations of their homosexuality, the church must minister in the same spirit as it ministers to widows, widowers, and the unmarried.

7. Christians who are homosexual in their orientation are like all Christians called to discipleship and to the employment of their gifts in the cause of the kingdom. They should recognize that their sexuality is subordinate to their obligation to live in wholehearted surrender to Christ.

By the same token, churches should recognize that their homosexual members are fellow-servants of Christ who are to be given opportunity to render within the offices and structures of the congregation the same service that is expected from heterosexuals. The homosexual member must not be supposed to have less the gift of self-control in the face of sexual temptation than does the heterosexual. The relationship of love and trust within the congregation should be such that in instances where a member's sexual propensity does create a problem; the problem can be dealt with in the same way as are problems caused by the limitations and disorders of any other member.

8. It is the duty of pastors to be informed about the condition of homosexuality and the particular problems of the homosexual in order

that the pastor may minister to his need and to the need of others, such as parents, who may be intimately involved in the problems of homosexuality. The pastor is also in a position to instruct his congregation in appropriate ways about homosexuality and to alert members and office holders to the responsibility they bear toward homosexuals in the fellowship. He can encourage an understanding of and compassion for persons who live with this handicap, and dispel the prejudices under which they suffer.

9. The church should promote good marriages and healthy family life in which the relations between husband and wife and between parents and children are such that the psychological causes that may contribute to sexual inversion are reduced to a minimum. Parents should be encouraged to seek Christian counsel and help when they see signs of disordered sexual maturation in their children.

10. Institutions and agencies associated with the church that are in a position to contribute to the alleviation of the problem of homosexuality are encouraged to do so by assisting ministers to become better informed, by offering counseling services to the homosexual and his family, and by generally creating a Christian attitude in the churches as well as in society as a whole.

11. The church should speak the Word of God prophetically to a society and culture which glorifies sexuality and sexual gratification. It should foster a wholesome appreciation of sex and expose and condemn the idolatrous sexualism and the current celebration of homosexuality promoted in literature, the theater, films, television, advertisements, and the like.

Homosexuality Committee

Ralph Heynen, Chairman

Clarence Boomsma, Secretary

Robert Baker

Melvin D. Hugen

Hudson Nyenhuis

Henry Stob

## REPORT 43

HEIDELBERG CATECHISM TRANSLATION COMMITTEE  
(Art. 16)

## DEAR DELEGATES:

We need to give only a brief report. The real substance of our work is reported in the booklet containing our new provisional translation of the Heidelberg Catechism. This booklet has already been published, and a copy of it will be included when copies of the *Agenda* are mailed to the delegates. Synod of 1972 (Acts, p. 29) authorized the committee, when we finished our translation, to publish it in separate booklet form. And so the text of this new translation should be considered the essence of our report.

But we relate here a few matters pertaining to our work this past year. With a few exceptions the committee met weekly. During the summer Prof. Sierd Woudstra, former secretary, left for new work in Australia and so had to give up his assignment on our committee.

The actual work of translating was finished in November of 1972. But we revised the earlier parts of the translation somewhat more than we had planned. Some of this revision was necessary to make the earlier parts of the translation consistent with the language and style we had developed in later sections. Other revisions were in response to suggestions for improvements which the committee received. These revisions were all completed and handed over to the Publishing House in January.

The preface to the new translation solicits further responses from the churches. Unless synod instructs us otherwise, we will continue to evaluate any responses we receive and try to meet synod's goal of having the final translation ready for the Synod of 1975.

The Heidelberg Catechism  
Translation Committee

Clarence Boersma  
Edward J. Masselink  
Stanley M. Wiersma  
Fred H. Klooster, Chairman  
Richard F. Wevers, Secretary

**REPORT 44**  
**ECCLESIASTICAL OFFICE AND ORDINATION**  
(Art. 64)

DEAR BROTHERS:

This committee was appointed by the Synod of 1969, and was given the following mandate:

“Synod appoint a committee to study the nature of ecclesiastical office and the meaning of ordination as taught in the Scripture and exhibited in the history of the church of Christ” (Acts, 1969, p. 85, Article 121, C).

The Synod of 1971 also assigned to our committee Overture 25 submitted to that synod, which dealt with the question of the ministerial status of ministers engaged in extraordinary types of service—like Bible teaching in high schools or administrative duties (Acts, 1971, pp. 55 and 643).

At this point we should like to indicate to synod how we understand our mandate. It will be well to remember, first, what is said in the Acts of 1969 by way of introduction to our mandate:

“For many years the Christian Reformed Church has been seeking to define the precise status of layworkers in evangelism. Valuable information has been provided the church in study reports presented to the Synods of 1965, 1967, and 1969. It has become evident that the precise status of the layworker in evangelism cannot be determined until the *nature of ecclesiastical office and the meaning of ordination have been clarified*” (p. 85, Art. 121, B).

Note now that the Synod of 1969 did not ask us to “define the precise status of layworkers in evangelism,” but rather to study “the nature of ecclesiastical office and the meaning of ordination as taught in the Scripture and exhibited in the history of the church of Christ.” We have therefore come to the conclusion that the synod wished us to develop certain principles and guidelines which will give direction to the church as it faces the basic ecclesiastical question of the status of layworkers in evangelism—a question which has a number of ramifications and implications. In other words, we consider our task to be that of providing a biblical and historical background in the light of which the problem of the status of the layworker in evangelism must be seen and in the light of which a solution to the problem must be found. In accordance with synod’s instructions, we have investigated the question of office and ordination primarily from two points of view: the biblical and the historical.

This report was submitted to the Synod of 1972. That synod sent the report back to the study committee, and requested us to do the following:

“a. to address itself to such (inter-related) questions as these:

1) To whom does the exalted Christ delegate his authority (Matthew 28:19f.), to the church as a whole, to special offices within the church, or to both?

2) What is the nature of the authority involved in the special office in its relation to what is known as ‘the office of all believers’?

3) What is the relationship between the task and authority of the apostles and that of other offices (ministries) in the church?

b. to delineate the comparison between its conclusions and articles 30, 31 of the Belgic Confession as well as the form for installation/ordination of office-bearers presently used in the Christian Reformed Church, and

c. to report to the Synod of 1973” (Acts, 1972, p. 95).

In the report which follows, your committee has tried to carry out this additional mandate. The first part of the report, Sections I and II, contains the main body of last year’s report, with only minor changes. In Section III your committee gives its answers to the questions raised by the Synod of 1972. As will be evident, we have taken the liberty of changing the order of some of the questions raised.

## OUTLINE

### I. BIBLICAL STUDY ON OFFICE AND ORDINATION

#### A. The Meaning of Ordination

1. Word Study on *Ordain*
2. Special Ceremonies Accompanying Appointments
  - a. Anointing
  - b. The Laying on of Hands
    - 1) In the Old Testament
    - 2) In the Book of Acts
    - 3) In the Pastoral Epistles
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#### B. The Nature of Ecclesiastical Office

1. Word Study of *Office*
2. Officers and Other Functionaries in the Bible
  - a. In the Old Testament
  - b. In the New Testament
    - 1) The Book of Acts
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    - 3) Various Functionaries in the New Testament Church
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4. Functions Usually Associated with Ordination Today
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## II. HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE CONCEPTS OF OFFICE AND ORDINATION

### A. The Ancient Period

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2. Specific Developments
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### B. The Reformation Era

1. Introduction
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### C. Post-Reformation Developments in the Dutch Reformed Tradition

1. The Terminology for Office
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## III. ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS RAISED BY THE SYNOD OF 1972

### A. Questions Involving the Nature of Authority

1. Introductory Consideration of the Concepts of Office and Authority
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3. The Relationship Between the Authority Involved in Special Office and that Involved in the Office of All Believers
4. The Delegation of Authority to the Church by Christ

### B. Questions Involving the Belgic Confession and our Forms for Ordination

1. A Comparison of our Conclusions with the Belgic Confession
2. A Comparison of our Conclusions with our Forms for Ordination

## IV. CONCLUSIONS

## V. RECOMMENDATIONS

Note: All Bible quotations are from the Revised Standard Version unless otherwise designated.

## I. BIBLICAL STUDY OF OFFICE AND ORDINATION

### A. The Meaning of Ordination

#### 1. Word Study on *Ordain*

When one tries to make a word study of the word *ordain* in our English translations of the Bible, he is bound to be disappointed. To be sure, the word *ordain* is used in our English Bible versions, particularly in the King James Version. But there is no evidence that this word in the King James Bible is meant to be an exact translation of a Hebrew or Greek word designating precisely what we today commonly understand by "ordination."

As far as the Old Testament is concerned, the word *ordain* occurs fifteen times in the King James Version. Five of these occurrences have to do with appointing a man to some kind of specific task; these five instances, however, are translations of four different Hebrew words. In the American Standard Version three of these five passages are rendered *appoint* rather than *ordain*. The Revised Standard Version has used the word *establish* in one of the two remaining passages where the word *ordain* is used in the King James Version.

The situation is similar in the New Testament. The word *ordain* occurs twenty times in the King James Version of the New Testament. Eight of these occurrences have to do with ecclesiastical functionaries, but these eight are translations of five different Greek words. Two of these Greek words are rendered *appoint* by the King James translators in other places. In the case of seven of the above-named eight passages, the words in question have been rendered *appoint* by both the American Standard Version and the Revised Standard Version; in the case of the eighth of these passages, the word in question is translated with *become* in both versions.

It seems clear, therefore, that the word *ordain* in the King James Version does not translate either a single term or a group of terms which convey precisely what we today commonly understand by ordination. Rather, the word *ordain* in the King James seems to be a translation for words which mean to "appoint" or "to put in charge."

In order to see whether we find in the New Testament anything comparable to our practice of ordination, let us go on to examine a number of New Testament words which are used to describe the setting aside of people for specific ecclesiastical tasks:

1) *Titheemi* (put, place, set; make someone something, put in charge, appoint). In the New Testament the word is used to describe the following appointments:

a) Paul's appointment as apostle, as a preacher and teacher of the Gentiles: I Timothy 1:12, 2:7; II Timothy 1:11. I Timothy 1:12 specifically states that the appointment was by "Christ Jesus our Lord." From Paul's statement in Galatians 1:1 ("an apostle not from men, neither through man, but through Jesus Christ"), we may conclude that neither the church nor other men were involved in this appointment.

b) The appointment of the Ephesian elders as guardians or bishops

over the flock (Acts 20:28). This was an appointment by the Holy Spirit. There appears to be no reason, however, for excluding some activity by the members of the church or by an apostle from this appointment, particularly in view of such passages as Acts 14:23 and Titus 1:5.

c) The appointment of believers to a variety of spiritual ministries (I Corinthians 12:28, "God hath set some in the church . . ."). What is here described is divine appointment to a wide range of functions. Some of these functions fit our common concept of *office*: apostles, prophets, teachers. But other functions mentioned here do not easily fit into our idea of *office*, and do not seem to be referring to *office* at all: miracles, gifts of healings, helps, governments, kinds of tongues. A careful perusal of this passage, in the context of I Corinthians 12-14, raises the question of whether the possession of certain spiritual gifts is not in itself something of a divine appointment to exercise these gifts.

2) *Kathisteemi* (primary meaning: to set down, to put in place; additional meaning: to set in an elevated position, to put in charge, to appoint). The word is used in the New Testament to describe a master's appointment of a servant to be in charge of his household, or a ruler's appointment of certain men to be in charge of various governmental functions. The book of Hebrews uses the word to indicate that under the law certain men were appointed as high priests (7:28), and to describe the tasks they were appointed to fulfill (5:1, 8:3). Two New Testament passages use the word to describe appointments within the Christian fellowship:

a) Acts 6:3. The twelve apostles propose that the congregation in Jerusalem pick out seven men to serve tables, "whom we may appoint to this duty." The entire congregation is active in selecting the seven, but it is the twelve apostles who finally authorize the seven to perform their tasks. In this connection we read about a ceremony involving the laying on of hands (6:6)—probably the hands of the members of the congregation, though it is possible to understand the passage as referring to the hands of the twelve apostles.

b) Titus 1:5. Titus is here instructed by Paul to appoint elders in every Cretan town. Nothing is said here about the way in which these elders are to be designated, about the possible role of the Christian fellowship in these appointments, or about the question of whether these appointments are to be accompanied by ceremonies.

3) *Cheirotoneoo* (literally, to show hands; thus, to choose or elect by raising hands. The word, however, does not invariably indicate a popular election, for both Philo and Josephus use it to describe God's appointment of a king. Hence the word can be used where nothing more than simple appointment by some authority is meant.) Two New Testament passages use the word:

a) II Corinthians 8:19. Here the word is used to describe the choosing by the churches of a representative to accompany Paul on the journey during which he is taking a collection for the poor in Jerusalem. Here the word unquestionably suggests the idea of a popular election. (It may be noted that in the writings of Ignatius and Polycarp the same word

appears when the churches are said to be choosing envoys for bringing greetings to other churches. And in *Didachee* 15:1 the churches are instructed as follows: "Appoint therefore for yourselves bishops and deacons"; here also the word *cheirotoneoo* is used for *appoint*.)

b) Acts 14:23. Here Paul and Barnabas are said to have appointed elders in the churches of Lycaonia and Pisidia during their first missionary journey. It is not warranted, however, to infer from the use of the word *cheirotoneoo* in this passage that there must have been some kind of congregational participation in these appointments.

4) *Ekleptomai* (to choose). This word is often used to indicate the selection of certain people for a position, function, or role in the church. The word is used to describe the choosing of the twelve to be apostles (e.g., Luke 6:13; John 6:70; Acts 1:2, 24). It is also used to describe Peter's conviction that God chose him from among others to bring the gospel to the Gentiles (Acts 15:7). When Luke describes the choosing of envoys to go with Paul and Barnabas to bring the decisions of the Jerusalem Conference to Antioch, he uses *eklegomai* (Acts 15:22, 25). *Ekleptomai* is also used in Acts 6:5, to describe the choosing by the Jerusalem congregation of the seven men who were to serve tables.

Summing up what we have learned so far, we have seen that the New Testament uses several words to express the idea of "appointing," "putting in charge," "selecting for a certain task." The way in which these words are used, however, does not indicate whether the congregations and churches described in the New Testament had anything comparable to our ceremony of ordination. We do read, to be sure, of a laying on of hands in connection with the appointment of the seven in Acts 6, but we have no precise details about this ceremony, and nowhere in the New Testament are we told that whenever people were appointed for a certain task in the church there always had to be such a ceremony.

## 2. Special ceremonies accompanying appointments

To carry the investigation further, however, we must not overlook the fact that some appointments reported in Scripture were accompanied by special ceremonies and symbolic acts. We refer here particularly to two kinds of ceremonies: anointing and the laying on of hands. Let us now see whether we may legitimately draw conclusions about ordination procedures from passages in which these ceremonies are described.

### a. Anointing

In Old Testament times persons and things were anointed with oil and thereby set aside for exclusive service to the Lord. The importance of this solemn act of anointing is underscored by the warning that it was a grave offense to use holy anointing oil for common purposes (Exodus 30:31-33). Anointing was considered indispensable for the performance of certain tasks. One was not to officiate as a priest unless he had been anointed to that office. Moreover, one was anointed for a specific task and not for any and all tasks; Saul and Uzziah, who had been anointed to the kingly office, sinned grievously when they assumed priestly functions.

It is important to observe that in the Old Testament the impression

is left that the anointing conferred something upon the anointed which he did not have before. The priests received the priesthood with its concomitant duties, rights, and privileges (Leviticus 7:36; Numbers 18:8). When kings were anointed, the Spirit of the Lord "came mightily" upon them (I Samuel 10:6, 10; 16:13). Only once do we read of a command to anoint a prophet (I Kings 19:16). The anointing of a king in Israel signified that the anointed one had been sovereignly chosen by the Lord, though the approbation of the people was not missing (II Samuel 2:4). It is also clear from the Old Testament that while the anointed king was untouchable (I Samuel 24:6), he was not sovereign in a dictatorial sense. Israel's king was to be a servant representing the Lord; he was not to act as an autonomous suzerain.

The most common word for anointing in the Old Testament is *mashach*, from which the word *Messiah* has been derived. Sometimes, however, the word *mashach* is used in a non-literal sense. For example, in Psalm 105:15 (cf. also I Chronicles 16:22) the patriarchs are called "anointed ones." The word *anointed* as used in Isaiah 61:1 must also be understood in a figurative way, since we do not read of a literal anointing with oil of either the prophet Isaiah or of the Messiah to whom the prophecy points. This non-literal use of the word strongly suggests that in the minds of the ancient writers the reality symbolized by the act of anointing was far more important than the symbol itself.

The Scriptural data with respect to anointing have been interpreted and applied in two different ways within the Christian community. a) One group of Christians sees in this material the basis for a setting aside of their clergy by an act of anointing which invests them with powers and qualifications not granted to others (see *The New Catholic Encyclopedia*, 1967, VII, 82ff.). b) Another group of Christians finds the Old Testament rite of anointing in connection with appointment to office to be pointing specifically to Jesus Christ. This group of Christians observes that in the New Testament only Christ is referred to as *the Anointed One*. Nowhere do we read in the New Testament that apostles, evangelists, elders, deacons, or others were anointed for their specific "offices." On the contrary, all believers are said to have been anointed (I John 2:20, 27; also II Corinthians 1:21, which should probably be understood as referring to a general anointing of believers rather than as an anointing of apostles only). For this general anointing of believers the Old Testament paved the way. The close association between anointing and the reception of the Holy Spirit is seen repeatedly in the Old Testament (I Samuel 10:1, 9; 16:13; Isaiah 61:1; Zechariah 4:1-14, esp. v. 6). The Old Testament indicates that in the last days there will be an outpouring of the Spirit on all flesh (Joel 2:28ff., Acts 2:16ff.). It is also said that in the latter time consecration to the Lord will be most comprehensive—even to the bells on the horses (Zechariah 14:20).

We opt for the second of these two interpretations of the biblical material on anointing. As far as specific office is concerned, Jesus Christ is now *The Anointed One*, *The Messiah*, *The Christ*—our chief Prophet, our only High Priest, and our eternal King (Heidelberg Catechism, Q. 31). All believers are now anointed by the Holy Spirit who has been

given to them (Acts 2:38, 10:47; Romans 8:9, 11; I Corinthians 12:13; I John 2:20). The New Testament, however, does not instruct the church to anoint those who have been anointed to special tasks or "office" within the Christian community.

## b. The Laying on of Hands

### 1) In the Old Testament

"The laying on of hands" is a technical expression in the religious terminology of the Old Testament. Three Hebrew words are used to describe the laying or placing of hands upon someone or something: *sim*, *shith*, and *samak*. The last word, *samak*, is the most important word for our purpose, since it is used of appointment to office.

The words *sim* and *shith* are generally used to denote the transmission of a blessing, or at least the wish to transmit a blessing. For example, Jacob lays his hands upon the sons of Joseph as he blesses them (Genesis 48:14).

The word *samak* is frequently used to describe the action of the worshiper who lays his hands on the sacrificial animal at the door of the tent of meeting (e.g., Exodus 29:10; Leviticus 1:4, 4:4). The laying on of hands in this type of ceremony suggests that the worshiper is thus designating the animal as his representative or substitute. In some instances, particularly in the "scapegoat" ceremony on the Day of Atonement (Leviticus 16:21), the laying on of hands stands for the transfer of sin to the animal.

The use of *samak* in Numbers 8:10 must be noted. The Lord here commands Moses to separate the Levites from the rest of the Israelites, so that the Levites may "attend Aaron and his sons" (v. 13). The people of Israel are now told to "lay their hands upon the Levites" (v. 10). In verses 11 and 16 it is pointed out that the Levites are thus offered to the Lord instead of the first-born among the Israelites. The Levites thus represent all Israel, as the first-born would normally represent the family. In this passage, therefore, the laying on of hands as depicted by the word *samak* obviously involves representation and substitution.

The use of the word *samak* in Numbers 27:15-23 to describe the appointment of Joshua as Moses' successor is particularly instructive. It is clear that Moses publicly laid his hands on Joshua so that all Israel might recognize the latter as Moses' rightful successor. It is equally clear, however, that Joshua is chosen because he has already been endowed with the Spirit (v. 18). Since God commands Moses to invest Joshua with some of his authority (v. 20), it would appear that in some way Joshua will represent Moses while the latter is still alive.

[Note: Deuteronomy 34:9 informs us that Joshua was "full of the spirit of wisdom, for Moses had laid his hands upon him." One may indeed raise the question of whether the word *ruach* here is intended to designate the Holy Spirit; neither the ASV nor the RSV capitalize the word *spirit* in this passage. The RSV, in fact, also spells *spirit* with a small s in Numbers 27:18. In any event, we do not need to assume that Moses' laying on of hands was the ceremonial means whereby the Spirit (or spirit) of wisdom was bestowed upon him, since according to Num-

bers 27:18 Joshua was chosen to be Moses' successor because he had already been endowed with the Spirit. It is interesting to note that Deuteronomy 34:9 speaks of the "spirit of wisdom," implying that Joshua had the gift of practical wisdom. This is the kind of wisdom which comes from learning and experience. We may assume that Joshua had gained a great deal of this type of practical wisdom since Moses had laid his hands upon him.]

Summing up our study of the Old Testament words used to describe this ceremony, particularly the word *samak*, we conclude that the laying on of hands in Old Testament times was usually a public rite. It was to designate a representative, a substitute, or a successor.

We go on now to look at New Testament instances of the laying on of hands. We find that in the New Testament the ceremony of the laying on of hands is used in a way analogous to the Old Testament ceremony in the *samak* passages: namely, as designating representation, substitution, or succession.

## 2) In the Book of Acts

According to Acts 6:1-6 seven men were set aside for special duties in the Jerusalem church. Verse 5 tells us that the church chose these seven men. Then verse 6 goes on to say, "These they [the multitude] set before the apostles, and they prayed and laid their hands upon them." The way the passage reads in the original makes it appear that the entire congregation did the laying on of hands, though there are interpreters who hold that only the apostles did the laying on of hands. We shall not try to settle this question. It is significant to note, however, that the laying on of hands did not communicate to the seven some gift not previously possessed, for these men had been chosen by the congregation on the basis of their being "of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom" (v. 3). The laying on of hands in this instance was clearly a public ceremony by which these men were appointed to carry out certain duties and functions which had been delegated to them.

In Acts 13:3 we read about another laying on of hands. At Antioch the Holy Spirit commanded that Paul and Barnabas were to be set apart for a special work to which he, the Spirit, had called them. "Then after fasting and praying they laid their hands on them and sent them off" (v. 3). Here it would appear that it was the prophets and teachers that did the laying on of hands, though some think that the laying on of hands was done by the entire congregation. This ceremony does not seem to be an ordination to office, for Paul and Barnabas were already among the prophets and teachers at Antioch (v. 1). Rather, Paul and Barnabas were being commissioned at this time to carry out a particular task or to go forth on a particular assignment. Through the laying on of hands the other prophets and teachers were sending forth Paul and Barnabas as an extension of themselves. As a matter of fact, in this instance Paul and Barnabas represented the entire congregation at Antioch. This ceremony reminds us of the way the Israelites laid their hands on the Levites according to Numbers 8:10, so that the Levites would represent all Israel when they attended Aaron and his sons. The passage in Acts 13, there-

fore, is an "ordination" in the sense of an appointment to represent one's fellow Christians, and to perform certain duties in their behalf.

### 3) In the Pastoral Epistles

In the Pastoral Epistles we find three passages which refer to a laying on of hands in connection with a kind of ordination. These passages read as follows in the American Standard Version:

I Timothy 4:14, "Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery."

II Timothy 1:6, "For which cause I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee through the laying on of my hands."

I Timothy 5:22, "Lay hands hastily on no man. . . ."

The first two passages speak of Timothy's having received the laying on of hands. A problem immediately arises: who laid hands on Timothy? Was it the presbytery (I Timothy 4:14) or was it Paul (II Timothy 1:6)? Did Paul perhaps join the presbytery so that both the presbytery and Paul laid hands on Timothy? Or do these two passages describe two distinct occasions? These two passages have led to a host of proposals, interpretations, and emphases. Let us examine three different ways of interpreting this material:

#### a) Interpretation One: Paul Ordained Timothy

This interpretation must obviously offer some explanation for I Timothy 4:14, where our translations tell us that the presbytery or the elders laid their hands on Timothy. The following explanation has been advanced by a number of interpreters: the I Timothy 4:14 passage is not describing a laying on of hands *by the presbytery*, but rather of a laying on of hands *unto eldership*. Calvin already saw this as a possibility:

"They who think that *presbytery* is here used as a collective noun, for 'the college of presbyters or elders,' are, I think, correct in their opinion; although, after weighing the whole matter, I acknowledge that a different meaning is not inapplicable, that is, that *presbytery* or *eldership* is the name of an office. . . . The meaning is that Timothy—having been called to the ministry by the voice of the prophets, and having afterwards been solemnly ordained—was at the same time endued with the grace of the Holy Spirit for the discharge of his office" (Commentary *sub loco*; cf. also *Inst.* IV, iii, 16).

This interpretation has recently been revived and given considerable attention by such scholars as E. Lohse, D. Daube, and J. Jeremias. In its more recent form this interpretation of the verse finds Paul using a Greek translation of the technical Jewish expression for rabbinic ordination: *semikhath zeqenim*: "the laying on of hands on persons in order to make elders or rabbis of them." On this interpretation I Timothy 4:14 refers to the ordination of Timothy by Paul—an ordination in which Paul invested Timothy with apostolic authority, analogous to the way in which Moses invested Joshua with authority. Timothy, on the other hand, is not to be hasty in ordaining others (I Timothy 5:22)—counsel consistent with the Jewish practice of not ordaining a man a rabbi until after his fortieth birthday. Perhaps Timothy himself was less than forty

years of age—a fact which might explain Paul's concern about Timothy's youth (I Timothy 4:12). The above-mentioned interpretation of I Timothy 4:14, needless to say, can build a strong case for a concept of the ministry as dependent on apostolic succession.

Not all interpreters, however, have been persuaded that this way of interpreting I Timothy 4:14 is satisfactory. Two objections have been raised: (1) There is no evidence that a standard form for rabbinic ordination existed as early as New Testament times. This being the case, the phrase *semikhath zegenim* would not have been common phraseology for the ordaining of rabbis at the time when the New Testament was written (cf. A. Ehrhardt, "Jewish and Christian Ordination," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, V [1954], 125-138). (2) I Timothy 4:14 is parallel to II Timothy 1:6 in grammatical construction. In both passages the phrase "the laying on of hands" is followed by the genitive case. In II Timothy 1:6 the genitive clearly expresses whose hands were laid on Timothy: *epitheseoos toon cheiroon mou*, "the laying on of my [Paul's] hands." In Acts 8:18 we find a similar construction: *epitheseoos toon cheiroon toon apostolon*, "the laying on of the hands of the apostles." These parallel passages suggest that the most natural reading of the genitive in I Timothy 4:14 is that it expresses whose hands were laid on Timothy: *epitheseoos toon cheiroon tou presbyteriou*, "the laying on of the hands of the presbytery." In fact, if Paul intended to tell us that the presbytery had laid their hands on Timothy, the construction found in I Timothy 4:14 would have been the most natural way of saying it. We therefore do not feel inclined to adopt the above method of interpreting I Timothy 4:14.

#### b) Interpretation Two: The Presbytery Ordained Timothy

This interpretation of the three passages quoted above denies that Paul was involved at all in Timothy's ordination. This interpretation sees the laying on of Paul's hands mentioned in II Timothy 1:6 not as a reference to ordination, but as a reference to Timothy's reception of the Holy Spirit at the time of his baptism. Several New Testament passages mention the laying on of hands in connection with baptism and the reception of the Holy Spirit: Acts 8:12, 15-17; 9:17-18; 19:1-6 (and most likely Hebrews 6:2). This interpretation is at the opposite extreme from the concept of apostolic succession. Not the Apostle Paul but the presbytery ordained Timothy. Ordination by the presbytery then symbolizes the fact that the person so ordained represents the presbytery. While acknowledging the possibility of reading II Timothy 1:6 as referring to Timothy's baptism, your committee considers this interpretation unnatural and artificial, since baptism is not mentioned in this passage. We are therefore not inclined to follow this interpretation.

#### c) Interpretation Three: Both Paul and the Presbytery Participated in Timothy's Ordination

We must first note two different emphases among those who hold to this third interpretation: (1) Some hold that it is chiefly Paul who ordains to the office of minister or bishop; however, since the presbytery has some powers of authorization at the local level, it is appropriate that

the ordination of Timothy should be a corporate act of both apostle and presbytery. Persons holding to this emphasis find that ordination is to be understood as rooting basically in the apostolic office. Thus, to have an ordination someone already holding office must pass on the office to the person being ordained. This emphasis can go along with an "apostolic succession" concept of the ministry, built on the model of the Moses-Joshua laying on of hands. (2) Others hold that it is chiefly the presbytery which ordains—but, of course, Paul joined with the presbytery in laying on his hands, since he too was an elder. This emphasis understands ordination as meaning that the presbytery appoints certain persons to be charged with special tasks and functions in the name of the presbytery as a whole. In this understanding of ordination, the laying on of hands follows the Israelite-Levite model (the Levites having been set aside to function for the entire body of Israelites).

How can we explain why Paul in writing to Timothy would at one time refer to Timothy's ordination as the *presbytery's* laying on of hands, whereas at another time he would refer to it as *his* laying on of hands? Can this difference not best be accounted for in terms of the differences between I and II Timothy? I Timothy deals extensively with problems of church administration and organization. In such a setting it would be natural to refer to Timothy's ordination in terms of the laying on of the hands of the elders—the ruling body of the congregation. II Timothy, on the other hand, is a much more personal letter than I Timothy. II Timothy is a kind of spiritual last will and testament, in which a veteran missionary turns over his work and his concern for the churches he has founded to his younger colleague. In such a setting it would be natural to refer to the gifts which Timothy must continue to rekindle as gifts which had come to him through Paul's instrumentality. Such intimacies are almost to be expected in a letter of this sort.

We do not have to choose, therefore, between "the presbytery's hands" and "Paul's hands." Neither statement needs to exclude the possibility of the other statement's being true. But when it comes to the question of which one of these two statements describes the essence of the ceremony, it would seem that preference ought to be given to the statement in the church administration context (the laying on of the hands of the presbytery, I Timothy 4:14), rather than to the statement found in the intensely personal second letter (the laying on of Paul's hands, II Timothy 1:6).

Assuming, then, that the presbytery was involved in Timothy's ordination, one can further ask which presbytery it was. Here again we find opinion divided between alternatives: (a) the presbytery in Lystra at the place where Timothy was converted, baptized, and adopted by Paul as his assistant. If Timothy's ordination took place here, it would seem to be an ordination into a kind of general ministry as an apostolic assistant. (b) The presbytery in Ephesus, where Timothy was now ministering. If this were the case, Timothy's ordination would have been of local and temporary significance. It would have been an *ad hoc* laying on of hands which could later be repeated when he was given a new assignment, rather than a once-for-all ordination into an office which would be for

life. Interestingly enough, two contemporary Reformed scholars take different positions here: W. Hendriksen opts for the Lystra "consistory" (Commentary on I Timothy 4:14), whereas H. N. Ridderbos votes for the Ephesian "consistory" (Commentary on I Timothy 4:14). Thus the varieties of interpretation as regards the laying on of hands in the Pastoral Epistles continue to multiply. It is difficult to find one's way in this maze of alternative possibilities.

The question of the meaning of ordination in the Pastoral Epistles, therefore, reduces itself to the question of how one understands I Timothy 4:14. Those who adopt Interpretation One interpret the verse as teaching that no presbytery laid hands on Timothy. Your committee has rejected this interpretation, as well as Interpretation Two (only the presbytery ordained Timothy) for the reasons given above. We therefore opt for Interpretation Three: both Paul and the presbytery participated in Timothy's ordination. But now, how must we explain the meaning of the presbytery's participation in this ordination? The fact that the presbytery was involved indicates that Timothy's office was not primarily related to and derived from the Apostle Paul himself. The involvement of the elders suggests that Timothy's office was basically related to and derived from the work of the elders. Elders ordained Timothy to do *for them* that which was their responsibility and prerogative. The presbytery's involvement therefore points to the representative character of Timothy's ordination. The laying on of hands by the elders did not convey some status or prerogative not possessed by elders, but was an appointment by the elders asking Timothy to carry out certain duties ordinarily performed by elders. I Timothy 5:17, in fact, indicates that the preaching and teaching Timothy was appointed to engage in was precisely the work of elders: "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the word and in teaching" (ASV). Those described in the latter half of this verse are obviously elders who have been given specific assignments.

We may at this point make an observation about the distinction between clergy and laity which is commonly made in the church today. According to this distinction, ministers belong to the clergy and elders to the laity. If, now, the elders were meaningfully involved in Timothy's ordination, and if the purpose of the ordination was to ask Timothy to carry out certain duties ordinarily performed by elders, as we believe, then any distinction between clergy and laity which gives ministers some kind of elevated status not possessed by elders is unscriptural and false.

Before we leave the subject of biblical teaching on ordination we must look at one more matter. What about the "gift" Timothy is said to have received in connection with his ordination? We find references to this gift both in I Timothy 4:14 and in II Timothy 1:6. Here again, however, we find differences between these two passages. In I Timothy 4:14 the gift is said to have been given *with* the laying on of hands, whereas in II Timothy 1:6 it is said to have come *through* the laying on of hands.

I Timothy 4:14 says, "Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by (*dia*) prophecy, with (*meta*) the laying on of the hands of the presbytery" (ASV). Must we understand the prophecy or pro-

phetic utterance as having been simultaneous with the laying on of hands? I Timothy 1:18 speaks of prophetic utterances which pointed to Timothy, or "led the way" to him (ASV). In the light of this statement, it seems preferable to think of the prophetic utterances which pointed to Timothy as one who was well equipped for the Lord's service as having preceded the laying on of hands. On the basis of this interpretation, the laying on of hands did not so much confer the gift Timothy obviously had as certify its presence. Further, we may believe that in response to the prayers of the assembled Christian community, Timothy's gift was increased, expanded, and intensified. In view of the fact that the Holy Spirit confers all gifts (I Corinthians 12:4, 11), the laying on of hands must not be understood as a magical kind of action which in some mysterious way communicates a spiritual gift, but rather as a gesture which certifies the presence of such a gift. The gift had been bestowed by God; the prophetic utterances had led both Timothy and the congregation to recognize the presence of the gift; the laying on of hands was the public certification of this invisible gift. What was Timothy's gift? It appears to have been his ability to teach, exhort, interpret Scripture, and refute objectors. The gift must not be understood as some indelible character conveyed to Timothy by the imposition of hands, since Timothy is told that he must use and cultivate his gift. He must not neglect it (I Timothy 4:14), and must be diligent in rekindling it or stirring it up (II Timothy 1:6).

II Timothy 1:6, however, brings us face to face with a problem. It reads, "For which cause I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee through (*dia*) the laying on of my hands" (ASV). One could interpret this passage as teaching that Paul was communicating some of his apostolic status to Timothy; in this way the passage would serve as proof for apostolic succession. This interpretation would understand ordination as conferring upon a person some indelible character, authority, or power. As a matter of fact, this passage has often been appealed to by those who believe in the apostolic succession of bishops. This interpretation of II Timothy 1:6 would be consistent with Interpretation One of I Timothy 4:14 (see above). Your committee, however, has rejected Interpretation One as well as Interpretation Two, which sees II Timothy 1:6 simply as an allusion to Timothy's baptism. We propose, therefore, that I Timothy 4:14 and II Timothy 1:6 are somehow to be harmonized, or must at least be held in tension. On this basis, we would understand that whatever took place through the laying on of hands was already in some sense evident and operative prior to the laying on of hands. We interpret the laying on of hands as a public acknowledgement of the fact that the Holy Spirit has given a certain gift to Timothy. We also understand the laying on of hands to mean that the elders are now appointing Timothy to exercise his gift in their behalf. Such an appointment or commissioning may also be used by the Holy Spirit as a means by which he increases, expands, and intensifies the gift or gifts he has given.

### 3. Summary

In drawing together this study of the meaning of ordination as taught

in Scripture, we make the following observations: word studies have not been helpful. There are no words in the Hebrew Old Testament or in the Greek New Testament that convey the kinds of conceptions which the church later associated with "ordination." The biblical words studied conveyed no meaning beyond that of appointing, putting in charge, or selecting for some duty or function.

Two ceremonies are described in the Bible, however, which might suggest some kind of "ordination" content. The one is anointing, an Old Testament practice which found its fulfillment in Christ, God's Anointed One, and in the anointing of all believers with the Holy Spirit. The New Testament, however, knows of no anointing ceremony in connection with church appointments or offices. The other ceremony is that of the laying on of hands. In Old Testament times this ceremony publicly designated a person as the representative, substitute, or successor of someone. The New Testament usage of this ceremony apparently carried the same significance. No rule or pattern can be detected as far as the usage of this ceremony is concerned. There is no evidence that this ceremony was used for all appointments, or even that it was a regular part of certain kinds of appointments.

Whenever the New Testament does speak of a laying on of hands in connection with an appointment, the context does not suggest that some new gift was being received, or that the ceremony communicated to the recipient a new status or a new quality of life. In other words, the ceremony of the laying on of hands did not produce a "clergy" which had gifts, status, or a quality of life differing from those found in "lay" people. Neither does the Bible give us any warrant for using this ceremony only for people being set aside for the work of teaching and preaching. In fact, to allow only pastors to lay hands on people in a ceremony of this sort is a departure from biblical example, since it was elders who laid their hands on Timothy.

The ceremony of the laying on of hands symbolizes the appointment of a person as the representative of the group which has laid hands on him. After such a ceremony the person appointed acts in behalf of this group and on the authority of the group. The group has empowered him to use in their name certain divinely bestowed gifts which they recognized in him.

There is no indication in Scripture that an authorization or appointment symbolized and confirmed by the laying on of hands was necessarily to be for the lifetime of the person appointed. The appointment seems to have been only for the special task assigned, according to the terms set at the time of the appointment.

In the laying on of hands, therefore, we have a ceremony which the New Testament church sometimes used for publicly confirming its call and appointment of certain people to special ministries. More advanced "ordination" than this your committee has not been able to find in the New Testament.

## B. The Nature of Ecclesiastical Office

### 1. Word Study on "Office"

Little can be gleaned from an examination of the words for *office* in the Old Testament. In fact, it may safely be said that the writers of the Old Testament had no word for office as we understand it. On this rather fine point the King James Version, which has had a considerable influence on the English-speaking church, is quite misleading. Although we encounter the word *office* about thirty times in the King James Version of the Old Testament, in only ten cases is it the translation of a Hebrew word. In the other twenty cases there is no Hebrew word for office, but the King James translators rendered the verb *kahan* (act as priest) as follows: "minister in the priest's office."

It is also true that the term *office* is a much more familiar ecclesiastical term for us today than it was for the New Testament writers. In fact, the New Testament writers seemed purposely to avoid available Greek words which would connote what is commonly understood as *office*. These writers, for example, did not use such words as *archee* (office in the sense of precedence, ruling, being at the head) or *timee* (office in the sense of position or dignity) to designate ecclesiastical positions.

As a general term for what we call *office* (namely, a certain type of service within the church), the word *diakonia* (service) is commonly used by the writers of the New Testament. This word never connotes exalted status or dignity. In view of the many terms for *office* available in Greek, the choice of this word by the New Testament writers tells us something significant about the way we are to understand the concept of office. The word *diakonia* suggests a position of service to God and to fellowmen, rather than a position carrying with it rights and powers which elevate one above his fellows.

The word *office* in the King James Version of the New Testament is the unfortunate English translation of various Greek words which do not have the same meaning as the English word *office* does today. For example, the King James Version renders both *diakonia* in Romans 11:13 and *praxis* in Romans 12:4 as *office*, whereas the Revised Standard Version translates these terms by *ministry* and *function*, respectively. The Greek word *hierateuoo*, rendered "serve as priest" in the RSV, is translated "execute the priest's office" in the King James.

It can therefore be seen that our English translations of the Bible, particularly the King James, have made the term *office* a much more familiar ecclesiastical term for us today than it was in biblical times. Really to know, therefore, what the Bible says about what we call *office*, we must study the biblical material in the original languages.

### 2. Officers and Other Functionaries in the Bible

#### a. In the Old Testament

##### 1) The Priests

Aaron and his sons were the first priests to be officially appointed in Israel (Exodus 28). Though in Exodus 19:6 it is said of the entire nation, "You shall be to me a kingdom of priests," there was a separate group of functionaries in Israel called priests. Though Exodus 19:22 and

24 suggest that Israel must have had pre-Aaronic priests, these are never referred to again.

It is important to note that Aaron and his sons were not appointed to be priests *over Israel*; they are to serve the Lord as priests (Exodus 28:1). The role of the priest is to mediate between God and man. As mediator he represents God, speaking for God to the people as he teaches the Law. As mediator, however, he also represents the people, speaking and acting for the people to God when he brings sacrifices. The priest as priest, therefore, was not over any man; he was to serve both God and man.

The task assigned to the priests was theirs and theirs alone. Anyone else who attempted to perform priestly duties did so at his peril (see I Samuel 13:8-13 and II Chronicles 26:18). The priest was to observe meticulously all the regulations for performing priestly duties which the Lord had given. Any priest who deviated from these regulations did so at his peril (see Leviticus 10:1-2).

Does all this mean that today, in the New Testament era, we must still preserve a carefully selected priestly caste who must meticulously carry out rigidly prescribed ceremonies? If Luther and Calvin were right in teaching the priesthood of all believers in the New Testament church, then to maintain a priestly caste within the family of God today is to turn back the clock of history. The Old Testament data concerning the priesthood must be understood as pointing forward to Christ—the Christ who is the last, and for us the only, high priest. The exclusivism with respect to the persons who were to serve as priests points to Christ as the exclusive high priest, whose is the only name whereby we must be saved. The specifically patterned function of the Old Testament priesthood underscores the fact that there is only one way by which God and man can be reconciled: by the atoning work of Christ. The proper New Testament response, therefore, is not to imitate the procedures outlined in the Old Testament, but rather to recognize the great difference which the coming of Christ and the outpouring of his Spirit have brought about. The New Testament knows of no class of priests other than the total number of those who constitute the church (cf. I Peter 2:9, “But ye are an elect race, a royal priesthood”).

## 2) The Kings

Whereas it is clear that the priests in early Israel did not rule, it is equally clear that the kings of Israel did rule. Several matters should be noted with respect to the appointment and function of Israel's kings:

First, we should note that monarchical government was instituted in Israel despite the Lord's warning (I Samuel 8:7ff.). The Lord had foretold that when unlimited power was vested in one man, oppression would be inevitable.

Secondly, although the approval of the people was not required before priests were anointed, kings were usually not anointed without such approval, since it was common for the governed to give their consent (cf. I Samuel 10:24, II Samuel 5:1ff., I Kings 1:39ff.). This provision was no doubt intended as a means of checking unbridled tyranny.

Thirdly, the kings mainly functioned in an area we would not consider ecclesiastical. This observation should keep us from drawing parallels too readily between the kingly office of the Old Testament and the office of elder in the New Testament church. We may, however, at least draw the following inference: If the Lord found it necessary to warn against a coercive exercise of authority on the part of Old Testament kings, how much more sensitive ought we not to be concerning coercive authority in the church today?

Finally, the picture of the ideal king which the Old Testament paints is still instructive for us today; the ideal king is an impartial judge (I Kings 3:28); he promotes righteousness (Isaiah 11:1-4; Jeremiah 33:15); he relieves the fatherless and widow (Psalm 146:9; Jeremiah 22:3). The true king is not a leech who drains his people dry, but one who builds his nation by serving his people. Isaiah sees the fulfillment of the ideal king in the Servant of the Lord who will serve God by being of service to men.

We conclude that the way in which Israel's kings are depicted reveals that there is an evil tendency in man to use authority for selfish ends. On the positive side, however, the Old Testament also depicts for us the ideal king. It thus points forward to Him who was to come, whose example we are now called to follow.

### 3) The Prophets

Only once do we read of the anointing of a prophet (I Kings 19:16), and even then it is not recorded that the anointing literally took place. It appears that no external ceremony of anointing was necessary for prophets. The prophet's validity was judged on the basis of his message, rather than on the basis of a properly executed ceremony by which his official status as a prophet had been publicly ratified.

The manner in which some of the prophets were chosen and prepared for their tasks was unique; we find no exact parallel to it in the history of the church after Christ, who is the culmination of all the prophets. This is not to deny that the church may draw inspiration from the prophets. But the manner in which these prophets were chosen and prepared for their task was *sui generis* (unique). Conclusions about the proper calling and preparation of ministers in the church today must therefore not be drawn from biblical data about the calling of prophets.

*Conclusion:* Though it may seem anachronistic to speak of the prophets, priests, and kings of Israel as ecclesiastical officers, it is true that even during the Old Testament era the Lord provided his people with the necessary functionaries to aid in the nurturing, correction, and regulation of the life of the covenantal community. These functionaries were types of Christ, our great Prophet, Priest, and King; their ministry finds its fulfillment in him. The study of these Old Testament "officers," however, does not offer us a normative pattern for ecclesiastical office and ordination in the church today. The change in the structure of the New Testament church as compared with Old Testament Israel should keep us from drawing unwarranted conclusions about New Testament offices like those of pastor, elder, and deacon from biblical data about Old Testament functionaries like prophets, priests, and kings. The Scriptures do

not permit us to posit the derivation of the New Testament offices from those of the Old Testament; nor do they permit us to see a complete and unqualified parallelism between Old Testament and New Testament offices.

b. In the New Testament

In the New Testament there is a variety of biblical materials. From the book of Acts we glean a perspective on what various members of the first-century church did and how their functions were viewed and labeled. Four passages in Paul's letters enumerate various gifts, ministries, and appointments. In the Gospels, the book of Acts, and the epistles one meets a number of individuals who function in various capacities. There are also passages in the pastoral epistles which speak specifically about the qualifications of bishops (also called elders) and deacons. From these materials we can reconstruct a picture of the situation in the New Testament church which should give some direction to our study of "the nature of ecclesiastical office and the meaning of ordination."

1) The Book of Acts

Let us see first of all what kind of picture of the first-century church and its functionaries emerges from the book of Acts. From the beginning a differentiation was made between the apostles and the brethren. The twelve apostles had been chosen by the Lord and had been commissioned to be his witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the end of the earth (Acts 1:8). Since Judas had defected from the group Matthias was added to the eleven (1:22,26). Matthias, therefore, was appointed to a special ministry—that of being a witness, along with the other apostles, of the resurrection of Christ.

On the day of Pentecost, however, the gift of the Holy Spirit, together with the special signs which accompanied the bestowal of that gift, was given to all the believers present. Yet the distinction between apostles and brethren was not wiped out, for the Apostle Peter immediately took the lead; in response to his Pentecost sermon about 3,000 souls were added to the church (2:41). Peter and John now became the prominent apostles in the ministry in Jerusalem (Acts 3-5).

The preaching and teaching of the apostles was accompanied by great signs and wonders. A new division of labor arose in the Jerusalem church as seven men were chosen for the ministry of the daily distribution of food (6:1-6), thus leaving the apostles free to pursue the ministry of the Word and prayer. Yet we note that Stephen, one of the seven, also spoke with wisdom and the Spirit and did great wonders and signs (6:8, 7:1-53), and that Philip, also of the seven, proclaimed (*keerussein*) Christ in Samaria (8:5), did many signs (8:6), and even baptized (8:34-38, cf. 8:12). Philip, in fact, is later called an evangelist (21:8). It is also significant to note that those who were scattered abroad after the persecution of Stephen (that is, Christians other than the apostles, since the latter stayed in Jerusalem) went about preaching the word (*euangelizomenoi*, 8:4).

Acts 9 narrates the conversion of Saul. A disciple named Ananias laid his hands on Saul so that the latter might regain his sight and be filled

with the Holy Spirit (9:17); at this time Saul was also baptized (9:18). He immediately began to preach in Damascus and Jerusalem (9:20, 29).

Peter's ministry now again becomes the center of attention (9:32-11:18). Again we read that Christians were scattered abroad because of persecution; these Christians, we are told, spoke the Word, mainly to the Jews, but some preached (*euangelizomenoi*) the Lord Jesus also to the Greeks (11:19-20). Since a number of people in Antioch had turned to the Lord, the Jerusalem church now sent Barnabas to that city (11:22). Barnabas went to Tarsus to find Saul, and brought him to Antioch; the two together worked in Antioch for about a year, teaching the people (11:26). It is significant to note that the church now had, in addition to apostles and the seven, prophets and teachers—a group which included Barnabas and Saul (Acts 13:1). The Jerusalem church apparently had prophets also (11:27).

Another group of functionaries in this early church were the elders; we meet them first in the Jerusalem church (11:30).

In Acts 13:1-3 we read about the commissioning of Barnabas and Saul as missionaries. The Holy Spirit directed the church at Antioch to separate these two men for a particular task, the task of bringing the gospel to Asia Minor. After prayer, fasting, and the laying on of hands, the church sent Barnabas and Saul on their first missionary journey. As Luke describes this journey, he calls both Barnabas and Saul (whose name has now been changed to Paul) apostles (14:14). We are also told that in the region of Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch of Pisidia Paul and Barnabas "appointed for them elders in every church" (14:21-23).

When the question of the relation between circumcision and salvation arose, Paul and Barnabas, now back in Syrian Antioch, decided to go to Jerusalem to consult with the apostles and elders about this problem (15:1-2). In the conference which followed, the apostles and elders had a predominant role (15:6, 22; 16:4); but the entire church played a part in arriving at the final decision (15:22; cf. vv. 4 and 12). Interestingly enough, the one who presided at this conference and took the lead in formulating the final decision was not one of the apostles but James, the brother of our Lord (15:13ff.). Judas and Silas, prophets from Jerusalem (15:32), were sent to Antioch to deliver the letter from the apostles and elders. While they were in Antioch, Judas and Silas engaged in the ministry of exhortation (15:32).

Paul and Barnabas now disagreed concerning their traveling companion on the next missionary journey (15:37-40); it is striking to note that, though Paul dominates the latter half of the book of Acts as the outstanding apostle to the Gentiles, Barnabas did not capitulate to Paul's authority when this dispute arose between them, but made his own decision, and separated from Paul.

At Lystra Timothy, a disciple who was well spoken of by the brethren (16:1, 2), joined Paul and Silas on the second missionary journey.

In Acts 18:24 Apollos appears on the scene as an itinerant preacher. Though he is described as an eloquent man who was well versed in the Scriptures (18:24), it is also reported that Priscilla and Aquila expounded to him the way of God more accurately (18:26).

We read again about elders in connection with the church at Ephesus. When Paul bade farewell to these elders, he told them to take heed to themselves and to all the flock in which the Holy Spirit had made them bishops (*episkopous*) (20:28).

It is interesting to note that Acts also speaks of female prophets: it is said that Philip had "four unmarried daughters who prophesied" (21:9).

From the book of Acts, therefore, we learn that there was a variety of ministries in the early church, that these ministries did not function in exactly the same way as comparable ministries do in the church today, that there were ministries in that church which are not commonly found in the church today, and that the early church felt free to adjust its ministry to others as the need of the time demanded.

## 2) Four Specific Passages in Paul's Epistles.

There are four specific passages in Paul's epistles which enumerate various gifts, ministries, and appointments in the New Testament church. These are: Romans 12:6-8, I Corinthians 12:4-10, I Corinthians 12:28-30, and Ephesians 4:11. These four passages do not specifically answer the question concerning the nature of ecclesiastical office, but they do point out the variety of gifts and ministries given to the church for its edification and upbuilding. One of the problems we face in interpreting these passages is the simple fact that in the lists of the gifts and ministries there are some items which we have always associated with particular permanent offices in the church, whereas there are other items, undifferentiated as such in the lists, which we have considered to be temporary functions found only in the first-century church.

In Romans 12:6-8 Paul exhorts the members of the church at Rome not to think individualistically but communally. Believers are all members of one body—the body of Christ. As in the human body the members, though having various functions, all contribute to the harmonious working of the whole, so it is also in the church. Paul now proceeds to enumerate the variety of gifts given to the church. Both from the list itself and from the comparison which preceded it, it is obvious that gifts are given for functioning. The question might be asked whether this functioning is to be done in the church in an "official" or unofficial capacity. This question, however, is not answered by the passage, since there is no differentiation between the gifts listed: prophecy, service (or ministry), teaching, exhorting, contributing, giving aid (or ruling), showing mercy. This list does not link these gifts or functions to any specific "offices" in the church. Prophecy, teaching, and exhorting, which we commonly associate with special offices in today's church, are not singled out in this list as having any superior position over against the other gifts or functions. The church is here described as a community in Christ which has a unified task; its members, therefore, must exercise their various gifts and functions for the mutual benefit of the entire body. This passage therefore does not give us a definition of the nature of ecclesiastical office in the present-day sense.

In I Corinthians 12 there are two significant sections: verses 4-10 and 28-31. In the first-named passage Paul speaks about the variety of gifts

and workings which the Spirit gives for the common good of the body of Christ (verses 4-7.) These gifts are then described in terms of various functions: the utterance of wisdom, the utterance of knowledge, faith, gifts of healing, working of miracles, prophecy, ability to distinguish between spirits, various kinds of tongues, and the interpretation of tongues. This list gives no indication that some of these items belong to the "official" ministry of the church whereas others belong to the membership in general. On the contrary, Paul is describing what the body of believers at Corinth as a whole possesses for the common good of the church. This passage, therefore, does not substantially contribute to our present-day understanding of office and ordination, except to alert us to the fact that every member who possesses a gift must employ it for the good of the entire church. From this fact one might possibly conclude that the proper exercise of these gifts constitutes an "office" in the church.

In I Corinthians 12:28-31 Paul continues his discussion of the unity of the body of Christ. The intervening verses (11-27) stress the fact that each member of the body is important, and that some should not consider themselves more important than others. The discussion is concluded with a reiteration of the ministries in verses 28-31. In these verses a new element is introduced; other ministries are listed, and the emphasis seems to be on the fact that each member does not have the same gift, ministry, or function: "And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondly prophets, thirdly teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, helps, governments divers kinds of tongues" (ASV). The questions which follow include "Do all interpret?," suggesting that the list above should include interpreters of tongues. The first impression one receives is that Paul is here speaking about specific offices in the church, since 1) he introduces the passage with the acknowledgment that God has appointed men to these "positions," and 2) he begins the list with those ministries which we generally associate with the present-day understanding of office. What should make us hesitate to adopt this conclusion, however, is to note 1) that the appointment by God refers not only to apostles, prophets, and teachers, but also to workers of miracles, healers, helpers, administrators, and the like; and 2) that Paul does not specifically say that some ministries on this list are more "official" than others. It may well be, in fact, that the "appointment" mentioned in verse 28 means nothing more than what is described in verse 11: "All these are inspired by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills."

What is clear in this passage is that not all the members of the church have the same gifts and therefore the same functions in the body. The individual members serve one another with the peculiar gifts the Lord has given them. All members, however, are exhorted earnestly to desire the higher gifts (verse 31). In chapter 13 the apostle counsels his readers to follow "a still more excellent way"—the way of love, apart from which all the gifts of the Spirit are useless. Every member of the church, therefore, must make love his aim, and earnestly desire spiritual gifts—especially prophecy, so that he may contribute to the mutual upbuilding, encouragement, and consolation of the church (14:1-4).

In the Ephesian letter Paul again stresses the unity of the body of Christ along with the diversity of gifts. "And his gifts were that some should be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, for the equipment of the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ" (4:11-12). This list is shorter than those in Romans 12 or I Corinthians 12. This list includes two entries which seem to have been included from the other lists: evangelists and pastors; they might have been included in the other lists, however, under different names (for example, under the "exhorters" of Romans 12). On the other hand, this list excludes many of the gifts, ministries, or workings found in the other lists: such as healers, workers of miracles, administrators, doers of mercy, tongue-speakers, interpreters of tongues. It seems best, therefore, not to think of any of these New Testament listings as constituting the entire "official" ministry of the church. Included in the Ephesian listing are, however, apostles (in the narrower sense of the twelve apostles or in a broader sense?), prophets (a specific class of "ministers" in the church, or members exercising a gift which all should strive for?), evangelists (in the sense that Philip and Timothy are called evangelists, or in the sense that all those who were scattered abroad after the persecution went about evangelizing?), and pastors and teachers (as a twofold exercise of certain gifts, or as two separate ministries?). However we interpret these terms, we should exercise extreme caution in deducing from Ephesians 4:11, or from any other listing of gifts and ministries in the New Testament, what the finalized structure of the official ministry of the New Testament church was. These passages were evidently not intended to give us an exhaustive description of a finalized order of offices in the church.

### 3) Various Functionaries in the New Testament Church

In the New Testament church there was obviously no fixed or limited number or order of functionaries such as we have in the church today. The following survey will indicate the variety of functionaries found in the early church:

a) *Disciples*. This term is applied first of all to the twelve whom Jesus appointed and whom he sent out to preach and to cast out demons (Matthew 10:1-4, Mark 3:14-19, Luke 6:14-16; cf. also Mark 6:7 and Luke 9:1). Eleven of these twelve received the commissioning task of discipling the nations, baptizing them and teaching them to observe what the Lord had commanded (Matthew 28:19-20). Another name for these twelve is apostles (Luke 6:14-16, 9:1, 10; Mark 6:30; Acts 1:2, 6:2, 6). It should be noted that the term "disciples" is not restricted to the twelve. The term is also applied to the greater body of believers and followers of Jesus (Acts 6:1, 7; Luke 6:13, 19:37; John 4:1, John 6:60, 66f.), and it is used specifically of some individuals like Ananias (Acts 9:10ff.) and Mnason (Acts 21:16). "Disciples" in the broader sense obviously continued to be found in the New Testament church.

b) *The Seventy*: Luke records a ministry of seventy individuals whom Jesus appointed and sent out to heal the sick and to proclaim the gospel of the kingdom (Luke 10:1-20).

c) *Apostles*: this term denotes first of all the twelve disciples (Luke 6:13-16, 9:1, 10; Mark 6:30); after Jesus' resurrection, the term was applied to the eleven plus Matthias (Acts 1:2, 25f.). To these eleven (twelve) was given the task of preaching, baptizing, teaching (Matthew 28:19-20), and of witnessing to the person and work of Jesus, especially to his resurrection (Acts 1:8, Luke 24:48). The term "apostles," however, is not restricted to the twelve. This title was given to Barnabas (Acts 14:14; I Corinthians 9:5, 6), perhaps to Andronicus and Junias (Romans 16:7), and possibly to others (I Corinthians 15:5, 7), as well as to James the Lord's brother (Galatians 1:19) and to Paul (Romans 1:1).

d) *The Seven*: Acts 6 describes a group of seven individuals, "men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom," whom the twelve appointed to the duty of ministering to the Hellenistic widows in the daily distribution (common meals?). No specific name is given to these seven in Acts 6. It is later reported that two of these seven engaged in "preaching" (Acts 6:8-14; 8:5, 12), and that at least one of them baptized (Acts 8:38).

e) *Prophets*: In the New Testament we read of the gift of prophecy (Romans 12:6; I Corinthians 12:10, 28; I Corinthians 14:1ff.) for which each member of the Christian community should strive (I Corinthians 14:1, 39), the function of which is to edify, encourage, and console the church (I Corinthians 14:3). The New Testament, however, also speaks of specific prophets: Agabus (Acts 11:27, 21:10); Barnabas, Symeon, Lucius, Manaen, and Saul (called prophets and teachers in Acts 13:1); Judas and Silas (Acts 15:22, 32); and the daughters of Philip (Acts 21:9). Even the women in the congregations apparently engaged in this ministry (I Corinthians 11:5).

f) *Evangelists*: This word occurs three times in the New Testament. Philip, one of the seven, is called an evangelist (Acts 21:8), presumably because he preached (*keerussein*, Acts 8:5; and *evangelizein*, Acts 8:12, 35, 40) the gospel in Samaria and elsewhere. Philip also baptized (Acts 8:38). In Ephesians 4:11 evangelists are listed as included in the gifts the ascended Lord has given to the church. In II Timothy 4:5 Timothy is instructed to "do the work of an evangelist, fulfil your ministry" (cf. Philippians 2:22, I Thessalonians 3:2).

g) *Teachers*: The third group of functionaries listed in I Corinthians 12:28 (cf. Romans 12:7, I Corinthians 12:8) are the teachers. In Ephesians 4:11 the term is combined with "pastors," and in other instances we read of "prophets and teachers" (Acts 13:1). In Mark 6:30 the apostles are said to have told Jesus all they had done and taught, and in Matthew 28:20 Jesus commanded his disciples to teach people to observe all that he had commanded them. Paul is often said to have engaged in teaching in the book of Acts (15:35, 18:11, 20:20, 28:31). Paul occasionally refers to what people were taught by him (II Thessalonians 2:15, Colossians 2:7, Ephesians 4:21), and he exhorts Timothy to engage in the work of teaching (I Timothy 4:11, 6:2). According to II Timothy 2:2 teaching is to be done by those who have the necessary personal qualifications. According to I Timothy 2:12 women are for-

bidden to teach (cf. I Corinthians 14:34f.); according to Titus 2:3, however, the older women are to teach what is good, and so train young women in right conduct.

h) *Elders and Bishops*: We first read of elders (*presbuteros*) in Jerusalem (Acts 11:30); they are mentioned also in one of the earliest epistles (James 5:14). In Acts 14:23 we are informed that Paul and Barnabas "appointed elders . . . in every church" in the area of Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch (14:21). The elders take their places alongside the apostles in Acts 15 (see verses 2, 6, 22, 23). Paul sent for the elders of the church in Ephesus (20:17), and charged them to take heed to themselves and to the flock in which the Holy Spirit had made them guardians (or "bishops," *episkopos*) "to feed the church of the Lord" (20:28). At this point men who have the function of guardian seem to have the title of elder.

The term "elder" is found occasionally in the epistles. We have already noted the reference in James. Peter includes an exhortation to the elders among the "exiles of the Dispersion" to whom he is writing, calling himself a "fellow elder" (I Peter 5:1). In only one of Paul's ecclesiastical letters is there any specific reference to these functionaries. Paul begins his letter to the Philippian church with the words, "To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are at Philippi, with the bishops (*episkopois*) and deacons (*diakonois*)" (Phil. 1:1).

In the pastoral letters, however, the situation is somewhat different. Paul's instruction to Timothy includes more specific material about "officebearers" than does any other piece of New Testament writing. In I Timothy 3:1-13 Paul distinguishes between the bishops (3:1-7), the deacons (3:8-13), and the women (3:11). To aspire to the task of a bishop is noble (I Timothy 3:1). One who is to engage in this work must be upright in character; must be a good husband and father, able to manage well (or rule, *proistamenon*) his own household; he must also be "apt to teach" (3:2-5). His task is to "care for God's church" (v. 5). In I Timothy 5:17 Paul uses the term *presbuteroi* to designate those who "rule" in the church; he singles out for special mention "especially those who labor in preaching (*en logoo*) and in teaching." It would seem that already at this time a distinction was being made between elders who merely ruled and elders who not only ruled but also taught and preached (ruling elders and teaching elders). The last-named class is often thought to have been the precursor to our present-day office of "minister of the Word." In Titus 1:5 Paul reminds Titus that the latter had been left in Crete to "appoint elders (*presbuteros*) in every town." Paul now goes on to discuss the qualifications of a "bishop" in verses 5-9; it seems quite obvious that he is using the terms "elders" and "bishops" synonymously.

This leads us to raise a specific question about elders (*presbuteroi*) and bishops (*episkopoi*) in the New Testament. Do these terms designate different offices, or do they refer to the same office? The Greek word *episkopos* (which generally means "overseer") is used only five times in the New Testament. In Acts 20:28 it seems to refer more to a function than to a position. In I Peter 2:25 the word is used to refer to Jesus as the Shepherd and Guardian (*episkopon*) of our souls. In the other three

instances (Philippians 1:1, I Timothy 3:2, Titus 1:7) the term seems to refer to what we understand today as an office in the church.

The Greek word *presbuteros* is used more often in the New Testament than the word *episkopos*. The word *presbuteroi* often designates individuals who have been assigned the task of supervision and/or teaching; in some cases the task of preaching also seems to have been given them (see Acts 11:30, 15:6, 21:18, I Timothy 5:17; Titus 1:5; I Peter 5:1).

On the basis of the following evidence, we consider the words *episkopos* and *presbuteros* to be used synonymously in the New Testament: (1) bishops and elders are never joined as distinct classes of officials (like bishops and deacons); (2) in Acts 20:17 and 28 the words refer to the same individuals; (3) Philippians 1:1 is addressed to "bishops and deacons"; (4) I Timothy 3 mentions bishops and deacons but no elders, though elders are mentioned in 5:17, and though Acts 20:17 reports that there were elders at Ephesus where Timothy was now ministering; (5) Titus 1:5-7 describes elders in nearly the same way as I Timothy 3 describes bishops; (6) the words elder and bishop are used interchangeably in Titus 1:5 and 7.

i) *Deacons*: The Greek word *diakonos* occurs very frequently in the New Testament, but it is usually translated as "servant" or "minister." The only exception to this is in Philippians 1:1 and I Timothy 3:8-13, where the term seems to be used in a more technical sense, as designating an office parallel to that of the *episkopos*.

In Acts 6:1-7 we read about the appointment of seven men who were to assist the apostles, taking over the task of ministering to the Hellenistic widows. Though these seven are nowhere called deacons, it is traditionally assumed that the office of deacon had its beginning in Acts 6. Nothing is said precisely about the specific function of deacons, but from the qualifications mentioned it can be inferred that the task of the deacons was a more "private," house-to-house type of ministry than that of the elders, and that the deacons had something to do with the distribution of money (see I Timothy 3:8-13). From Romans 16:1 and I Timothy 3:11 it appears likely that there were female deacons as well as male deacons.

j) A thorough examination of the New Testament will reveal that, in addition to the functionaries already mentioned, there were others whose tasks or contributions are described with varying degrees of preciseness. Note, for example, Apollos (Acts 18:24-28, I Corinthians 1:12, 3:4-8, 4:6, 16:12) who spoke and taught about Jesus (Acts 18:25); Priscilla and Aquila, who expounded the way of God more accurately to Apollos (Acts 18:26; cf. also Romans 16:3-5, I Corinthians 16:19; II Timothy 4:19); Euodia and Syntyche, who labored side by side with Paul in the gospel (Philippians 4:2f.); Tychicus, a beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord (Ephesians 6:21; cf. Colossians 4:7); and a host of individuals who are simply called fellow workers in Christ (for example, see Romans 16:9, 12; II Corinthians 8:23; Philippians 4:3; Philemon 24).

### 3. The Servant Concept Underlying Office in the New Testament.

We noted above that the New Testament generally employs the term *diakonia* (ministry, service) for the service of individuals in the church. Let us now look more closely at the significance of this word for our understanding of the concept of office in the New Testament.

The pattern for New Testament teaching about ministry is to be found in the words of Jesus. When at one time there was strife among the disciples as to who among them was the greatest, Jesus said, "Let the greatest among you become as the youngest, and the leader as one who serves. . . . But I am among you as one who serves" (Luke 22:26-27). According to Mark 10:35ff., the sons of Zebedee were requesting positions of special honor in the Lord's future kingdom. Jesus replied to their request by referring first to Gentile authorities and their standard of greatness: "You know that those who are supposed to rule over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great men exercise authority over them" (Mark 10:42). Then, by way of contrast, Jesus described the standard of greatness which marks his kingdom: "But it shall not be so among you; but whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all. For the Son of man also came not to be served but to serve . . ." (Mark 10:43-45).

In these passages Jesus provides a pattern for the ministry of those who would be active in his kingdom. There is a sharp contrast between Jesus' attitude toward service and that of the Greeks, for whom service was not very dignified. "Jesus' attitude to service is completely new as compared with the Greek understanding. The decisive point is that he sees in it the thing which makes a man his disciple" (Hermann Beyer, *diakoneoo*, in Kittel's *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, Vol. II, p. 84). "A decisive point for understanding the concept is that early Christianity learned to regard and describe as *diakonia* all significant activity for the edification of the community (Ephesians 4:11ff.), a distinction being made according to the mode of operation" (*ibid.*, p. 87).

All of the Lord's people, therefore, must be servants, and all the functionaries must render service (*diakonia*) to the Lord and to their fellow believers. It is most unfortunate that we have tended to limit this concept of *diakonia* to one particular "office" in the church, that of deacon. This, again, may be due to the Bible versions we commonly use. In the King James Version the term *diakonos* is translated three times as "deacon," seven times as "servant," and twenty times as "minister." In our usage of the word "minister" the service dimension of the word *diakonos* is often lost sight of (think of titles like *dominee*, from a Latin word which means "lord"; *the Reverend*, suggesting dignity rather than service; and the like), whereas the Greek word for "minister" (*diakonos*) means servant. The noun *diakonia* is likewise variously translated in the King James Version (once each as "to minister," "to do service," "relief," "office," and "serving"; twice each as "service" and "administration"; three times as "ministering"; six times as "ministration"; and sixteen times as "ministry"). Whereas we are accustomed to associate the word "ministry" with a position of authority, the Greek term behind this word commonly suggests the concept of "service."

The choice of the word *diakonia* for these various forms of ministry indicates that what the New Testament wishes to emphasize about functionaries in the church is that they are to be servants of God and of man. This terminology does not suggest that office in the church means first of all a position which elevates one above his fellow-believers, but rather that office in the church describes a specific way in which one may serve his Lord and his fellowmen.

In this connection it is interesting to note that the term *keerux* ("herald" or "preacher,") which occurs frequently in Greek literature, occurs infrequently in the New Testament. This term occurs only three times in the New Testament, always in the later writings. In I Timothy 2:7 and II Timothy 1:11 Paul applies this term to himself, along with the terms "apostle" and "teacher"; whereas in II Peter 2:5 Noah is called a preacher (*keerux*) of righteousness. Why this infrequent usage? Probably because the word *keerux* was commonly used in Greek literature to describe a kind of elevated personage who was inviolable because he was under divine protection. By way of contrast, the messengers of Christ were to be like sheep delivered up to wolves (Matthew 10:16), and were to expect to be persecuted as Jesus himself had been persecuted (John 15:20) (see Gerhard Friedrich, *keerux*, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, Vol. III, pp. 688, 696). The very infrequency of the word *keerux* in the New Testament, therefore, underscores the importance of the "servant-concept" underlying office in the New Testament.

#### 4. Functions Usually Associated with Ordination Today.

Because the concept of ordination as we understand it today generally includes the right to perform certain ecclesiastical functions, it will be instructive for us to investigate who does the preaching and teaching in the New Testament church, and who administers the sacraments in that church.

##### a. Preaching

Who does the preaching in the New Testament church? When we think of the proclamation of God's Word by men, we almost invariably think of the word *preaching*. The Greek word generally associated with the concept of preaching is *keerussein*. The New Testament, however, uses a number of words to describe the proclamation of God's Word to men. Gerhard Friedrich, in the article on *keerux* in the *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (Vol. III, p. 703), lists 32 terms in addition to *keerussein* which are used in the New Testament for proclamation. An exhaustive study of the question of who does the preaching in the New Testament church, therefore, would require a thorough investigation of the usage of all 33 of these terms. Perhaps a limited survey of the use of two of these terms (*keerussein* and *euangelizein*) will suffice for our purpose.

Let us note first of all some common usages of the verb *keerussein*, which occurs about 61 times in the New Testament. In each of the following instances the word *keerussein* is used for *proclaim* or *preach*: John the Baptist is said to *proclaim* the kingdom of God (Matthew 3:1; Mark 1:4, 7; Luke 3:3; Acts 10:37); Jesus is said to have *proclaimed* the king-

dom of God (Matthew 4:17, 4:23, 9:35); people who had been healed by Jesus *proclaimed* what Jesus had done for them (the leper, Mark 1:45; the demoniac, Mark 5:20 and Luke 8:39); the apostles were sent to *preach* (Mark 3:14, Matthew 10:7, Luke 9:2; Matthew 10:27, Luke 12:3, Mark 6:12); Paul *proclaimed* (Acts 9:20), as did Silvanus and Timothy (II Corinthians 1:19; II Timothy 4:2); Philip, one of the seven, *proclaimed* Christ (Acts 8:5); the undefined "they" of Mark 7:36 zealously *proclaimed* Jesus' miraculous deeds; and the strong angel of Revelation 5:2 *proclaimed* with a great voice, "Who is worthy to open the book?" Paul also asks the Jews addressed in Romans 2 whether those of them who *preach* against stealing do actually steal (2:21). We conclude that, though the usage of *keerussein* is rather limited, in a few isolated instances the subjects of this verb are people other than those formally appointed by the church to perform this function.

In addition to *keerussein*, New Testament writers often use *euangelizein* to describe the proclamation of the gospel. *Euangelizein* is often used as a synonym for *keerussein* (see Luke 8:1, 9:2 compared with 9:6, Romans 10:15). The subjects of *euangelizein* may be Jesus, John the Baptist, or a host of witnesses: disciples, apostles, evangelists. We might take particular note of others who are said to engage in the activity called *euangelizein* (in each of the following instances the word *preach* translates a form of *euangelizein*): Philip, one of the seven, *preached* the good news (Acts 8:12, 35, 40); the men of Cyprus and Cyrene went about *preaching* the Lord Jesus (Acts 11:20); those who had been scattered because of the persecution following the death of Stephen went about *preaching* the Word (Acts 8:4); Paul and Barnabas remained in Antioch for some time *preaching* and teaching (*didaskontes*) the Word of the Lord, with many others also (Acts 15:35). So here again we note that a verb which is used to describe the proclamation of the Word of God, and which is often used synonymously with *keerussein*, sometimes has as its subjects people other than those formally appointed by the church to perform this function.

#### b. Teaching

Who does the teaching in the New Testament church? Obviously, Jesus was the great teacher. Teaching was one of the most prominent features of his public ministry (see Matthew 4:23, 5:2, 9:35, 11:1). Already during Jesus' earthly sojourn, in response to his command, the disciples began to teach (Mark 6:30). In the Great Commission recorded in Matthew 28:20 the risen Lord made the continuation of this task one of the duties of his disciples: "teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you." The apostles diligently pursued this task (Acts 2:42, 4:2, 5:28, 5:42). They were, however, soon joined by others: Paul and Barnabas (15:35), and some men from Judea who were teaching some disputed ideas in the Antioch church (15:1). Apollos, the Alexandrian Jew, also taught accurately the things concerning Jesus (Acts 18:25).

Paul advises those in the Roman church who have the gift of teaching to serve the community through their teaching (Romans 12:7). In Colossians 1:28 Paul indicates that he admonishes and teaches every man in all wisdom, but in Colossians 3:16 all Christians are told to teach

and admonish one another (the same Greek verbs are used in both passages). In the Pastoral letters Paul advises Timothy to teach (I Timothy 4:11, 13; 6:2) as well as to preach (II Timothy 4:2). One of the qualifications for the office of bishop is that a man must be "apt to teach" (I Timothy 3:2); elders who rule well are to be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the word and teaching (I Timothy 5:17). Timothy is also exhorted to entrust the gospel to faithful men who will be able to teach others also (II Timothy 2:2).

The New Testament not only uses the verb *to teach* (*didaskoo*), but also designates certain persons as *teachers* (*didaskaloi*; see previous section on various functionaries in the New Testament church). The word for *teacher* occurs 58 times in the New Testament, most frequently (48 times) in the Gospels. In the Gospels the term is used most often in the form of direct address to Jesus; only on seven occasions is the term applied to others besides Jesus (Matthew 10:24 and Luke 6:40; Luke 2:46, 3:12; John 3:10). According to K. H. Rengstorf the four or five passages in the Gospels where the word *teacher* is used of others than Jesus describe "one who indicates the way of God from the Torah" (*Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, II, 153).

Other New Testament passages refer to *teachers* as to a leading group in the early Christian community (Acts 13:1, I Corinthians 12:28; Ephesians 4:11; cf. also James 3:1). In I Corinthians 12:28 *teachers* come after apostles and prophets in a list of those who discharge specific functions in the community; in Ephesians 4:11 *teachers* appear in a similar list after apostles, prophets and evangelists, being linked with pastors ("and some, pastors and teachers"). In Acts 13:1 teachers are mentioned along with prophets. Interestingly enough, Paul calls himself a teacher in I Timothy 2:7 and II Timothy 1:11. In both passages the term is used in conjunction with the self-designation of "a preacher and an apostle." In the three other occurrences of the word for teacher in the New Testament (Romans 2:20, Hebrews 5:12, and II Timothy 4:3), the term seems to be applied respectively to Jews addressed in Romans 2, the recipients of the letter to the Hebrews, and to people who teach after their own lusts. It is obvious therefore that, as in the case of the words used for *preaching*, so it is with the word used for *teaching*: the New Testament sometimes applies the word to people other than those who have been formally appointed by the church to perform this function.

### c. The Administration of the Sacraments

#### 1) Baptism

The majority of passages in the Gospels which speak of baptism designate John the Baptist as the officiator. Repeatedly we read in the Gospels about the baptism of John and about baptisms by John. (See, for example, Matthew 3:7, 11, 13, 14, 16; 21:25; Mark 1:4, 5, 8, 9; 11:30; Luke 3:3, 7, 16, 21; 7:29; 20:4; John 1:25, 26, 33; 3:23). Note also the following references to John's baptism in Acts 1:22, 10:37, 13:24, 18:25, 19:3-4. Only in the Gospel of John do we read of baptisms which are attributed to Jesus—though even here it is said that "Jesus himself did not baptize, but only his disciples" (John 4:2; cf. 3:22, 26, and 4:1).

Jesus is also mentioned as one who baptizes in the assertion of John the Baptist, "I need to be baptized by you" (Matthew 3:14), though this statement may not be pressed to force us to the conclusion that Jesus himself administered baptism.

It is interesting to note, particularly in view of the parenthetical statement in John 4:2 ("Jesus himself did not baptize but only his disciples"), that when Jesus sent out the twelve disciples (Matthew 10) or the seventy (Luke 10), no mention is made of baptism. These were obviously not word and sacrament missions, but word and healing missions.

The most important passage in the Gospels for our study of the administration of baptism is probably the Great Commission as found in Matthew 28:18-20. Here the risen Lord specifically commands his disciples both to baptize and to teach: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you" (vv. 19-20).

On the Day of Pentecost we hear Peter saying to his audience, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins" (Acts 2:38). This passage leads J. K. S. Reid to comment, "Moreover (v. 38), the twelve are already aware that among their duties is the administration of baptism" (*The Biblical Doctrine of the Ministry*, p. 19). The response to Peter's invitation on the Day of Pentecost was phenomenal: "those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls" (Acts 2:41). The author of Acts does not tell us, however, who administered this "mass baptism." If the twelve apostles did the administering, they would each have had to baptize 250 people.

The next baptisms we read about in the book of Acts were not administered by an apostle but by Philip, one of the seven (commonly called *deacons*). The seven, as we saw above, were appointed to serve tables so that the twelve might devote themselves to prayer and to the ministry of the Word (Acts 6:1-6). It would appear, then, that Philip's role was not to be primarily that of the ministry of the Word. Yet, according to Acts 8:5, "Philip went down to a city of Samaria, and proclaimed to them the Christ." A few verses later we read, "But when they believed Philip as he preached good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women" (v. 12). Later in the chapter we read that Philip baptized the Ethiopian eunuch (v. 38). From Acts 8 we learn, therefore, that Philip, one of the seven, later called Philip the evangelist (21:8), both preached the Word and baptized.

Acts 9:18 records the baptism of Saul of Tarsus, a baptism apparently administered by Ananias, who is simply called "a disciple at Damascus" in Acts 9:10. We also read that Ananias laid his hands on Saul with the result that the latter regained his sight and was filled with the Holy Spirit (9:17). One might argue that Ananias had received a special commission from the Lord to baptize Saul, but in Acts 9:10-12 we read only of a command to Ananias to lay his hands on Saul so that Saul might regain his sight.

From Acts 8 and Acts 9 we have learned that baptism was administered by one of seven "deacons" and by a "disciple." In Acts 19:9 the word "disciple" obviously has a wider meaning than it does when it is used only of the twelve. (For other examples of the wider meaning of the term "disciple," see Luke 6:13, 19:37; John 4:1, 6:60, 6:66). Does the fact that a "disciple" in the broader sense was permitted to baptize, according to Acts 9, imply that all the "disciples" in the broader sense could likewise administer baptism? Does the fact that one of the "deacons" administered baptism imply that the other "deacons" could also do so? There is nothing in the book of Acts which would rule out an affirmative answer to these questions.

Acts 10 narrates the story of Peter's visit to Cornelius and his household. As Peter was preaching to them, "the Holy Spirit fell on all who heard the word" (v. 44). Peter went on to declare "Can any one forbid water for baptizing these people who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?" Next we read, "And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ" (vv. 47, 48). Who administered this baptism? Peter? The brethren from Joppa who had accompanied Peter to Caesarea (v. 23)? The passage does not say.

From Acts 19:1-7 we learn that when Paul came to Ephesus he found some disciples who had been baptized into John's baptism. Paul now proceeded to instruct them more fully in the truths of the Christian gospel. Next we read that these disciples "were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Spirit came on them . . ." (vv. 5, 6). What we are not told here is who baptized the Ephesian disciples. All we read is that they "were baptized."

Eduard Schweizer, in his *Church Order in the New Testament*, p. 186, is of the opinion that Paul laid his hands on these Ephesian disciples after someone else had officiated at their baptism. He finds support for this conclusion in Paul's statement in I Corinthians 1:14-17, "I am thankful that I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius (cf. Acts 18:8 and Romans 16:23) . . . I did also baptize the household of Stephanas (cf. I Corinthians 16:15). Beyond that, I do not know whether I baptized any one else. For Christ did not send me to baptize but to preach the gospel." Schweizer uses this passage to support his claim that as a rule the apostles did not baptize. It must be granted, however, that Paul is here writing to the church at Corinth. It is at least questionable whether one can use this passage as a key to the interpretation of Acts 19:5-6. But it must be recognized that to the Corinthians at least Paul "plays down" his role as an administrator of baptism, and claims that Christ did not send him to baptize but to preach the gospel. In view of Paul's limited list of those among the Corinthians whom he baptized, one wonders who baptized the other Corinthians (note that, according to Acts 18:8, "many of the Corinthians hearing Paul believed and were baptized").

The two remaining accounts of baptism in Acts are both recorded in the passive voice. Of Lydia it is said, "The Lord opened her heart to give heed to what was said by Paul. And when she was baptized, with her household, she besought us . . ." (Acts 16:14-15). Of the Philippian

jailer it is said, "he was baptized at once, with all his family" (Acts 16: 33). These passages do not shed much light on our problem. It is impossible to build a case for specifying certain exclusive administrators of baptism when passive verbs are used to describe these baptisms.

We have now considered all the Acts passages which speak of baptism. We may well agree with G. R. Beasley-Murray when he says,

To insist that the Apostles personally conducted every baptism in the primitive Church is an absurdity that no one, so far as I am aware, has asked us to believe. Apart from the physical impossibility of the Twelve visiting so many places at once, the narrative of Acts excludes it; for in chapter 11 we read of unknown Hellenist Christians, scattered by the persecution at Stephen's death, evangelizing in Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch, and in the last-named place "the hand of the Lord was with them and a great multitude that believed turned to the Lord" (11:21) (*Baptism in the New Testament*, p. 113).

There is considerable reflection on the meaning of baptism in chapters like Romans 6, Ephesians 4, and Colossians 2, but these passages say nothing about the administrators of baptism. It is only in the First Epistle to the Corinthians (1:14-17) that the question of the administrator of baptism is considered, as we saw above. And here the point Paul makes is that Christ sent him not to baptize but to preach the gospel!

There is, further, a remarkable silence in the letters to Timothy concerning the sacraments in general and the administration of them in particular. Timothy is exhorted in I Timothy 4:13 to "attend to the public reading of scripture, to preaching, to teaching." We might feel inclined to add to this, "and to the proper administration of the sacraments"—but words of this sort are conspicuous by their absence. To the same effect is II Timothy 4:1 and 2, where Paul charges Timothy to "preach the word, be urgent in season and out of season, convince, rebuke, and exhort, be unfailing in patience and in teaching."

We may summarize the above discussion by saying that the New Testament does not teach that baptism was administered in the first-century church only by the apostles, and that it does not clearly teach that baptism could be administered only by persons specifically appointed by the church for that purpose.

(Note: It may be observed at this point that, on the basis of the parallel between circumcision and baptism, it would be natural for Jewish Christians to expect that no specifically appointed office-bearer in the church was needed to administer baptism. For the Old Testament nowhere indicates that circumcision could only be performed by a priest or other special functionary.)

## 2) The Lord's Supper

The biblical material on the celebration of the Lord's Supper is sparse. The first recorded celebration of the Lord's Supper was administered by Jesus himself (Matthew 26:26-29, Mark 14:22-25, Luke 22:14-23); these accounts, however, contain no instructions for the proper administration of the Lord's Supper in the future. The words, "Do this in re-

membrance of me," found in Paul's account of the institution of the Lord's Supper (I Corinthians 11:24, 25) and, according to some manuscripts, in Luke 22:19, probably were not intended to indicate who were to be the proper administrators of this supper, but rather to imply that this supper should frequently be celebrated by Christians. It is highly significant that when Paul discussed the problems which the Corinthians had with the proper administration of the Lord's Supper (I Corinthians 10:16, 17, 21, and 11:23-28), he did not address his advice to any official administrator(s) of the sacrament. It is on the basis of this fact that Eduard Schweizer contends that according to the New Testament every church member may distribute the Lord's Supper (*Church Order in the New Testament*, pp. 186f.).

It is again of interest to note that Paul does not give any instruction on the administration of the Lord's Supper to the young pastor Timothy. Paul gives Timothy many exhortations to preach, teach, exhort, read the Scriptures publicly, to convince and to rebuke, but says nothing about administering the Lord's Supper.

What about references in the book of Acts to "the breaking of bread"? There are four such passages:

2:42, "And they [the 3,000 just converted] devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.

2:46, And day by day [all who believed], attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they partook of food with glad and generous hearts.

20:7, [At Troas] On the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul talked with them.

20:11, And when Paul had gone up and had broken bread and eaten, he conversed with them a long while.

Although there is some difference of opinion about Acts 2:46, most commentators agree that the expression "the breaking of bread" in these passages refers to the celebration of the Lord's Supper, probably in connection with a regular meal. If this is so, it would seem to indicate that the Lord's Supper was in all probability celebrated at this time without an "official" administrator. It is quite clear that the celebration took place in a fellowship of Christians, large or small; none of the passages, however, give any indication that the Lord's Supper was administered at this time only by an ordained church official.

We may summarize the above discussion by saying that the New Testament does not clearly teach that the Lord's Supper could be administered only by persons specifically appointed by the church for that purpose.

[Note: It may again be observed that, on the basis of the parallel between the Passover and the Lord's Supper, it would be natural for Jewish Christians to expect that the Lord's Supper could be administered by people other than specifically appointed office-bearers in the church. For in Old Testament times it was not the duty of the priest to administer the Passover. In earliest times the Passover was observed in the homes of the Israelites (Exodus 12). Later, after Jerusalem had become the

center of Israelite worship, the Passover was celebrated in Jerusalem and burnt offerings were presented there in conjunction with the feast (II Chronicles 30, 35), but even at that time the priests did not administer the Passover to the people. This way of observing the Passover appears to have continued into New Testament times, as is evidenced by the celebration of the Passover by Jesus and his disciples which is recorded for us in the Gospels (Mark 14:12-16, Matthew 26:17-19, Luke 22:7-13).]

#### 5. The Fluid New Testament Situation with Regard to Office.

Both at the beginning and at the end of Paul's missionary career we hear about the appointment of elders in the churches. During the first missionary journey Paul and Barnabas appointed elders in the churches of the region of Iconium (Acts 14:23). Near the end of his career Paul is urging Titus to appoint elders in the cities of Crete (Titus 1:5). From data of this sort one might gain the impression that a fixed system of church government was established early in the history of the Christian community, and that this system remained pretty much the same throughout the New Testament era. A careful look at the New Testament materials, however, does not support this impression.

We do not read about elders in Paul's letters except in the Pastoral epistles which he wrote near the end of his life. Before this, Paul had mentioned "bishops and deacons" in the opening address of the letter to the Philippians. In Acts 20 Luke also tells us about a meeting between Paul and the elders of the Ephesian church, a meeting which took place near the end of Paul's third missionary journey.

Before this, however, the situation is quite unclear. Paul, in his earliest letter, called on the Thessalonians "to respect those who labor among you and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, and to esteem them very highly in love because of their work" (I Thessalonians 5:12, 13). In similar vein, he wrote to the Corinthians: "Now, brethren, you know that the household of Stephanas were the first converts in Achaia, and they have devoted themselves to the service of the saints; I urge you to be subject to such men and to every fellow worker and laborer" (I Corinthians 16:15, 16). It is obvious that there were in these congregations men who were giving leadership and service; their fellow-Christians were to respect them for their work and to cooperate with them. Had these men been formally appointed as office-bearers? Were they giving leadership because they had been officially appointed by the congregation or by some church official? On the basis of the New Testament evidence, it is impossible to answer these questions with a definite *yes* or with a definite *no*. We must at least take account of some evidence which suggests a rather loose organization of the early New Testament churches. The letters to the Corinthians are suggestive on this score.

It is Paul's consistent teaching that every Christian has received the Holy Spirit. To the Romans he said, "Any one who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him" (Romans 8:9). In I Corinthians Paul calls attention to the freedom with which the Holy Spirit operates within the Christian fellowship. All members of the body of Christ have

been given some form of ministry (I Corinthians 12:7, 11, 18; 14:26; cf. Romans 12:3-8). The fact that Christians have different gifts and therefore different ministries is the Spirit's doing. The Spirit "apportions to each one individually as he wills" (I Corinthians 12:11).

In the Corinthian church some rivalries had developed concerning these gifts of the Spirit. Some believers at Corinth were apparently highly impressed with the value of the ability to speak in tongues. By way of correcting these wrong emphases, Paul pointed out that since the Spirit has given the gifts, it is the Spirit who accounts for the variety of the gifts. No one may treat his neighbor's gift as being of little account. No gift is inherently superior or inferior to any other gift (I Corinthians 12:12-31). If there is to be any measure of relative importance, the standard must be how well the gift serves the Christian community and how useful it is for strengthening the members (12:7; 14:1-5, 12). In this connection, Paul emphasized the greater importance of prophesying over tongue-speaking, and urged his readers to seek this gift (14:1, 5, 39).

With regard to prophesying also, however, there must be no rivalry. If several members of the group have been given a prophetic message, they must take turns in presenting it. All things must be done in an orderly way (14:29-33, 40). Further, the other members of the group do not remain inactive while someone is prophesying. "Discernings of spirits" (*diakriseis pneumatoon*) are among the gifts given to members of the congregation (12:10). While the prophets speak, others are to discern or weigh what is said (*diakrinetoosan*, 14:29). The entire congregation must be able in an intelligent way to say *Amen* to what has been said by others (14:16). So even the gift of which Paul speaks most highly (prophesying) does not place someone on a different level or rank in the congregation. Even prophecy remains a gift operating in conjunction with all the other gifts present in the congregation.

The picture we get of the Corinthian church is that of a church which is like a living organism, in which all kinds of spiritual powers are freely coming to expression. The members actively serve each other and complement each other. No one may lord it over another, and no one may isolate himself from another. What we see in Corinth does not appear to be a highly formal organization, in which conscious distinctions are made between those who hold office and those who do not.

This fact becomes more apparent as we probe further. There are a number of passages in I Corinthians which make us question whether any single person or any group of persons in Corinth bears special responsibility for what is happening in the congregation. Consider, for example, the following four passages:

a) Paul does not appeal to any one particular person or persons to straighten out the disorders that have developed in connection with the communal meal. Nobody seems to be in charge of things. The advice Paul offers for correcting the situation is simply: "Wait for one another" (11:33).

b) With regard to the collection for the Jerusalem poor, each one is asked to keep his own contribution until Paul arrives. Then, when the

gifts have all been brought together, the congregation is to designate whom they wish to deliver this money to Jerusalem (16:1-4).

c) With regard to the matter of taking disputes into the civil courts, it is not merely the disputing parties for whom Paul has harsh words. Paul implies that the congregation as a whole was negligent in not providing a judge to settle such matters ("can it be that there is no man among you wise enough to decide between members of the brotherhood . . .?") Somebody should have offered to be the judge or arbiter here. Is not Paul's point that the members of the congregation are not availing themselves of the gifts which are present among them? (6:1-6, especially v. 5).

d) With respect to the sexual scandal within the congregation, the congregation is at fault because nobody had enough Christian boldness to stand up and condemn this sin. Therefore Paul will have to do it from afar. He clearly implies, however, that what he is now doing from a distance ought to have been done at a public gathering by some member of the congregation. Paul is not condemning some office-bearer's laxity. He is condemning the entire congregation (chapter 5).

Whatever, therefore, may have been the position of Stephanas and the others to whom the Corinthians were to be subject (16:15, 16), it does not appear that Stephanas had the kind of responsibility for supervising congregational affairs which would later be associated with a formal ecclesiastical office. The Corinthian situation appears to have been very fluid, open, and free. Every member of the congregation was to be open to following the working of the Spirit both in himself and in his fellow members. Obviously some were giving some kind of leadership. Obviously the Gospel was being preached and applied. But what does not appear to be so obvious is that those who were doing these things were doing them "officially." In other words, the pattern of formal office-bearers with clearly defined duties which emerges later in the New Testament is difficult to discern in Corinth.

By the time of the Pastoral Epistles the ecclesiastical situation is quite different. The church has come up against a serious threat. The church is struggling to maintain herself against a highly destructive kind of *gnoosis*—"the knowledge which is falsely so called" (I Timothy 6:20). Paul found this early form of gnosticism a most subtle and pervasive influence, issuing in all kinds of doubts, confusions, and departures from the faith (I Timothy 1:4, 6:3-5; II Timothy 2:16-18). This heretical system of thought was being propagated from house to house. Women seemed to be most vulnerable to it (II Timothy 3:6-7; I Timothy 5:11-13). In short, the church was facing possible disintegration.

In this situation Paul did not speak in the same way that he had spoken to the Corinthians. To be sure, the Corinthians had also had some problems with a certain type of *gnoosis*. Paul had reminded them that "knowledge (*gnoosis*) puffs up, but love builds up" (I Corinthians 8:1); he had also said, "If I have . . . all knowledge (*gnoosis*) . . . but have not love, I am nothing" (I Corinthians 13:2). But by the time of the Pastorals the *gnoosis* problem had grown to new and threatening proportions. Paul was not now reminding Timothy and Titus of the free-

dom with which the Spirit distributes his various gifts to believers. Rather, he now recommended that Timothy and Titus find men able to teach and able to rule, and appoint them bishops or elders over their congregations (I Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9). He now urged Timothy and Titus, and those whom they had appointed, to hold fast to the Apostolic teaching which has been received. Paul's emphasis in these epistles was on a kind of organizational structure for the church which would enable it to stand firm against the devastating threats which now confronted it. Hence Paul charged Timothy and Titus to appoint elders, urged them to do so with great care (I Timothy 5:22), and enumerated the qualifications for this position (I Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9). It may be noted that the office of deacon had now also come into prominence (I Timothy 3:8-10, 12-13). Apparently a changed situation had brought about a new emphasis in the Pauline writings.

Was the entire church reacting to the threatening situation of the later New Testament times in the same way that Paul did? We cannot find many clues with regard to this matter in the rest of the New Testament. In the Epistle to the Hebrews it is said to be to the discredit of the readers that they have not all become teachers (Hebrews 5:12). There were, to be sure, leaders in the congregation(s) to which the readers of Hebrews belonged. These are not called by any of the regular names for office-bearers in the New Testament, but simply "leaders" (Hebrews 13:7, 17, 24). These leaders were responsible for the care of the people under them, and the congregation was to recognize this, obeying them and submitting to them (13:17).

In I Peter the situation seems closer to that of the Pastorals. "Elders" (*presbuteroi*) may here simply mean the older man (I Peter 5:5). But the word is also used to refer to a specific group of men with official standing (I Peter 5:1-4); in fact, in verse 1 of this chapter Peter calls himself "a fellow elder." These elders have been placed over the flock; they are specifically instructed, however, not to lord it over the flock, but to be examples to them (v. 3). We get the impression here of a well ordered situation, with office-bearers who have specific duties.

The letters of John contain only slight hints about the organizational structure of the church. The threat to the churches to which John wrote was apparently similar to that confronted in the Pastorals. False teachers and confusing prophets were abroad, spreading the Gnostic line of thought (I John 4:1-6, II John 7). In these short letters, however, John was not promoting offices or a specific type of church organization. Rather, his approach seems more like Paul's approach in I Corinthians. John reminded his readers that every believer has sufficient knowledge to cope with the situation: "You have been anointed by the Holy One, and you all know" (I John 2:20). Or, again, he wrote, "The anointing which you received from him abides in you, and you have no need that any one should teach you; as his anointing teaches you about everything, and is true, and is no lie, just as it has taught you, abide in him" (I John 2:27). Individual believers are told not to believe every spirit, but to "test the spirits to see whether they are of God" (I John 4:1). Individual believers are able to detect false teachers and should treat them as such,

refusing them hospitality (II John 10-11). Though it is possible that there may have been regular office-bearers in the churches to which John wrote these letters, officials of this sort are not given prominence in these letters as means whereby the Gnostic threat is to be averted. John's appeal is rather to individual believers and to their own ability to discern false teaching.

In view of this kind of material in the New Testament, it appears that the office-structure of the church was in a fluid state during New Testament times. There is a shift in Paul from the Corinthian emphasis on spiritual gifts to an emphasis on specifically qualified office-bearers in the Pastoral Epistles. I Peter suggests an approach similar to the Pastorals. The Johannine letters appear to be more in the spirit of I Corinthians. In other words, there is variety on this matter within the New Testament. Possibly the development of church structure was different in different localities. It is, therefore, not surprising that various traditions in church organizations have been able to appeal for support to various types of New Testament material.

The New Testament materials which we have been examining in this report are instructive and helpful; they give us much necessary guidance in church-organizational matters. These materials contain guiding principles significant for the church of every age. But they do not present a definitive church-organizational structure to which the church must remain bound for all time. Neither do they describe the offices of the church with such finality that no changes may be permitted in their number or in their functioning.

## II. HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE CONCEPTS OF OFFICE AND ORDINATION

### A. The Ancient Period

#### 1. Statement of the Problem

To arrive at a proper understanding of the nature of office and ordination in the church, it is necessary to consider not only the biblical evidence, but also the major historical developments from the beginning of the Christian church to the present. It is evident that current understandings and practices with regard to office and ordination cannot be supported by Scripture in every detail. What we propose to do in this historical review is to weigh the major historical developments in the understanding and practice of office and ordination on the following scale: what is required by Scripture, what is allowed by Scripture, and what is forbidden by Scripture.

In order for us to accomplish this, we do not need to scrutinize every century of the history of the church. Two eras are particularly important for our purposes. The first is the era which witnessed the formation of the order of the ancient church. The second is the era of the Protestant Reformation, at which time certain correctives and modifications were applied to this order which have shaped the practices we are following today.

The problem involved in the first of these two inquiries is that of determining how and why the church moved from the situation pictured in the New Testament to that reflected by the end of the ancient period. The problem is far from simple. The evidence is so scanty as to have led scholars to speak of the earliest years (up to the beginning of the second century) as the "tunnel period." It is hard to determine exactly *what* happened in that period, and even harder to determine, except by way of conjecture, *why* what happened did happen. In addition, the evidence available does not give us a clear and simple picture. It includes such a variety of obscure, ambiguous, and even contradictory statements as to make certain only one negative conclusion: that at the end of the "tunnel" there was no one clearly defined and established concept of office and ordination.

As the picture is clarified, however, it becomes possible to assert three things regarding early church organization: 1) There was diversity in the concept of office in the early church. 2) This diversity progressed toward a standardization which came to prevail throughout the church. 3) In this standardization the church made use of some of the organizational models available to it in shaping its concept of office.

An additional element in the complexity of this problem lies in the fact that the situation at the beginning of the "tunnel" shares some of the characteristics of the situation which emerged at its end. Diversity is evident in the New Testament also; the order of the Jerusalem church did not match exactly that reflected in the epistles of Paul. Progress is evident in the New Testament, since the later epistles reflect some changes in emphasis as compared with the earlier ones. And there was at least some degree of imitation of existing models, evident in the elements of similarity between the organization of the early church and that of the synagogue.

From all the available evidence it appears that up to the year 100 A.D. the organization of the local church was not a matter of paramount concern. All Christians belonged to the church as a whole. Among the considerations leading to greater attention to church organization were the following: 1) The expectation of the imminent return of the Lord waned, leading to the need for firmer church organization. 2) The leadership the original apostles had given disappeared with their death; thus the need was created for understanding apostolic authority and regulating the transmission of that authority. 3) The growth of the church and the rise of divergent or heretical views accentuated the need for an established court of appeal. All three of these factors, especially the last-named, contributed to the rise of a canon of Scripture, to the emergence of a common creed, and to the development of the concept of office. These developments were not arbitrarily foisted upon the church, but arose out of pressing need, when Gnostic (and, later, Montanist) false prophets appeared, threatening to lead many astray.

The changes in the concept of office which occurred during the ancient period were often subtle and obscure. What is beyond dispute is that a major change did take place during that period. In the New Testament era many offices or functions existed alongside of each other.

Apostles and prophets seemed to be recognized throughout the church. Alongside of these arose certain offices which were more closely associated with local churches than those of apostles and prophets: the office of bishop or presbyter (probably used interchangeably) and the office of deacon. The organization of the church at this time was relatively free, and there was little indication of a radical difference between Christians in general and those appointed or elected to special functions. All believers were "priests."

By the end of the fifth century, however, many changes had taken place. The apostles and prophets of whom the New Testament had spoken had disappeared. Their places had been taken and, to some extent, their functions had been assumed by regular officers, who had either been appointed or elected. Among these officers bishops had emerged to special prominence in the monarchical episcopate; they were now considered the administrative successors of the apostles (apostolic succession). A distinct hierarchy had developed among church offices, culminating in the chief patriarchates and in the papacy at Rome. The ministry had become a priesthood, with powers which the laity did not share. The Lord's Supper had become a sacrifice offered to God by the priest. The clergy had become a distinct class, with special powers and special privileges; even in the election of the clergy the laity had only a minor role. Though some of these developments were not completed until the fifth century, their general shape was quite clear by the close of the second.

## 2. Specific Developments

As was stated above, the evidence on the basis of which we attempt to reconstruct this period is scanty. "Any reconstruction of the primitive church's ministry—as indeed any other phase of its outward life—must rest upon what are regarded as the implications of a very few scattered passages in a very meager literature" (John Knox in Niebuhr and Williams, *The Ministry in Historical Perspectives*, p. 2).

In the early literature available to us after the New Testament writings, special attention attaches to the *First Letter of Clement* (A.D. 93-97), the *Didache* or *Teaching of the Twelve Apostles* (A.D. 115), and the *Epistle of Ignatius to the Smyrneans* (A.D. 117). These three can be grouped together because the last two, dating from the early second century, contain slightly different responses to the same situation in the Syrian Church, and in them appeal is made to Clement of Rome. The *Didache* reflects a situation in which the authority of the apostles and prophets is waning but the authority of bishops and deacons has not yet taken its place. The *Didache* seeks to establish such a resident ministry more firmly. Bishops and presbyters, however, are still viewed as constituting a collegiate office, held by several men in common. Ignatius, in contrast with the *Didache*, represents more of an emphasis on the authority of the bishop; he seeks to establish the monarchical authority of the bishop in a situation in which such authority was not yet generally recognized.

In so doing Ignatius appeals to the earlier writing of Clement. Clement, intervening in a Corinthian dispute, reflects the fact that bishops have

taken over the functions of the "prophetic" officers, though he does not define in what way this took place (the term "prophetic" is applied by scholars to the apostles and prophets in the very early church, whose prerogatives were recognized throughout the church). Ignatius was probably pushing Clement a bit too far when he used him to buttress the monarchical episcopate.

Thus we see here the rise of bishops and deacons in the place of the "prophetic" offices, and an emerging emphasis on the value of the so-called monarchical episcopate (one man should be at the head of each local church). With respect to the matter of the rise of the monarchical episcopate, which has been the subject of much theological debate, there is little argument on the fact that the development took place, but a great deal of uncertainty as to why it did so. In part the development seems to have been the natural emergence of one man as a leader among many, due probably to the leader's exceptional gifts of teaching or administration. In part the development may have been hastened by the rise of heresy, which accentuated the need for an authoritative voice to "test the prophets." Perhaps some New Testament models of church government or the model of Roman civil organization played a role in this process. Even if all these forces were operative, however, the development of the monarchical episcopate is less clear than the understanding of that development advanced by Roman Catholic apologists, who trace a direct line of appointment from the original apostles to the bishops. This development does, however, reflect the effort of the early church to adjust to changed conditions and to meet some very real crises, and it suggests quite clearly that the church must have some latitude to make such adjustments.

That what we say above falls short of reflecting the Roman Catholic position on the matter will be evident from another consideration. For Roman Catholic apologists, attached to the idea of the monarchical episcopate was the idea that the bishops were the successors of the apostles. This idea went through an evolution. Irenaeus, writing in approximately 175 A.D., speaks of a "charisma" of truth given to the bishops as the successors of the apostles. The role of being guardians of the apostolic tradition—a role which was assigned to bishops—was the church's safeguard against the ever-present threat of false teaching. This idea was later to furnish the basis for the belief that the bishops assembled in a church council could speak authoritatively in defining the truth. Clement, meanwhile, had also spoken of the bishops as being successors of the apostles. This conception of bishops as the successors of the apostles eventually came to be understood as including the authority of bishops to administer and appoint. It is highly significant, however, that Ignatius, writing shortly after Clement, does not make use of the argument that bishops were the successors of the apostles. This, we may assume, Ignatius would almost certainly have done if he had been aware of the existence of that argument. It was when the ideas of the monarchical episcopate and of the apostolic succession of bishops were later combined that the prestige and power of the bishop's office were tremendously enhanced.

At least as important as the new offices which developed in the church

at this time was the revised conception of what the offices entailed. Clement of Rome already spoke of the ministry as a priesthood. He spoke of distinctions within the church between high priests, priests, and Levites, and of a *laity* which was to be distinguished from all three of these groups. In this he had the model of the Old Testament to go by. An additional model for the early church was found in the priestly practices of the pagan religions with which the early Christians were familiar. It should be noted, however, that the New Testament, far from supporting this development, argues for the priesthood of all believers.

By the middle of the third century Cyprian, following the lead of Tertullian, had developed the idea of the ministry as a priesthood to the point where the Lord's Supper was viewed as a sacrifice offered by the officiating "priest" to the Lord. In Cyprian the priestly conception of the Christian ministry had come to full flower. The distinctions within the major offices had now become distinctions within the priestly character of the ministry of the church. The question of whether one was a presbyter, deacon, or subdeacon was now less important than the question of whether he was a member of the clergy—and, as such, endowed with clerical and priestly powers—or a mere member of the laity. The concept of "office" had now become official and authoritarian, in contrast with an earlier emphasis on "ministry" as service—a service which, in one form or another, all Christians exercised.

This development was a late step in the gradual decline of the laity in the early church. It appears that in the New Testament church all believers were considered to be ministering members of the church by reason of their baptism. There is no evidence that only a few people were permitted to administer the sacraments. That leaders and people with special functions in the church should emerge into greater prominence was to be expected. But there was a gradual decline in the role the "laity" played in the choosing of these leaders. Lay participation in the election of bishops never entirely disappeared, but such participation soon become mere lip service to an earlier principle. The development of the priestly conception of the ministry and of the sacraments introduced an essential difference between clergy and laity. When the functions and characteristics of the "prophetic" ministry also began to be ascribed to the institutional ministry, the gap between clergy and laity could only be widened.

Two other developments may be added to complete the picture. a) The gap between clergy and laity was widened even further by the introduction and gradual growth of clerical privileges and immunities. These included exemption from trial in civil courts and from certain civic duties which the general citizenry had to perform. Certain outward signs accentuated the distinction between clergy and laity, such as clerical garb and the tonsure. Clerical celibacy was an additional mark of distinction, although it must be added that this requirement had a relatively slow development and a stormy career.

b) Furthermore, in Gregory of Nyssa (who died in 394 A.D.) and in Augustine (who died in 430) the idea developed that "ordination"—that is, the induction of a person into sacred orders—conferred upon the

recipient an indelible character, comparable to the military brand or to the regal imprint on a coin. According to this view, when the ceremony of ordination is performed in a formally correct manner, a change takes place. The ordained person is suddenly given a character which he did not formerly possess, and certain new qualities; as a result of this endowment he is now enabled to be a teacher of righteousness, an instructor in hidden mysteries, and a performer of potent ecclesiastical rites.

### 3. Evaluation

It would be difficult to maintain that all of the changes described above were illegitimate. This would be tantamount to saying that the process of adjustment to changed conditions, already under way during New Testament times, should have stopped at the end of the period of special revelation. This would be particularly unfair because of the major change which the closing of the biblical canon signaled.

Though all this is true, the developments just sketched are open to serious criticism. The departure from the spirit and tenor of the New Testament situation was too wide to be excused. The most obvious point of criticism has to do with the development of a hierarchy of offices. One of the most serious results of this development was the demotion of the lay member of the church to the status of a second-rate citizen. Furthermore, the concentration of sacramental power in the office of the priest violated the freedom of access which the believer has to Christ. And, to mention but one more point, the ascription of apostolic authority to the leading members of the hierarchy tempted the church to replace biblical authority with the authority of ecclesiastical tradition. History is replete with evidence that this temptation was not resisted with any great success.

It remains now to trace the correctives applied to this situation by the Protestant Reformation. The Reformers certainly did apply biblical correctives, both in the area of doctrine and in the area of church organization. When that has been acknowledged, however, two things remain to be considered: whether the revision in church organization which the Reformers carried out was complete enough, and whether the post-Reformation church has fully carried forward the insights of the Reformers in their address to the problem of office and ordination—or even maintained the degree of biblical normativity in this area which the Reformers achieved.

## B. The Reformation Era

### 1. Introduction

The view of office and ordination which had developed by the close of the ancient period prevailed throughout the medieval period of the Roman Catholic Church. During these medieval centuries, that view became deeply embedded in Roman Catholic tradition. One could call it a "priestly" or "sacerdotal" view of office and ordination. According to this view, the office of priesthood was limited to a specially ordained class within the church, and ordination was elevated to the position of a sacrament. The sacrament of ordination was thought to confer an in-

delible character of power and grace upon the ordained; as a result, office came to be associated more with status than with service. By virtue of his office, the priest became the dispenser of sacramental graces, and the possessor of special spiritual powers: the power to bind and loose with respect to the forgiveness of sins, and the power necessary for the administration of the sacraments—especially the power to change the elements in the celebration of the Mass. This special spiritual power and grace was not available for the laity. As a result of these developments, therefore, a wide gulf was created between clergy and laity, with the laity being reduced to second-class citizenship in the church of Christ.

The Protestant Reformation involved, among other things, a reaction against this priestly, hierachical development. Without exception, the Reformers adopted a new stance with regard to office and ordination. But the question, "What precisely was the meaning of office and ordination according to the Reformers?", is difficult to answer. This difficulty stems, in part, from the fact that for the principal Reformers the order of the church was not a primary concern. The focus of their concern was the doctrine of grace. Church order concerns, therefore, arose only secondarily, usually when the medieval priestly developments were thought to obscure or interfere with the doctrine of grace. Hence the Reformers usually tended to be quite pragmatic in matters of church order. Moreover, there were many Reformers working quite independently of one another, and there was no collective attempt to give *the* definitive answer to our question. Finally, none of the individual, main-line Reformers gave a neat, convenient, summary definition of the terms "office" and "ordination." In fact, those terms were often used rather loosely and ambiguously in Reformation literature. And yet, in spite of these difficulties, it is possible, by way of implication, to draw from a study of the Reformation era some conclusions that have bearing on our problems in the area of office and ordination today.

If this study is to be kept within reasonable scope, it will be impossible to examine the views of *all* the Reformers. Rather, we shall take as being generally representative of the basic Protestant approach to office and ordination the views of Luther and Calvin, with occasional references to other sources. In view of the particular community that is to be served by this report, furthermore, the bulk of attention will be given to Calvin.

Another limitation should be mentioned at this point, namely, that this study of office and ordination in the Reformation era will be largely limited to the ministerial or pastoral office. Such a limitation is quite natural when office and ordination are to be studied in tandem, as is being done by this committee. For implicit in this combination is the suggestion that our interest with regard to office should focus on the pastoral office, since it is historically with reference to that office that the term "ordination" is used. In Reformation literature, for example, "ordination" is a word used normally, if not exclusively, in connection with the special ministerial office. We shall therefore deal here particularly with the Reformation view of the ministerial office and of ordination to that office, and only incidentally with the other offices.

Finally, in order to gain perspective on Reformation developments,

it is important to recognize at the outset that the Reformers did not work in some sort of non-historical vacuum. Whether they were developing theologies or church orders, they were working in a historical context. With regard to developments specifically in the area of office and ordination, it is helpful to keep in mind that the poles between which the Reformers were working were Roman Catholicism on the right and Anabaptism on the left (see Wilhelm Pauck, "Ministry in the Time of the Continental Reformation," in Niebuhr and Williams, *The Ministry in Historical Perspective*; and Helmut Lieberg, *Amt und Ordination bei Luther und Melanchthon*). With regard to the development of church orders in the Reformation, Pauck observes, "The Roman Church was firmly established in the common life. Innumerable ties linked it to the political and social order, to economics and law, to mores and customs. New church orders could not come into being except by a transition in the course of which much that was old and traditional had to be preserved." In addition to these ties with the Roman past, the mainline Reformers were sensitive to what they regarded as excessive disorder in Anabaptism, the left-wing of the Reformation. Both of these pressures help us to understand on the one hand the gap that at times existed between the Reformers' ideals for the life and order of the church and what they were actually able to accomplish, and on the other hand the rather conservative position eventually taken by the Reformers themselves on the matter of office and ordination.

Having noted the medieval background for the Reformation as well as certain problems, limitations, and perspectives with regard to the Reformation era, let us now go on to examine some specific Reformation developments that bear on the concept of office and ordination.

## 2. Specific Reformation Developments

### a. With Regard to Office

Out of the Reformation emerged the well-known phrase, "the priesthood of all believers." This phrase was particularly associated with Luther, but it designated a teaching held by all the Reformers, including Calvin—as is evident from his prayer in the commentary on Malachi 2:9.

Grant, Almighty God, that since thou hast deigned to take us as a priesthood to thyself; and hast chosen us when we were not only in the lowest condition, but even profane and alien to all thy holiness; and hast consecrated us to thyself by thy Holy Spirit; that we may offer ourselves as holy victims to thee.

Grant that we may bear in mind our office and our calling and sincerely devote ourselves to thy service. May we so present to thee our efforts and our labors that thy name may be truly glorified in us, that men may know that we have been ingrafted into the body of thine only begotten Son.

As he is the chief and the only true and perpetual priest, may we become partakers of that priesthood with which thou hast been pleased to honor him; so that he may take us as laborers with him.

Thus may thy name be perpetually glorified by the whole body as well as by the Head. Amen.

This doctrine of the priesthood of all believers (along with the companion emphasis on the sharing of all believers in Christ's prophetic and kingly offices—cf. Calvin's *Institutes*, II, 15, 2ff; and *Heidelberg Catechism*, Q. 32) was a potentially revolutionary doctrine in the historical development of the concept of office and ordination, for it contradicted on at least one essential point centuries of tradition pertaining to that concept. Universal priesthood meant, as the quotation from Calvin indicates, that in some sense all Christian believers are office-holders in the church of Jesus Christ! It meant that the office of ministry in the broad sense of Christian service is basically conferred not upon a select group but upon the whole church. It may be said that simply by virtue of our general baptism into the body of Christ, and not by special ordination, all believers are "ordained" priests, prophets, and kings. There is therefore essentially no special order of priests existing above and separate from the rest of the body of Christ.

This recovery of an important New Testament teaching was probably the major contribution of the Protestant Reformation toward the development of a new view of office and ordination. At the very least, the doctrine of universal priesthood was bound to blunt the clericalism and sacerdotalism that had attended the ancient and medieval developments. If the universal priesthood of all believers would not eliminate the gulf between clergy and laity, it would at least diminish that gulf. And it would of necessity force a change in the concepts of office and ordination in the direction of a broader, less priestly, more functional interpretation of those terms.

It can be well questioned, of course, whether the full potential of the teaching of universal priesthood was ever realized in Protestantism. For in that tradition, too, there has grown up a clericalism that has resulted in a back-seat position for the laity with respect to the total ministry of the church—a clericalism that is inconsistent with Reformation theories of universal office-sharing. At this point it is important to recall an observation made in the introduction to this section on the Reformation era. To some degree, the historical context in which the Reformers worked affected the extent to which the doctrine of universal priesthood would alter the traditional ideas of office and ordination. For example, in his recent study of office and ordination in Luther, Helmut Lieberg concludes that the later Luther became more conservative than before in response to the Anabaptist wing of the Reformation, therefore emphasizing more than he had earlier the need for particular special offices, and even permitting again a greater distinction between clergy and laity than he had previously permitted. Likewise, Calvin's fear of the Anabaptists as disturbers of civil and ecclesiastical peace is well known; it is more than likely that this fear contributed to moving Calvin in the direction of a rather firm ordering of the church and its ministry. Of course, Calvin appealed to Scripture in order to legitimate his church order. But that appeal was not made in the abstract, apart from a historical context.

In spite of the distinctive Protestant emphasis on universal priesthood or universal office-sharing into which all are baptized, the Reformers retained the traditional idea of the need for special office-holding in the church into which one is ordained. There is very little evidence that the Reformers saw any inconsistency here. There are only occasional references in Reformation literature that may suggest a slight feeling of tension between the ideas of universal priesthood and special office. Zwingli says, for example, "It is true we are all fully ordained to the priesthood . . . which means nothing else but that everyone offers himself. But we are not all apostles and bishops." And the *Second Helvetic Confession*, Chapter 18, asserts that there is a difference between universal priesthood and special ministry, but does not really clarify what that difference is.

The Apostles of Christ indeed call all believers in Christ priests, but not by reason of a ministerial office, but because through Christ all who are the faithful, having been made kings and priests, are able to offer spiritual sacrifices to God. Accordingly there are great differences between a priesthood and a ministry. For the former is common to all Christians . . . but the same is not so with the latter. And we have not removed the ministry out of the midst of the church when we have cast the papistical priesthood out of the church of Christ. (Both Zwingli and the Confession are quoted in J. L. Ainslie, *The Doctrines of Ministerial Order in the Reformed Churches of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, pp. 7, 8.)

The principal reason why the Reformers saw no real inconsistency between universal office-sharing and special ministry is very important, because it offers us a basic insight into the "meaning of office and ordination" in the Reformation era. That reason is that the Reformers regarded the special offices as being *functional* or *instrumental* in character. The church appoints some of its members to special tasks in order that the total ministry of the church, which remains basically the responsibility of all, can be most efficiently carried out. Although such division of labor is necessary for good order and efficiency, it does not create an essentially different order or hierarchy in the church that may be regarded as an end in itself. As Luther viewed it, for example, within the body of Christ some of the priests are chosen or elected to become "the other priests' workmen, servants, and officers (*Werke*, Weimar Edition, Vol. 7, p. 633). Consequently it is wrong, said Luther, to understand the office of ministry in terms of status, authority, privilege, or dignity. Rather, the primary emphasis is to be placed on function, duty, and work (Vol. 12, p. 190). When Calvin uses the term "office" in his *Ecclesiastical Ordinances* of 1541, it often means work or function rather than position or status. For example, "The office proper to doctors is the instruction of the faithful." And again, when writing of the elders, "Their office is to have oversight of the life of everyone . . ." (*Theological Treatises*, Vol. 22 of *The Library of Christian Classics*, pp. 62, 63).

On this important point, Robert Clyde Johnson in an essay on "The Reformation and the Ministry" in *The Church and Its Changing Ministry* (ed. by R. C. Johnson), observes the following:

It is significant that in the Reformers' use of Latin, *officium* meant primarily "service," "duty," "work," "function," or "obligation," and only secondarily meant "office" in the sense in which we commonly understand this word today. . . . The fact that the principal connotations we today bring to the word "office," which appears repeatedly in English translations of Reformation writings, are primarily those of position and status, and only secondarily those of service and work, could be a hidden source of one aspect of the ambiguity that surrounds the questions of ministry. We might do well to read "work" each time the word "office" appears in discussions of the nature of the ministry (p. 57).

The same author expresses the Protestant functional view of office by speaking of special offices as the result of the ordering of the church for the purpose of enabling "the church to deploy its forces most effectively in its assigned mission in and for the world" (p. 21). And ordination is then the "appointment to a post that is strategic to the accomplishment of this mission."

This functional view does not mean that the Reformers regarded the special offices as mere human contrivances. On the contrary, Calvin speaks of the special office of ministry as "a most sacred ordinance of Christ." He further states, "To Christ we owe it that we have ministers of the gospel, that they abound in necessary qualifications, that they execute the trust committed to them. All, all is his *gift*" (Commentary on Ephesians 4:11). But although Calvin views the ministry as an institution of God, he still speaks of it in strongly functional terms. God uses the ministry of men, he writes, "not by transferring to them his right and honor, but only that through their mouths he may do his own work—just as a workman uses a tool to do his work" (*Institutes*, IV, 3, 1). He adds that the minister is a "puny man risen from the dust," that "he excels us in nothing," and that as a class ministers are "weak and earthen vessels" (*Ibid.*).

The functional approach is also evident in Calvin's comments on the several offices mentioned in Ephesians 4:11—apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers.

Of these only the last two have an ordinary office in the church; the Lord raised up the first three at the beginning of his kingdom, and now and again revives them as the need of the times demands. . . . These three functions were not established in the church as permanent ones, but only for that time during which churches were to be erected where none existed before, or where they were to be carried over from Moses to Christ. Still, I do not deny that the Lord has sometimes at a later period raised up apostles, or at least evangelists in their place, as has happened in our own day (*Institutes*, IV, 3, 4; italics ours).

Calvin's functionalism allowed him to be somewhat pragmatic and flexible, sensitive to the immediate situation, to the exigencies of the times. He saw that the offices were not an end in themselves, but a means to the end of the building up of the people of God, "for the equipment

of the saints for the work of ministry" (Ephesians 4:12). Calvin therefore allowed for the establishment of what he called extraordinary offices "as the need of the times demands."

b. With Regard to Ordination

It is important to recognize at the outset that there is a certain ambiguity in the Reformers' usage of the term "ordination." The term is used both in limited sense (as referred to the ceremonial act of the laying on of hands) and in a broader sense (as referring to the church's appointment and authorization of a minister to preach and to administer the sacraments). The ceremony of the laying on of hands may be included in such an appointment, but it is not essential to it. Luther was speaking of ordination in the broader sense when he said, "We single out a man, and through the power of the Word which we possess we give him authority to preach the Word and to administer the sacraments. This is to ordain" (*Werke*, Vol. 15, p. 721). The Westminster Assembly was also using the broader meaning when it described ordination as "the solemn setting apart of a person to some public church office" (quoted in H. G. Goodykoontz, *The Ministry in the Reformed Tradition*, p. 71).

Calvin wrote little about ordination, but when he did he apparently had in mind the ceremonial act of the laying on of hands (see *Institutes*, IV, 3, 16). He regarded the ceremony of the laying on of hands as useful, but not essential. There is no good evidence that he himself was ordained in the ceremonial sense. What Calvin emphasized when he wrote about the appointment of a person for the ministry of the Word was not the ceremony of the laying on of hands but the call, election, and examination of such a person. In the *Ecclesiastical Ordinances* he writes,

Now in order that nothing happen confusedly in the Church, no one is to enter upon this office [the office of pastor] without a calling. In this it is necessary to consider three things, namely: the principal thing is the examination; then what belongs to the institution of the ministers; third, what ceremony or method of procedure it is good to observe in introducing them to office (*Theological Treatises*, p. 58).

In this same document, written in 1541, it was recommended that the ceremony of the laying on of hands should not be used:

As to the manner of introducing him, it is good to use the imposition of hands, which ceremony was observed by the apostles and then in the ancient church, providing that it take place without superstition and without offence. But because there has been much superstition in the past and scandal might result, it is better to abstain from it because of the infirmity of the times (*Ibid.*, p. 59).

On the other hand, Calvin states in the *Institutes* that the ceremony of the laying on of hands was of sufficient standing in the tradition of the apostles that it should not be abandoned, for "their very careful observance ought to serve in lieu of a precept" (IV, 3, 16). He even speaks of this ceremony as proceeding from "the Spirit of God" who "establishes

nothing without cause in the church" (*Ibid.*). And yet Calvin concludes on that functional, pragmatic note we have heard before. He says that the ordination ceremony is "not useless, provided it be not turned to superstitious abuse" (*Ibid.*). So even though this ceremony proceeds from the Spirit of God, whether it should continue to be practiced depends on whether it is properly used or abused.

Calvin used the phrase "superstitious abuse" whenever he wished to oppose Roman Catholic sacramentalism. By means of this phrase, therefore, he denied by implication that any spiritual grace or sacramental grace is conferred by the ceremony of ordination. This denial becomes explicit in his commentary on II Timothy 1:6,

It is a question of knowing if grace has been given by the external sign. I reply to this question that whenever ministers were ordained, they were commended to God by the prayers of the whole church. It is in this way that grace was obtained for them from God, and not by virtue of the sign. But the sign was not in vain or uselessly applied. It was the external and sure testimony of the grace that they received from the hand of God himself.

It appears that Calvin considered the laying on of hands not as a sign effectual in itself (and therefore indispensable), but as a sign which is *useful* as a means of assuring the ordinand that God grants the grace sought on his behalf. Calvin, in other words, assigns to ordination a certain teaching function. It is "an external and sure testimony of the grace . . . received from the hand of God himself" (*Ibid.*). And it is used "to warn the one ordained that he is no longer a law unto himself, but bound in servitude to God and the church" (IV, 3, 16). Calvin's view of ordination has been summarized as follows in an essay by Henri d'Espine.

The church recognizes by ordination the call that God has addressed to one of its members. It grants him authority for the exercise of the ministry within the church to which God has called him. It prays earnestly on his behalf for the graces necessary to the work of the ministry. It ordains him to the service of God, by the laying on of hands, and expresses its certainty that God grants its prayer (*The Church and its Changing Ministry*, p. 122).

Finally, a few observations should be made regarding the special function or "office" to which one is ordained. The primary office (using "office" in the Reformation sense of function) is the preaching of the gospel in the Reformed tradition. The secondary office is the administration of the two sacraments. Ordination was the normal route prescribed for securing proper authorization to carry out these functions. In other words, it was the normal procedure and practice of the early Reformed churches to limit both the preaching of the Word and the administration of the sacraments to the ordained ministry—largely, if not wholly, in the interest of maintaining good order in the churches. Calvin's *Ecclesiastical Ordinances* of 1541, however, do apparently allow for some limited exceptions to that rule.

Baptism . . . should be administered only by ministers or coadjutors.

. . . The ministers are to distribute the bread in proper order and with reverence; and none are to give the chalice except the colleagues or deacons with the ministers (*Theological Treatises*, pp, 66, 67).

The Reformers' general practice of limiting the administration of the sacraments to the ordained ministry can be traced to two concerns: first, their concern for good order; and, second, their concern that Word and sacrament remain together for theological reasons. The latter point is the key to Calvin's view reflected in his Genevan Catechism, where he says,

Does the administration of both baptism and the supper belong indiscriminately to all?

They are the proper function of those to whom the public office of teaching is entrusted. For the two things, feeding the church with the doctrine of salvation and administering the sacraments, are joined to each other by a lasting tie (*Theological Treatises*, p. 139).

It is worth noting here that Calvin does not tie the administration of the sacraments to ordination *per se*, but ties this function to the "teaching" or preaching of the Word. His primary concern is simply to keep the two together. In Calvin's view "those to whom the public office of teaching is entrusted" are thereby authorized to administer the sacraments.

### 3. Summary

In summary we may observe that the Reformation emphasis on the priesthood of all believers—or, more broadly, on "universal office-sharing"—means that "office" is primarily committed to the whole church, and that the task of ministry is assigned to *all believers*, not simply to a special, professional class. At the same time, it is not inconsistent with this universal office-sharing, and it is in keeping with apostolic practice, that, in the interests of good order and efficiency, some individuals within the body at large be appointed to certain special offices or ministries, thereby enabling the church "to deploy its forces most effectively for its assigned mission in and for the world." The Reformation view of these special offices is quite functional and pragmatic. Special offices are a God-given means to an end, and in the usage of the Reformers "office" often means work or function, rather than position or status.

"Ordination," in Reformation usage, refers either broadly to the entire procedure by which a church appoints some members of the body to special ministries, or more narrowly to the ceremony of the laying on of hands. In the former sense, ordination is essential to the good order and well-being of the church; in the latter sense, ordination is useful but not essential, and possibly subject to superstitious abuse. For the Reformers, ordination in the sense of the laying on of hands was not a sacrament, did not create a special priestly order in the church, and did not confer sacramental grace or power *ex opere operato*. It was simply the rite by which the church publicly confirmed its call and appointment, and as such it had a certain symbolic and instructional value. Ordination was

not performed in the abstract, for it was appointment to a particular post that was strategic for the accomplishment of the church's ministry.

In the Reformation view, the primary "office" (function) of the ministry is the preaching of the Word; the secondary "office" is the administration of the sacraments. In keeping with the theology of sacramental dependence upon the Word, these functions should be kept together; and in the interest of good order they should be assigned to those whom the church sees fit to appoint.

Finally, it is important to emphasize that the Reformation view of office and ordination was developed both out of response to New Testament apostolic practice, and out of response to the exigencies of the time. In the Reformation view, therefore, there is room for adjustments to historical circumstances, in Calvin's words, "as the need of the times demands."

### C. Post-Reformation Developments in the Dutch Reformed Tradition

Among the Reformers, Calvin held a relatively high view of church office. He saw the order of the church as having been basically prescribed in the New Testament. He shared with the other Reformers the view that the church as the school of Christ expresses itself through the ministry of the Word. On the other hand, he did leave some flexibility as to the number and definition of the offices, and he raised some doubts as to the wisdom of continuing the laying on of hands as a part of the ceremony of ordination.

The Dutch Reformed tradition has generally followed Calvin quite faithfully. Herman Bavinck, as he expresses himself in his *Gereformeerde Dogmatiek*, may be taken as representative of such agreement with Calvin. Bavinck recognizes a certain freedom and flexibility in the church with respect to the offices, and yet argues that basic, scriptural principles are reflected in the Reformed church order. He recognizes that there were differences of opinion in the Reformed camp on many questions. For example, were the offices two, three, or four in number? Was the office of the teacher distinct from that of the preacher? Or, on the other hand, was the ministry of the Word itself only a subdivision of the office of elder? How were office-bearers to be chosen? What was the proper term of office for an elder? These and other questions are considered proper questions to raise in the area of church order. But Bavinck concludes this discussion as follows:

It may safely be said, however, that the Reformed, by restoring the office of elder and the office of deacon alongside of that of the minister of the Word, have most purely grasped the intent of Scripture and have most effectively recognized the rights of the congregation (*Gereformeerde Dogmatiek*, 3rd ed., Vol. IV, p. 424; translation ours).

Bavinck also points out that Christ's prophetic ministry is the task of the entire community of believers, but that it comes to special expression in a specially appointed minister of the Word. He also speaks of the close relationship of Word and sacrament, of the secondary position of the sacrament, and of the administration of the two. Whoever administers

the Word, he says, can and may administer the sacraments (*Ibid.*, pp. 456-57).

Finally, Bavinck seeks to set the ceremony of the laying on of hands in its proper place. This ceremony, he says, is not an essential element of ordination. He goes on to say:

It [the laying on of hands] cannot and may not be conceived of as a mechanical impartation of a particular qualification for office. For, according to Scripture, the laying on of hands does not bestow but rather presupposes the presence of the *charismata* required for the office. This ceremony is also not to be identified with a person's election or calling to an office; it can therefore be nothing other than a public designation of someone who has been called to an office, and a solemn induction into and setting apart for that office. Just as a marriage ceremony does not constitute the essence of a marriage, and just as a coronation ceremony does not make a person a king, so also ordination, with or without the laying on of hands, is not the impartation of an office or of the qualifications for office. Ordination is simply the solemn, public declaration, before God and his people, that the one who has been called has been sent in a lawful way and hence by God himself, that he possesses the required gifts, and that he must therefore be received, recognized, and honored as such by the church (*Ibid.*, p. 149; translation ours).

The question must be faced, however, whether the Reformed tradition has in fact remained true to this understanding. Some of the developments in that tradition have carried forward the official character of the offices at the expense of the office of all believers. This is especially true of popular conceptions or misconceptions, but it is also true to some extent of official and semi-official positions. It is understandable that offices have to be established and regulated in the church. But there is a tendency in Reformed circles to add a veneer of officiousness to what is essentially a specialized service in the church. In part this tendency takes the form of an uncritical acceptance of growing traditions, and in part it involves an inclination to lend biblical weight to what are essentially practical considerations of good order. The following are representative examples of such subtle changes.

### 1. The Terminology for Office.

What we call offices were called *diensten* (meaning *services*; the Latin term was *functiones*) in the original Dutch text of the Church Order of Dordt. For the sake of convenience we call them "offices," but the convenience is dearly bought if the term obscures the basic connotation of service (*diakonia*) involved in the concept of ministry in and for the church. The concept of office (*ambt*) and office-bearers (*ambtsdragere*) has ingrained itself so deeply into our religious life that we still have to reckon with it (Cf. Jansen, *Korte Verklaring*, p. 10; Van Dellen and Monsma, *The Revised Church Order Commentary*, p. 22; K. Dijk, article on "Ambt" in *Christelijke Encyclopaedie*, 2nd ed.).

## 2. The Meaning of Laying on of Hands.

Calvin recognized the value of the precedent for the laying on of hands in the work of the apostles and in the practice of the early church. But because of the danger of superstition he advised on at least one occasion against the use of this ceremony. The early Dutch synods rejected the laying on of hands as a remnant of superstition, but by 1581, at the Synod of Middelburg, the laying on of hands was required for those entering office for the first time. Reformed commentators since that time have been at pains to point out that this is not a sacrament and does not confer special powers. The very effort to avoid a superstitious interpretation of the ceremony probably reflects the constant presence of the temptation to give it just such an interpretation.

It has become the invariable practice in the Christian Reformed Church to employ the laying on of hands in the ordination of ministers, but not to use it in the ordination of elders and deacons. If the symbolism conveyed by the laying on of hands is as carefully restricted as Bavinck says it should be, does not this symbolism apply equally to elders and deacons? Although the form used when elders and deacons are inducted into office speaks unequivocally of "ordination," the suggestion conveyed by common practice is that ministers are in a class by themselves. Common parlance underscores this kind of distinction in speaking of ministers alone as ordained. Thus credence is given to the idea that there is a clerical class, restricted to ministers alone, who have special gifts and powers not shared by the laity.

## 3. The Identification of the Offices.

Certain Reformed commentators have tended to identify the three recognized ecclesiastical offices with the prophetic, priestly, and kingly offices of Christ. This is a theological gloss on the New Testament, where support for this contention is lacking. A particularly strong statement of this contention is found in Van Dellen and Monsma's *The Revised Church Order Commentary* (pp. 23, 24), where the loss of true knowledge, righteousness, and holiness in the Fall is interpreted as the loss of the threefold office. Christ is represented as restoring man in each of these respects. Thereupon the *Commentary* goes on to say:

For this reason the Old Testament knew three primary offices; no more, no less: prophets, priest, and kings. They were representatives of the Christ to come. For this same reason the New Testament period has three primary offices; no more, no less: ministers, deacons, and elders, representing Christ respectively as Prophet, Priest, and King of His Church (p.24).

## 4. Differences in Term of Office.

Reformed church order makes ministry a lifelong occupation while requiring periodic retirement from office by elders and deacons. Commentators on this distinction seek to give it a biblical basis. Jansen (p. 56)—followed by Van Dellen and Monsma (p. 65)—buttresses the argument for lifelong ministry as follows:

... Yet we hold that a minister is bound to the service of the church for life. Why? In the first place because this is biblical. Even in the Old Testament days Elijah, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and other prophets were called to the ministry for life. The disciples also and the apostles and evangelists were "separated" unto their ministry, not temporarily, but permanently, for life.

Scripture also indicates that the service of the Word demands our undivided love (John 21:15-17; II Cor. 5:14), our full time (John 9:4), our readiness of will (I Cor. 9:16, 17), our unflinching perseverance (II Tim. 4:1-6), and our complete separation unto the work (Rom. 1:1).

But with respect to elders it is argued that the absence of scriptural stipulations leaves the churches free to regulate this matter according to their best interests (Jansen, p. 128; Van Dellen and Monsma, p. 94). Even if one grants the relevance of the scriptural citations given above, the question must be faced why the same passages do not apply to elders and deacons as well. Were not priests and kings also called to office for life in the Old Testament? And do the New Testament texts cited prove, upon examination, to apply only to the ministry of the Word, or to all of Christian service?

The danger does not lie in making distinctions as to term of office, but in misapplying scriptural proof to support these distinctions. A distinction between the term of office of a minister and an elder or deacon may be defended on practical grounds. The length of preparation for the ministry argues for a long-term commitment to it. The demands of time and the necessity of earning a living may speak for periodic retirement of elders and deacons. But the introduction of biblical arguments for the distinction comes dangerously close to recognizing a priestly or clerical class in the church, and to reviving the Roman Catholic idea that ordination confers an indelible character on its recipient. Furthermore, this sort of argumentation is rendered suspect by the fact that in the New Testament those servants whom we now call ministers are described as elders who labor in the Word and in teaching (I Tim. 5:17).

##### 5. The Official Character of Preaching

Reformed theology rightly holds that Christ is the only head of the church and that all authority in the church is his. The church, however, has a role in transmitting this authority. This is reflected in the question found, with a minor variation, in the forms for ordination of ministers, elders, and deacons: "Do you feel in your heart that you are lawfully called of God's church, and therefore of God himself, to this holy office?" The manner of the transmission of authority, and therefore the nature of the authority itself, is subject to some ambiguity. But, in distinction from Lutheran and certain forms of Presbyterian theology, Reformed theologians hold that the office-bearers are not representatives of the church, but of Christ (cf. T. Hoekstra, *Gereformeerde Homiletiek*, pp. 105, 106).

This concept of the authority of the office-bearers comes to focus on the official character of preaching. Many theologians comment on the

authority of preaching by an ordained minister in an organized congregation. Another quotation from Van Dellen and Monsma's *The Revised Church Order Commentary* (p. 30) may serve to represent a widespread consensus:

Dr. H. Bavinck is thoroughly biblical when he maintains that all believers have a calling to preach or to witness, but that only those who have a definite charge of God may do so with authority and in the name of the Lord, preaching the Gospel as a savor of life unto life and as a savor of death unto death. See Isaiah 43:10, 12; Luke 10:16; Acts 8:4; II Corinthians 2:14-17 (Cf. H. Bavinck, *Ge-reformeerde Dogmatiek*, 1918, IV, pp. 410-415).

A sharp distinction is here made between the preaching done by an ordained minister and the exhorting done by anyone else. Mission preaching or evangelistic preaching may, according to some (e.g., Jansen, and Hoekstra) be another story.

Again the question may be raised whether too strong a case has been made for a possibly legitimate distinction. Is the argument weightier than its biblical support? It may be quite proper and defensible that the church open its pulpits only to properly qualified and duly designated men. But it would be very difficult to demonstrate on the basis of the texts cited above that it is ordained men alone to whom these texts apply, and that it is ordained men alone whose words of witness are a savor of life unto life or of death unto death.

The instances cited above reflect a slight but dangerous tendency to blur the lines on several important points. There is a tendency to lend scriptural authority to practical decisions and time-hallowed traditions. There is a tendency to lose the distinction between service and office. There is a lack of clarity as to who are the recipients of ordination and what is the meaning of this ceremony. These are sufficient reasons, it seems to us, for the church to re-examine its practices and to see in how far they still conform to the biblical requirements.

### III. ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS RAISED BY THE SYNOD OF 1972

#### A. Questions Involving the Nature of Authority

##### 1. Introductory Consideration of the Concepts of Office and Authority

In order to provide a general background, introduction, and context for our answers to the three questions involving the nature of authority which were submitted to us by the Synod of 1972, we wish first to make an introductory statement about the concepts of office and authority as these are to be understood in the light of Scripture, in relationship to Christ, and as they come to expression in the life of the church. Following this introductory statement your committee will address itself specifically to the three questions mentioned above.

As we attempt to arrive at a fuller understanding of what is involved in the biblical view of office and authority, it will be helpful to see

these concepts in relationship to the fact that man was created in the image of God. From the way in which the word *image* is used throughout the ancient Near East, it is clear that the biblical phrase, "God created man in his own image . . ." means, among other things, that God made man to represent him. One of the most basic things, therefore, which the creation account teaches us about man is that man is God's representative and, therefore, an authority-bearing creature. This holds true for both "male and female" (Gen. 1:27). From a consideration of such passages as Genesis 9:6 and James 3:9 we conclude, further, that this remains true for all men, even after the fall.

It is obvious from Genesis 1:26 that man has been given dominion over the earth because of the fact that he is God's representative on earth. The way in which man is to exercise that dominion (or authority), however, is spelled out more precisely in Genesis 2:15, where we read that God "put him [man] in the garden of Eden to dress it and keep it." It is of considerable significance for our study that the Hebrew word translated "to dress" is *'abad*, which literally means "to serve." Furthermore, the Hebrew word translated "to keep" is *shamar*, which literally means "to watch over with concern," so that, for example, an object or a person may be preserved. *Shamar* is often used in the Psalms to describe God as the keeper of Israel, whose love and guardianship will keep his people from all harm.

As the creation account describes man, he is an authority-bearing creature who is expected to exercise that authority in such a benevolent and constructive way that he virtually becomes the servant of the "lower creation." Man is to be the "green-thumbed" gardener, caring for the plants, trees, and shrubs which he serves in such a way that they may develop to their fullest potential. This is the portrait Genesis gives us of God's divinely-appointed office-bearer.

We are taught in Genesis that the man who was made in God's image was also created after God's likeness. This must mean, among other things, that the way in which man exercises his authority should be a reflection of the way in which God exercises his authority. The Creator-Father is so concerned about the welfare of his creatures that he constantly serves them by providing them with food, water, clothing, and many other gifts (Ps. 147; Mt. 6:25-30, 10:29-31). Divine authority, therefore, is a serving authority. That this is so, is confirmed by the life and ministry of Jesus Christ who, when he was on earth, fed the hungry, healed the sick, and washed the feet of his disciples. He could therefore say to his disciples with a convincing ring of truth, "I am among you as one who serves" (Luke 22:27). In this way Christ fulfilled the "servant prophecies" of the Old Testament. In this way Christ was also the revealer of the Father. Both God the Father and God the Son exercise their authority in a ministry of service.

Because man fell into sin, the image of God which he bore became twisted and distorted. Thus his office to serve God, man, and the rest of creation became corrupted, and the loving, serving authority which he was to exercise as God's representative was also radically distorted. Christ, however, came to "make all things new" (Rev. 21:5); included in this renewal is the restoration of the image of God in man (see Col.

3:10, Eph. 4:24). Christ, in other words, came to restore to all believers the office which was once theirs by virtue of creation; namely, the office to serve others and to serve the whole creation.

This office, shared by all believers, does not make special ministries unnecessary. Special ministries are given by Christ to the church so that the universal ministry of all believers may be enhanced and developed. The special ministries have a double function. On the one hand, they serve to keep the people of God in fellowship with their Lord, and, on the other hand, they help the people of God to fulfill their office to serve each other and the world. The special ministries, therefore, have as their goal the equipment and preparation of the entire congregation for service. The special ministries proclaim, teach, shepherd, and serve so that the members of the congregation may also exercise these functions on behalf of Christ towards each other and toward the world. The special ministries are not an end in themselves and have no importance in and of themselves. They function correctly only when they assist the office of all believers to come to its fullest expression. The authority of the special ministries, like the authority of the office of all believers, is correctly exercised only when it is used for the benefit of those over whom it is exercised.

Authority in the church is essentially the authority of Christ, to whom all authority belongs. As we have already emphasized, this divine authority is characterized by service. Hence the authority reflected in and exercised by the special ministries as well as by the office of all believers must also express itself primarily in terms of service.

The special ministries, therefore, may not lord it over the congregation, for they are the servants of the congregation. But neither may the congregation dictate to the special ministries. The special ministries, for example, do not serve the congregation well by simply carrying out the will of the majority; they should rather insist that the congregation live by the will and authority of Christ, the Lord of the church—if necessary, against the desire of the majority. And yet, the special ministries remain subject to the congregation in the sense that the special ministries must fulfill the task of representing Christ under the mandate of the congregation and for its benefit.

The church, therefore, is neither a hierarchy nor an aristocracy, oligarchy, or democracy. It is rather a "Christ-ruled brotherhood." The rule of Christ is represented in the special ministries in order to guarantee the growth of the brotherhood. It is also represented in the office of all believers, as they engage in mutual service and service to the world. At the same time, both the special ministries and the universal ministry remain subject to the rule of Christ, the only Lord of the church.

## 2. The Relationship Between the Authority of the Apostles and that of Other Special Officers in the Church.

One of the questions which the Synod of 1972 asked us to reflect upon was worded as follows: "What is the relationship between the task and authority of the apostles and that of other offices (ministries) in the church?" Questions about apostleship in the New Testament do not permit easy answers in our day. This subject is being vigorously discussed

and debated by New Testament scholars at the present time. The spirit of ecumenism has probably fed the fires of debate on this topic as various traditions have tried to verify their claims to being the true apostolic church or to pursuing the true apostolic way. Renewed study of the biblical materials on apostleship and its role in the New Testament church has brought forth a wealth of considerations and insights that cautions one against easy and simple answers.

In the earlier section of this report [I, B, 2, b, 3) c)] we pointed out that the term *apostle* is used by the New Testament writers in a broader way than is commonly thought. The term is applied by the New Testament to the twelve disciples, Paul, Barnabas, James the Lord's brother, Andronicus and Junias, and possibly to others. It has long been customary to think of New Testament apostles as including only the Twelve plus Paul. This way of thinking at least gave Paul his due. But it was always a bit disconcerting to discover that the New Jerusalem as described in the Book of Revelation would have only "twelve foundations, and on them the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb" (Rev. 21:14). Does this mean that Paul would be by-passed in this listing—the same Paul who had so far outrun the Twelve in pursuit of the commission to make disciples of all nations? Furthermore, there were men in Corinth who claimed to be apostles of Christ; to Paul's dismay the Corinthians did not seem to be able to detect the fact that they were false apostles (II Cor. 11:12-13). The people at Corinth apparently knew of no fixed list of apostles; and when Paul addressed himself to this problem, he did not give them such a list for their future guidance. Even at the end of New Testament times (according to the common understanding of the date of the Book of Revelation), John was instructed to commend the church in Ephesus for having "tested them who call themselves apostles but are not, and found them to be false" (Rev. 2:2). The testing here referred to certainly sounds like more than just checking a roster and some personal identification papers! In other words, to think of apostles as including only the Twelve plus Paul is to use the term *apostle* more narrowly and in a more carefully defined way than was the case in New Testament times.

It is clear, however, that the earliest Christians knew about apostles. In the list of Christ's gifts to the church in Ephesians 4:11, apostles are mentioned first. Apostles are listed first among those whom God has appointed in the church (I Cor. 12:28). Apostles share with prophets the honor and privilege of constituting the foundation of the church (Eph. 2:20). The Twelve had been present with Christ throughout his ministry. They had been present when Christ made his resurrection appearances. They were charged to be witnesses to Christ's resurrection (Acts 1:21, 22). The twelve apostles knew Christ because they had been his disciples, had lived with him, had listened to him, had received his instruction, and had become personally involved with him throughout his earthly ministry. They had received their gospel directly from him, together with his promise that the Holy Spirit would lead them into all the truth (John 16:13). Paul had received a special resurrection appearance of Christ (I Cor. 15:8); perhaps other apostles besides the Twelve had also received such an appearance (I Cor. 15:7 as com-

pared with verse 5; in these two verses a distinction seems to be made between "apostles" and "the twelve"). Paul had also received his appointment as an apostle and the revelation of the gospel directly from the risen Christ (Gal. 1:1, 11-12, 15-16). There was therefore a group of men who had been appointed by Christ, whose role in Christ's church-building activities was to bring and interpret Jesus Christ to men. They had received their message from Christ, and yet they formulated and gave shape to that message for the church. They mediated Jesus and his gospel to the church and to the world. Future generations would forever be bound to their testimony. They comprised the foundation of the church.

In pursuit of their foundational work in Christ's church, the apostles engaged in a wide variety of activities. They were busy preaching (*kerussein*); evangelizing (*euaggelizein*); teaching (*didaskein*); baptizing (*baptizein*); exhorting, encouraging, consoling (*parakalein*); admonishing (*nouthetein*); building, edifying, strengthening (*oikodomein*). These activities lay at the very heart of apostolic activity. But these activities were not uniquely or exclusively apostolic functions. Other church leaders besides the apostles and even believers who held no special office would continue to be busy in activities of this sort long after the apostles had died. The uniqueness of the apostleship, therefore, was not to be found in the kinds of work the apostles were engaged in, but in the *foundational character* of their work. Through their preaching, teaching, evangelizing (together with their other activities) they formulated and gave shape to the gospel for the church, first in its oral form, and later in its written form. The New Testament Scriptures are the product of the foundational activity of the apostles. Through these Scriptures the apostolic witness to Christ and to his gospel continues to serve as the living foundation for the church of all times and in all lands. Other leaders, however, were given to the church alongside of and after the apostles. These leaders, too, in their service of Christ and his church, busied themselves with preaching, evangelizing, teaching, exhorting, and even with writing messages, letters, and books. Some of these writings, produced by leaders other than the apostles, came to be recognized as possessing apostolic foundational character (e.g., the Gospels of Mark and Luke, and Jude's epistle). But when these other church leaders kept on engaging in the same activities as the apostles, the activities of these leaders were not foundational in character. As was said above, it was the foundational character of the work of the apostles which marked the uniqueness of the apostolic task.

There was, however, another way in which the special nature of apostleship displayed itself: namely, in the consciousness the apostles exhibited of being under direct appointment from the Lord himself and of speaking with his authority. Apostolic appointment was direct appointment. The risen Lord had chosen and sent the apostles. New Testament scholarship is probably on the right track when it relates apostleship to the *shaliach*-institution which functioned in Judaism. Rabbinic materials tell us that "a man's agent [*shaliach*] is like to himself" (Bere-koth 5:5). The literal meaning of both the Hebrew term *shaliach* and the Greek term *apostolos* is "one who has been sent." In view of the fact

that Christianity came into existence in a Jewish atmosphere and against a Jewish background, the designation of someone as being Christ's apostle undoubtedly included such overtones of meaning as "being Christ's agent," "standing for him," "speaking and acting with his authority," and "sharing his lot at the hands of men." Paul comes close to expressing precisely this kind of relationship in II Corinthians 5:20, "We are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us."

Paul reflects this sense of acting with divine authority in various ways. He exerts his authority by using such forceful terms as *paraggelein* (give orders, command, direct) and *diatassein* (order, command, regulate). He commands spirits to come out of people in Christ's name: "I charge you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her" (Acts 16:18). He frequently attaches to his commands such phrases as "through the Lord Jesus" (I Thess. 4:2) or "in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ" (II Thess. 3:6). Paul may not always be able to quote a traditional saying from Jesus when he gives instructions to people, but he gives them solemn charges nevertheless (I Cor. 7:10)—and even in such situations makes his readers feel that they have to do with the Lord himself and not just with Paul. Paul lays down rules and regulations for a wide variety of things: with regard to the contribution for the Jerusalem saints (I Cor. 16:1), with regard to matters of worship (I Cor. 11:34), and with regard to the affairs of everyday life (I Cor. 7:17). Paul does not just give rules of this sort to the Corinthians; on the contrary, Paul informs the Corinthians that "this is my rule in all the churches" (I Cor. 7:17). Paul's apostolic assignment from the Lord clothes him with authority in the church of Christ.

Nowhere, however, does Paul's sense of authority come to more straightforward expression than in the claim made in II Corinthians 5:20, "we are ambassadors for Christ." Paul here uses a term (*preusbeuein*) which has a long history of usage as designating either a political ambassador or (in the religious sense) an emissary, messenger, or herald of God. He justifies his claim to "ambassador" status (note the word *so* or *therefore* at the beginning of v. 20) by appealing to the fact that the reconciliation God has brought about through Christ involves both a ministry (*diakonia*, v. 18) of reconciliation and a message (*logos*, v. 19) of reconciliation. In other words, bringing the gospel is not simply announcing that something has taken place; the bringing of the gospel is itself essential to the accomplishment of the reconciliation which it announces. For this reason Paul can call himself God's fellow-worker (the verb used is *sunergein*, II Cor. 6:1), and can find himself ushering in the eschatological day of salvation foretold in Isaiah 49:8 (II Cor. 6:2). Paul is Christ's ambassador; God himself is making his appeal through Paul (5:20). Can one imagine a more authoritative stance than this?

It is, however, important to note that the main purpose of II Corinthians 5:20 is not to emphasize or underscore apostolic authority. That this is the case is evident in two ways. First, in the succeeding context Paul enlarges on the thought he had introduced in 5:18, namely, that God had given him a ministry (*diakonia*). Paul is concerned to "put no obstacle in anyone's way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry" (6:3); he adds, "but as servants of God we commend ourselves in every

way" (6:4). Now follows a long list of Paul's acts of personal self-giving and self-denial in pursuit of his ministry (6:4-10). He then concludes, "Our mouth is open to you, Corinthians; our heart is wide. You are not restricted by us . . ." (6:11, 12). The description of Paul's ministry given in these verses, needless to say, is the very opposite of a strong assertion of authority on his part.

There is another line of thought, however, which prevents us from applying Paul's words in II Corinthians 5:20 exclusively to apostles. The preceding context of this passage allows us at least to raise the question of whether Paul's words, "we are ambassadors" mean only "we apostles," or whether they might have a wider meaning like "we Christians." In verse 17 Paul writes, "If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, behold, the new has come." He goes on in verse 18 to say, "All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation." Does not the first *us* in this verse refer to *us Christians*—the new creatures of verse 17? Can we be certain, then, that the second *us* comes to mean *us apostles*? There is, in fact, a marvelous ambiguity in the use of the *we's* and *us's* found in these verses. In verse 21 ("For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God") the meaning of the words *our* and *we* can hardly be limited to the apostles. It may very well be possible, therefore, that the words "we are ambassadors for Christ" (v. 20) are not to be applied exclusively to the apostles, as is commonly thought. In this entire passage, to be sure, Paul is certainly speaking of himself and of his own ministry to the Corinthians. And when he claims to be Christ's ambassador, through whom God is making his appeal, he is certainly calling attention to the authority with which his ministry to the Corinthians has been invested. But the authority of which II Corinthians 5:20 speaks is not linked specifically to the *person* bringing the message. Rather, the authority here spoken of is rooted in the *message* itself: God has decisively and conclusively brought about reconciliation through Christ, and to that great deed of God we are now called upon to respond in faith. It is the message that is primarily authoritative; the person is authoritative only as the bringer of the message.

Paul, to be sure, had a real sense of apostolic authority. This sense of authority, however, did not rest in the office itself but rather in the message which he as an apostle had to bring. Nowhere does this become more clear than in Galatians 1:8, "If we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to that which we preached to you, let him be accursed" (Gal. 1:8). Apostolic authority did not exist outside of the apostolic message. As Von Campenhausen has aptly remarked, "Ultimately the foundation laid by the apostles must also support the apostles . . . and not vice versa." Paul's defense of his apostleship was always a defense of the gospel which he brought. Hence he argues simultaneously that his apostleship is from God and not from man (Gal. 1:1), and that his gospel is not man's gospel but came to him through a revelation of Jesus Christ (Gal. 1:11, 12). When called upon to prove either of these points, he is at a loss. He can only argue that neither his gospel nor his apostleship came from the Christian leaders

in Jerusalem (Gal. 1 and 2). His further appeal will have to be simply this: my gospel has been effective. In Thessalonica people had heard Paul's gospel as the Word of God, and it had caused many changes (I Thess. 1:5ff; 2:13ff.). When asked for letters of recommendation, Paul points to the Corinthian Christians (II Cor. 3:1ff.). All of this is quite consistent with the nature of the gospel. The gospel does not merely consist of some lessons to be learned or some propositions to be agreed upon; the gospel comes as *keerugma*, address, summons. It demands as its response the obedience of faith. Such believing obedience is a response to the content and call of the message, not to the person and power of the messenger. Paul's sense of authority lay in the message which he brought. Hence he could rejoice even when Christ was preached out of motives of envy and rivalry (Phil. 1:15-18)—as long as it was truly Christ who was being preached!

In his struggle with his opponents at Corinth, Paul twice called attention to his authority. By the time Paul wrote II Corinthians he knew that his apostolic authority was being challenged, and that he was the object of ridicule and disdain because of the weak figure he and his gospel were cutting. Interestingly enough, this attack by his opponents provoked Paul into some "boasting" (with elaborate apologies) and into a kind of trumpeting of his authority (*exousia*). His authority, however, turned out to be a strange kind of authority. It was authority "which the Lord has given me for building up (*oikodomeen*) and not for tearing down" (II Cor. 13:10; cf. 10:8). It was the authority which belongs to the stance of a servant. Paul was not the least bit apologetic about that apparently weak stance. In his mind authority for building up and serving was a powerful kind of dynamic. In these verses Paul sounds very much like one who has been with his Master!

Does the so-called apostolic commission of Matthew 28:18-20 give expression to a unique kind of apostolic authority? Jesus was here telling the eleven disciples that all authority in heaven and on earth had been given *to him*. He did not add that some of that authority was now given to the disciples. Rather, he gives them a mandate: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations . . ." They may carry out this mandate with confidence, since Jesus, their Lord, has been given all authority and power. But now the question arises: was the mandate given or the task assigned a specifically apostolic assignment? The Book of Acts gives us little evidence that the eleven disciples gathered there that day heard this mandate as exclusively an apostolic assignment. From Acts we learn that after Pentecost the apostles were determined to stay in Jerusalem, at least at first (Acts 8:1). It was believers other than the apostles who, when scattered because of the persecution in Jerusalem, began to spread the word beyond Jerusalem and to baptize converts from nations other than Israel. If the "apostolic commission" may be understood in the light of the way the apostles first permitted it to be carried out, we do not see in it clear evidence of a uniquely apostolic authority and assignment. It would rather seem to be the case that the assignment given in this commission came to rest on the church as a whole.

Do the passages which speak of the "keys of the kingdom" describe a kind of authority which is uniquely apostolic? Matthew 16:19 tells

us that Jesus gave "the keys of the kingdom of heaven" to Peter. John 20:22, 23 makes it clear that the prerogatives involved in the bestowal of these keys (assuming that the binding and loosing spoken of in the Matthew passage is equivalent in meaning to the forgiveness or non-forgiveness of sins spoken of in John) did not belong to Peter alone, but were given to all the apostles. Now the question is whether Matthew 18:18 ("Whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven") indicates a still wider extension of the powers involved in the keys of the kingdom: namely, to the church as a whole. It is true that Matthew 18 records conversations between Jesus and his disciples (see vs. 1). Ordinarily the term *disciples* refers to the Twelve. Often, however, the term refers to a group of followers either larger or smaller than the Twelve; it is therefore not warranted to assert dogmatically that the word *disciples* here can refer only to the Twelve. Furthermore, the verse immediately preceding verse 18 describes how the man who refuses to listen to the church is to be treated: "as a Gentile and a tax collector." And the verse immediately following verse 18 contains a promise which holds for any group of Christians, however small: "if two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven." It would seem that the promise originally made to Peter about the power of the keys is here being extended to the entire church. If this is indeed the case, then the so-called "power of the keys" does not describe an authority which is exclusively and uniquely apostolic. Rather, it describes an authority which was first exercised by the apostles but which later, as soon as a functioning church appeared on the scene, was exercised by the entire church. When, still later, office-bearers in the church became active in exercising this power (the power of binding and loosing), this was not because they had received from the apostles a kind of authority which other church-members did not have, but rather because office-bearers were officially carrying out functions which belonged to the entire church.

After this lengthy but necessary discussion of the nature of the apostolic office, we return to the question which the 1972 Synod directed to us: "What is the relationship between the task and authority of the apostles and that of other offices (ministries) in the church?"

The apostolic task was the task of building Christ's church. This task was unique in two senses: (1) the church-building done by the apostles was foundational, so that all other church-building had to be on the foundation laid by the apostles; and (2) the apostles received their commission and authorization directly from the risen Lord. In another sense, however, the task of building Christ's church is a task to which the entire church is called. Every believer is called to take an active part in the task of church-building, using the gifts which the Spirit has given him. As the church pursues her work, the very things which the apostles did will be done by the entire church; preaching, evangelizing, teaching, baptizing, binding, loosing, ordering, commanding, prohibiting, regulating, encouraging, consoling, admonishing, building, strengthening, helping, serving. When the church appoints certain people to carry out certain facets of this work, she authorizes them to carry out these functions

officially and on her behalf. These functionaries now speak and act for the church. This authorization lends weight and significance to the actions of these functionaries, for the church is Christ's church, and the work of the church is Christ's work. These functionaries now act with apostolic authority—better yet, they now act with the authority of Christ himself. Christ through his church has authorized and empowered them.

What, now, is the relationship between the authority of the apostles and that of the special office-bearers in the church? Basically, the authority both of apostles and of special office-bearers is one and the same: it is Christ's authority present in his gospel and by his Spirit. But we must differentiate between the way in which this authority functioned in the apostles and in the office-bearers who were appointed after the apostles. The apostles served the church by authoritatively formulating the gospel which Christ had given them. By their speaking and writing of the gospel, together with their other activities, the apostles laid the foundation of the church of Jesus Christ. In this sense both the apostolic task and the apostolic authority were unique. Subsequent church leaders, on the other hand, pursued the same wide range of activities as the apostles did, but were no longer formulating the gospel or laying the foundation of the church. Rather, these later leaders were applying the gospel formulated by the apostles to the lives of people, and were building the superstructure of Christ's church on the foundation which had been laid by the apostles.

In summary, there is only one authority in the church of Christ: the authority of Christ himself. This authority, however, functioned in different ways: on the one hand, in formulating the gospel, and on the other hand, in applying it; on the one hand in laying the foundation of the church, and on the other hand in building the superstructure. Authority in the church today continues to function in the latter of these two ways. There is ultimately only one authority: the authority of Christ. Authority in the church must be nothing less and nothing more than this. We must always remember Christ's word: "I am among you as one who serves" (Luke 22:27).

### 3. The Relationship Between the Authority Involved in Special Office and That Involved in the Office of All Believers.

The advisory committee which dealt with the Report on Ecclesiastical Office and Ordination at the Synod of 1972 was of the opinion that the question of the authority of special office in the church had not been adequately dealt with in our report. It was felt by them that "the element of authority in I Thessalonians 5:1-13, Hebrews 13:17, and similar passages has not received sufficient attention in the report." Accordingly, the advisory committee suggested that the study committee should also address itself to the following question: "What is the nature of the authority involved in the special office in its relation to what is known as 'the office of all believers'?" The Synod of 1972 approved this suggestion, and sent it on to our committee.

The one question addressed to us by last year's synod, however, really involves two questions: (1) what is the nature of the authority of special offices in the church, as this authority is described in such passages as I

Thessalonians 5:12, 13 and Hebrews 13:17 and (2) how does the authority involved in special office relate to the authority involved in the "office of all believers"? We shall be dealing with both of these questions.

The two passages mentioned by the advisory committee (I Thess. 5:12, 13 and Heb. 13:17) both speak about certain people who are "leaders" or "rulers" in the church, and who are said to have been placed "over" other members of the church. The discussion which follows will focus on the two passages cited above, but will take into account other passages which speak about the authority of special office-bearers in the church.

I Thessalonians 5:12, 13 reads as follows: "But we beseech you, brethren, to respect those who labor among you and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, and to esteem them very highly in love because of their work." In this passage Paul recognizes that there are some individuals who labor among the Thessalonians, who admonish them, and who are "over" them in the Lord (*proistamenous humoon en kurioo*). The key verb here is *proistamenous*, from *proisteemi*. This verb occurs eight times in the New Testament, always in Paul's writings. It has the following basic meanings: (a) "to preside" in the sense of "to lead, conduct, direct, govern"; (b) "to assist," "to join with," more precisely defined as "to protect," "to represent," "to care for," "to help," "to further"; and (c) "to care for," "to arrange," "to handle," "to execute" (Bo Reicke, *proisteemi*, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, Vol. VI, pp. 700, 701). "In most cases *proisteemi* seems to have sense (a), 'to lead,' but the context shows in each case that one must also take into account sense (b), 'to care for.' This is explained by the fact that caring was the obligation of leading members of the infant church" (*ibid.*, p. 701). The verb occurs in the list of gifts given in Romans 12:8, "he who gives aid (*ho proistamenos*), with zeal" [both KJ and ASV have "he that ruleth, with diligence"]. In this passage people who give aid (*hoi proissameno*) are a special group separated by the Spirit for the primary task of caring for others" (*ibid.*).

In I Thessalonians 5:12, the verb *proisteemi* has the same basic meaning. "According to the context the task of the *proissameno* is in large measure that of pastoral care, and the emphasis is not on their rank or authority but on their efforts for the eternal salvation of believers" (*ibid.*, p. 702). As we now look again at the translation of *proistamenous humoon en kurioo* in the Revised Standard Version, we see that it is somewhat misleading. "Who are over you in the Lord" seems to imply a kind of hierarchical rank, whereas the Greek verb used here actually means a combination of two thoughts: guiding and caring. The respect and esteem which is to be shown to such individuals is here said to be owed to them not because of some hierarchical kind of rank, but "because of their work."

In I Timothy 3:4, 5 the verb *proisteemi* occurs twice. Our older translations render the verb "rule," suggesting a concept of authoritarian dominance: "One that ruleth well (*proistamenoun*) his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; but if a man knoweth not how to rule (*prosteenai*) his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?" (ASV; the KJ is virtually identical). The Revised

Standard Version however, renders the verb *proisteemi* by *manage* in both instances. That this passage should not be understood as teaching that elders (for it is generally agreed by Reformed interpreters that "bishops" here are synonymous with "elders") should exercise an authoritarian kind of domination in the church is evident from the following three considerations: (1) Verse 12 of the same chapter states that deacons should also "rule" (*proisteemi*) their own children and households well; yet we have not traditionally assumed that deacons have a "ruling" function in the church; (2) as we have seen, the verb translated *rule* or *manage* (*proisteemi*) often has the connotation of "caring for" or "taking care of"; (3) the task of the elder with respect to the church is described in the latter part of verse 5 as one of "caring for": "For if a man does not know how to manage his own household, how can he care for (*epimeleesetai*) God's church?" The emphasis in these verses is therefore on the need for an elder to be well qualified for a pastoral caring kind of leadership in the church.

Another passage in which the word *proisteemi* occurs is I Timothy 5:17, "Let the elders who rule well (*kaloos proestootes*) be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching." It is probably from this passage that we have derived our traditional distinction between "ruling elders" and "preaching elders"; often a "ruling elder" is then considered an authoritarian deputy over the church. It is to be noted, however, that the word translated "rule" is again a form of the verb *proisteemi*, which, as we have seen, carries with it the meaning of "taking care." The second half of the verse, "especially those who labor in preaching and teaching," does not necessarily describe a type of activity different from or additional to "caring for" or "giving leadership to" the church, but may also be understood as an especially valuable way of exercising this care or giving this leadership. The congregation is here exhorted to recognize the value of this type of service, and to see to it that it is duly rewarded. "In all these instances, however, the verb (*proisteemi*) has in the New Testament the primary senses of both 'to lead' and 'to care for,' and this agrees with the distinctive nature of office in the New Testament, since according to Luke 22:26 the one who is chief (or leader *ho heegoumenos*) is to be as he who serves" (Reicke, *ibid.*, p. 702).

The second passage which the advisory committee of the Synod of 1972 called to the attention of our committee is Hebrews 13:17, "Obey your leaders (*tois heegoumenos*) and submit to them; for they are keeping watch over your souls, as men who will have to give account. Let them do this joyfully, and not sadly, for that would be of no advantage to you." The word here rendered *leaders* is a participle from the verb *hegecomai*. This word occurs three times in Hebrews 13: in verses 7, 17, and 24. In each case where it occurs, both the King James Version and the American Standard Version translate the verb as follows: "those who rule over you"; the Revised Standard Version, however, as well as the New English Bible, translates the verb by means of the expression "your leaders." The verb itself simply means "to lead." Verse 7 indicates that it was the pastoral services of these "leaders" that made their work so significant and so worthy of remembrance: "Remember your

leaders (*toon heegoumenoon*), those who spoke to you the word of God; consider the outcome of their life, and imitate their faith." The same emphasis on the pastoral activities of these leaders is found in verse 17, "for they are keeping watch over your souls." The call for obedience and submission found in this passage is to be seen in this strongly pastoral context. Jesus had said earlier that in the community of believers founded by him the leader (*ho heegoumenos*) was to be as one who serves (*ho diakonoon*) (Luke 22:26). According to Hebrews 13:17 the appropriate response to this type of leadership in the church on the part of the people is obedience and submission. Christians ought to find such obedience and submission easy and natural, since they are in such situations submitting, not to authoritarian masters, but to faithful servants.

Being subject to one another, as a matter of fact, is one of the characteristics that mark Christian fellowship. In I Peter 5:5 we read, "Likewise you that are younger be subject to the elders" (whether the term *elders* here refers to officials in the church or simply to older members cannot be determined with finality). The subjection here enjoined, however, must be paired with humility on the part of all, for Peter goes on to say, "Clothe yourselves, all of you, with humility toward one another." Paul, in I Corinthians 16:15, urges the Corinthians to be subject to the household of Stephanas, since the members of this household have devoted themselves to the service of the saints; the Corinthians are to be subject, however, not just to this household, but also "to every fellow worker and laborer" (v. 16). Subjection to each other on the broadest possible scale is urged in Ephesians 5:21, where Paul says, "Be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ." Christians, therefore, are to be subject, not just to special office-bearers in the church, but to all fellow believers. Subjection, in other words, as described in the above quoted verses, does not merely define the relation of believers to special office-bearers, but defines the relationship which all believers should maintain toward each other.

Significant light is shed on the nature of the authority of special office-bearers in the church by the type of terminology which is employed by the New Testament writers to designate these officials. This can be seen best when we contrast terms used to describe Roman or Jewish officials with those used to describe office-bearers in the church. The Greek word *archoon* (meaning *ruler* or *chief*) is used repeatedly in the New Testament to designate Roman or Jewish officials (e.g., in Mt. 9:18; John 3:1, Rom. 13:3). The New Testament also uses various combinations of this word to designate the "ruler of a city" (*politarchees*, Acts 17:6, 8), the "ruler of the feast" (*architriklinos*, John 2:9), and the "ruler of the synagogue" (*archisunagoogos*, Mk. 5:22). But the New Testament knows of no "ruler of the church"—except Christ to whom all authority has been given (Mt. 28:18) and who is the ruler (*archoon*) of the kings of the earth (Rev. 1:5). The church has no "authoritarian rulers" in the sense that secular governments and synagogues do. Even Christ is not called the ruler (*archoon*) of the church in the New Testament—though it is acknowledged that he is the head of the church and that all authority in heaven and earth has been given to him.

What explains this strange refusal of the Bible writers to call leaders

of the New Testament church rulers (*archontes*)? We must probably look for an explanation first of all in Jesus' own teaching concerning the nature of authority as exercised by his followers: "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles (*hoi archontes toon ethnoon*) lord it (*katakuriuousin*) over them, and their great men exercise authority (*katevousiazousin*) over them. It shall not be so among you; but whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be your slave; even as the Son of man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many" (Mt. 20:25-28). This understanding of authority is echoed by Peter when he writes, "So I exhort the elders among you . . . Tend the flock of God that is your charge, not by constraint but willingly . . . not as domineering over (*katakuriuousantes*) those in your charge, but being examples to the flock" (I Peter 5:1-3). From both of these passages it is evident that the nature of the authority exercised among the followers of Christ in the church is not of the authoritarian, "domineering" type, which exercises "lordship" over those "ruled." Rather, the nature of authority in the church must always be that which Christ himself taught and exemplified: the authority of the servant. This type of authority is recognized and obeyed, not because of the prestige of some hierarchical position, but because of the example and work of the one who is the bearer of this authority. For these reasons the term ruler (*archoon*) does not properly fit the leaders of the church.

It is significant to note that when attributing "authority over" to the followers of Christ, the New Testament speaks only of their "authority over" evil, never of their "authority over" other believers. So, for example, in Luke 9:1 we read, "And he [Christ] called the twelve together and gave them power and authority over all demons . . ." Similarly, Luke 10:19 records Jesus' words to the seventy after their return: "Behold, I have given you authority to tread upon serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy . . ."

The nature of the authority of special office-bearers in the church must be defined in a way which is consistent with the terminology used in the New Testament to define both the offices and their functions. We have seen that New Testament writers do not use words like ruler (*archoon*) to designate these office-bearers. Rather, the New Testament uses terms like the following to describe office-bearers in the church: shepherds, leaders, guardians, those who take care of the church. Most typical of all the terms used is the word *servant* (*diakonos*). On the basis of this type of terminology (as well as for other reasons given previously), we conclude that the authority of special office-bearers in the church is of the servant type. In this most important and fundamental sense the nature of the authority of special office-bearers in the church is the same as that of the office of all believers.

We go on now, however, to consider a further question: Does the New Testament evidence permit us to say that one of the differences between the nature of the authority of special office-bearers and that of the office of all believers lies in the fact that special office-bearers are permitted to do certain things ordinary believers are not permitted to do? In the earlier part of our report (above, I, B, 4,) we noted that in the

New Testament church a variety of people are reported as having engaged in activities which we today normally associate only with special office-bearers. In the above-named section of our report we gave evidence to show that *preaching* or *proclaiming* (*keerussein*) was engaged in by the apostles (Mk. 3:14), by Philip (Acts 8:5), and by the undefined "they" of Mark 7:36; that *preaching* in the sense of *euangelizein* was engaged in by Philip (Acts 8:12), by the men of Cyprus and Cyrene (Acts 11:20), and by those who had been scattered because of persecution (Acts 8:14); and *teaching* (*didaskein*) was done by the apostles (Acts 2:42), by Apollos (Acts 18:25), by the elders (I Tim. 3:2, 5:17), by Paul (Col. 1:28), and by the recipients of Paul's letter to the Colossians (Col. 3:16); that *baptizing* was done by Philip (Acts 8:38), by Ananias (Acts 9:18), and by others besides the apostles; that *admonishing* and *exhorting* was done not only by church leaders but also by Christians among themselves (Col. 3:16, Heb. 3:13). From this type of biblical evidence (more of which can be found in I, B, 4) it becomes clear that the exclusive right to engage in certain functions was not a control aspect of the authority of special office-bearers in the New Testament church.

We should make a distinction, however, between "permission" and "appointment." We have just seen that the New Testament does not distinguish between special office-bearers and believers in general in terms of permission to engage in certain designated functions—functions which special office-bearers may engage in, but other believers may not. It is, however, clear that the New Testament church did appoint certain of its members to carry out some of these functions on behalf of the Lord and on behalf of the entire church (Acts 13:2, 20:28). When this happened, however, the authority of these special office-bearers did not root in the fact that they were performing certain functions which other believers were not permitted to perform, but rather in the fact that the special office-bearers carried out these functions on behalf of the Lord and his church.

Another significant observation should be made at this point. The authority of special office-bearers in the church does not exist in the abstract. The way authority functions in the church is never to be abstracted from the life and example of the person who bears the authority. The godly example of those chosen to special office in the church is an essential aspect of the office. The right of a special office-bearer to be heard and heeded by his fellow church-members does not lie just in the fact that he has been appointed to an office but rests to a very significant extent in his "godliness" and Christian character. Such godliness and Christian character are prerequisites for office, and often constitute an important aspect of the basis for recognizing the authority of the office-bearer. By way of illustrating the point just made, we call your attention to the following passages:

Acts 6:3, 5a, "Therefore, brethren, pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may appoint to this duty . . . and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit . . ."

Galatians 2:9, "And when they perceived the grace that was given to

me, James and Cephas and John . . . gave to me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, that we should go to the Gentiles . . . .”

I Timothy 3:2-4, 7, “Now a bishop must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, sensible, dignified, hospitable, an apt teacher, no drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, and no lover of money. He must manage his own household well . . . moreover, he must be well thought of by outsiders” (cf. Tit. 1:5-9).

I Timothy 3:8-10, 12, “Deacons likewise must be serious, not double-tongued, not addicted to much wine, not greedy for gain; they must hold the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. And let them also be tested first; then if they prove themselves blameless let them serve as deacons . . . . Let deacons be the husband of one wife, and let them manage their children and their households well . . . .”

I Timothy 4:12-16, “Let no one despise your youth, but set the believers an example in speech and conduct, in love, in faith, in purity . . . . Practice these duties, devote yourself to them, so that all may see your progress. Take heed to yourself and to your teaching; hold to that, for by so doing you will save both yourself and your hearers.”

II Timothy 2:15, 16, 21-25, “Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth. Avoid such godless chatter, for it will lead people into more and more ungodliness . . . . If any one purifies himself from what is ignoble, then he will be a vessel for noble use, consecrated and useful to the master of the house, ready for any good work. So shun youthful passions and aim at righteousness, faith, love, and peace . . . . Have nothing to do with stupid, senseless controversies . . . . And the Lord’s servant must not be quarrelsome but kindly to every one, an apt teacher, forbearing, correcting his opponents with gentleness.”

Titus 2:1, 7, 8, “But as for you, teach what befits sound doctrine . . . . Show yourself in all respects a model of good deeds, and in your teaching show integrity, gravity, and sound speech that cannot be censured, so that an opponent may be put to shame, having nothing evil to say of us.”

Hebrews 13:7, “Remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the word of God; consider the outcome of their life, and imitate their faith.”

I Peter 5:1-3, “So I exhort the elders among you . . . . Tend the flock of God that is your charge, not by constraint but willingly, not for shameful gain but eagerly, not as domineering over these in your charge but being examples to the flock.”

For the passages just cited we learn that the recognition and acceptance of the authority of the special office-bearer is most intimately related to that office-bearer’s life and example. When the life style of the special office-bearer is inconsistent with the gospel message which he confesses or brings, his authority is in jeopardy (see, for example, Paul’s rebuke of Peter recorded in Gal. 2:11-14). Authority in the church, therefore, does not exist in the abstract. It does not exist in the mere holding of an ecclesiastical position as such. Authority in the church exists by virtue of the gospel of Jesus Christ. It is channeled through appointment by the body of Christ, and it is verified, recognized, and

accepted by fellow-believers in intimate and indissoluble connection with the Christian life style and godly example of the person so appointed.

One more point may be mentioned in this connection. Paul exhorts the Thessalonians to "respect those who labor among you and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, and to esteem them very highly in love because of their work" (I Thess. 5:12, 13). From this passage we learn that our esteem for special office-bearers should be based on the work they perform—the ministry of service they render to the church and on its behalf to others who are not members of the church. It is significant to note, however, that Paul asks the recipients of his letters to honor many because of their work who are not special office-bearers. To mention just a few of these, there is the long list of people mentioned in Romans 16:1-16, the household of Stephanas (I Cor. 16:15, 16), Fortunatus and Achaius (I Cor. 16:17, 18), and Tychicus (Eph. 6:21, 22). We conclude, therefore, that in the New Testament church the right to be heard, heeded, and esteemed was not associated exclusively with the holding of ecclesiastical office, but was closely connected with the rendering of loving service to fellow-Christians. This linking of esteem with service is consistent with the thesis which has been developed throughout our report: namely, that in the New Testament church the role of servant is the position of honor.

Let us now sum up what has been said so far on the question with which we have concerned ourselves in this section of our report: namely, "What is the nature of the authority involved in the special office in its relation to what is known as 'the office of all believers'?"

The nature of the authority of the special offices of ministries is best described by the term *service*. The one who leads is to be as he who serves. The nature of the authority of the special ministries, therefore, is none other than the nature of the authority of the Lord—the authority of the supreme servant. The nature of the authority of the office of all believers is also characterized by the term *service*. For man was intended, from the beginning, to be an authority-bearing creature who was expected to exercise that authority over creation in a benevolent, caring manner. Christ came to restore all believers to that office which was once theirs by virtue of their having been created in God's image: namely, the office to serve others and to serve the whole creation. In this fundamental sense, the nature of the authority of the special offices and that of the office of all believers is precisely the same.

The appropriate response of the church to the serving authority of the special ministries as well as to the serving authority of other fellow believers is one of obedience and submission, not as to authoritarian masters but as to faithful servants. The authority of the servant is to be recognized and obeyed because of the work and example of the authority bearer. He is to be esteemed for his work's sake. The right of the special ministries to be heard and heeded is also grounded in the qualifications and example of the office-bearer. Authority does not exist abstractly in an "office" or "position" as such. It exists concretely in the gospel of Jesus Christ; it is channeled through appointment by his body; and it is verified, recognized, and accepted in connection with the serving work and godly example of the office bearers.

#### 4. The Delegation of Authority to the Church by Christ.

Having addressed ourselves to questions concerning the relationship between the task and authority of the apostles and that of current ministries in the church, and to questions concerning the relationship of the authority of the special ministries to that of the office of all believers, we are now in a position to respond to the following question addressed to us by the Synod of 1972: "To whom does the exalted Christ delegate his authority, to the church as a whole, to special offices within the church, or to both?" As the Synod of 1972 recognized, all the questions which it addressed to us are "interrelated." It is to be expected, therefore, that this question concerning the delegation of Christ's authority has already been partly and indirectly answered in the preceding sections of our report.

In any consideration of the delegation of Christ's authority to the church, it is important to emphasize at the outset that Christ does not delegate authority in such a way as to transfer or relinquish it to others. Christ retains his authority at all times. He does not transfer his authority either to the congregation or to the special office bearers. To affirm the former would be to fall into the error of independentism, whereas to affirm the latter would be to fall into the error of hierarchism. Christ himself continues to be Lord of the church. There is an important sense in which the church lives and functions under an authority which lies above and beyond herself: in Christ, the head of the church. In other words, there is no person or group of persons within the church who "possess" authority in some total or absolute way. This means that authority within the church must always be exercised in obedience to Jesus Christ, her only Lord.

The authority of Christ, as we have consistently emphasized, is a serving authority. This serving authority comes to expression in various ways within the life of the church. It is reflected and represented by the whole congregation on the one hand, for Christ has restored all believers to that office which was once theirs by virtue of their having been created in God's image, namely, the office to serve others and to serve the whole creation. The authority of Christ is also reflected when the congregation serves as an agent of Christ in the naming of persons to special ministries. Christ calls to office, using the agency of the congregation to effectuate his call.

The serving authority of Christ is also reflected in and represented by the special ministries of the church. The special ministries have a double function: they serve to keep the people of God in fellowship with their Lord, and they divert them to fulfill their calling as members of Christ's body toward each other and toward the world. In other words, the special ministries exist to enable the office of all believers to come to its fullest expression. For example, pastors explain the Scriptures so that believers may grow in faith and live lives of joyful service to God and man. Deacons serve so that believers may unitedly demonstrate the love of Christ to the needy. Elders serve with guidance and counsel so that believers may have peace with God and men. In this service of the special ministries, the serving authority of Jesus Christ comes to expression.

The special ministries, however, do not stand above the congregation in the place of Christ, nor does the congregation stand above the special ministries in the place of Christ. Both stand beneath the authority of Christ. That authority is reflected by both as both seek to fulfill their office to serve. The special ministries serve the congregation as the representatives of the One who came not to be served but to serve. The congregation renders respect and support and obedience to the special ministries of their serving work in behalf of Christ. The congregation most fully demonstrates its obedience to the authority of the special ministries by growing and maturing in the office to which Christ has restored it, namely, the office to serve God and man and the rest of creation. In this way the congregation also represents the One who came not to be served but to serve.

To whom, then, does the exalted Christ delegate his authority: to the church as a whole, to special offices within the church, or to both? Within the perspective and framework described above, our answer is: to both, that each may serve the other and the world, and thus serve Christ, the Lord of the church.

## **B. Questions Involving the Belgic Confession and our Forms for Ordination**

### **1. A Comparison of Our Conclusions with the Belgic Confession.**

The Synod of 1972 instructed your committee "to delineate the comparison between its conclusions and articles 30, 31 of the Belgic Confession . . . ."

#### **a. Fundamental Agreement**

There are important similarities between the designated articles of the Belgic Confession (from now on to be referred to simply as "the Confession") and our report. These similarities indicate fundamental agreement.

The first similarity is the functional emphasis found both in the Confession and in our report. In both attention is focused on services to be rendered for the edification of the church. The offices or special ministries exist for the carrying out of these functions. This is true also of Article 32 of the Confession (not mentioned in the mandate addressed to us), where the accent on ordinances and even on discipline is for the purpose of nourishing and preserving concord and unity in the church, and of maintaining obedience to God.

The second similarity lies in the middle course chosen between hierarchism and independentism. Commentaries on the Confession, when expounding these articles, consistently call attention to this feature. The Confession evidently refers to Roman Catholicism on the one hand and to Anabaptism on the other as representing the extremes to be avoided. The Confession thus reflects the historical circumstances under which it was written. In each instance, however, it was not the persons or organizations themselves, but the errors which they propagated that were rejected. Our report is concerned to avoid the same errors, and thus moves along the same line as the Confession.

### b. A Possible Conflict

There may, however, appear to be a conflict between the opening statement of Article 30 and Conclusions 2 and 12 of this report. The Confession speaks of "that spiritual polity which our Lord has taught us in his Word" and then goes on to specify that there must be ministers, elders, and deacons in the church. This statement raises the following question: In how much detail did the Confession wish to specify what is "that spiritual polity which our Lord has taught" and which must be followed?

The following observations indicate that there is no real conflict here:

1) To lift the first part of Article 30 out of context is to fail to reckon with its functional emphasis as noted above. The choosing of faithful men and their establishment in office is for a specified end. The offices are services and the office-bearers are servants for the accomplishment of this end. It is for their work's sake that the office-bearers are to be esteemed; and when they are not faithful to their work they are unworthy of office and are not to be followed.

2) In its historical setting, the Confession described the way the church was to be governed in terms of contrast with forms of government found in Romanism and Anabaptism. Neither the clergy nor the people are a law to themselves. Christ is the Lord of the church, and this lordship is expressed and implemented in his name by men chosen by the congregation. This basic motif of the Confession is basic also to our report.

3) Not every detail of church order was as completely agreed upon in the early Reformed Church as a casual reading of Article 30 without reference to the context would seem to indicate. Calvin himself, whose thinking is largely followed in the Confession, went through a certain evolution in his thoughts about church order (cf. the Genevan Church Order of 1537 with that of 1541—see *Calvin's Theological Treatises in The Library of Christian Classics*, Vol. 22, pp. 47-72). Furthermore, there has been a long term dispute in Reformed circles over the number of offices in the church, particularly over the question of whether the office of *doctor*, *teacher*, or *professor* was to be recognized as a fourth office. Another ambiguity in this area can be found in the fact that, while the Confession made deacons part of the council of the church (*raad der kerk*), the original Church Order of Dort specified that the consistory (*kerkeraad*) should be constituted only of ministers and elders. The two questions noted above, involving the number of offices in the church and the constitution of the consistory, were both dealt with in our own 1965 revision of the Church Order.

These considerations lend support to the conclusion that the specified "spiritual polity" by which the church is to be governed, according to Article 30 of the Confession, refers to general principles rather than details. Commentaries on the Confession are agreed on this point, although they do not specify where the dividing line between general principles and details is to be drawn. Therefore, although the emphasis on service as the heart of office comes out more clearly in our report

than in the Confession, we believe that our report and its conclusions are basically in line with the Confession.

#### c. The Question of Authority

The 1972 mandate given our committee make frequent mention of authority. It will be appropriate to say something about this subject in connection with the Belgic Confession, particularly since the commentaries on the Confession also speak about authority in connection with Article 30. The position of our report is that the authority of Christ is indeed present in the church and is therefore to be represented and recognized. Christ retains his authority. He does not transfer his authority, either to the congregation or to the office-bearers. These errors, respectively, of independendism and hierarchism are to be avoided. Both congregation and office-bearers are agents of Christ. The congregation, acting for Christ, names men to office; the office-bearers, acting for Christ, perform the duties of their respective offices. The congregation shows due respect to the office-bearers as to Christ's emissaries; the office-bearers, as Christ's representatives, minister to the congregation. In this position our report agrees with the Confession.

#### d. Conclusion 12 and Article 32

It may still be felt by some that the last conclusion of our report leaves the door open too wide to all sorts of change. The only restriction Conclusion 12 lays on the freedom of the church "to adapt or modify its special ministries" is that this be done "in order to carry out its service to Christ effectively in all circumstances."

Our twelfth conclusion distinguishes between general principles and details of church government, and underscores the functional emphasis found in the scriptural description of the special ministries. Both of these matters have been dealt with above. What remains is the reference in Conclusion 12 to the freedom left to the church to "adapt or modify its special ministries."

A look at Article 32 of the Belgic Confession will be illuminating at this point. In this article the "rulers of the church" are given liberty to "establish certain ordinances among themselves for maintaining the body of the church" (actually, "establish a certain order" would be a better translation, since in the original French the word for *order* is in the singular). The liberty given to these "rulers," however, is not absolute. They are to take care that they do not "depart from those things which Christ, our only Master, has instituted." Even this limitation is further defined. Human inventions and laws which bind the conscience are to be rejected, and only that which edifies the congregation and promotes obedience to God on the part of all men is to be allowed.

It is latitude of this sort which our Conclusion 12 also advocates. The effective service to Christ to which it refers is both the motivation for the adaptation or modification of special ministries which it permits, and the limitation which should keep such modification within proper bounds.

#### 2. A Comparison of Our Conclusions with the Forms for Ordination

The Synod of 1972 instructed your committee "to delineate the comparison between its conclusions and . . . the forms for installation/ordi-

nation of office-bearers presently used in the Christian Reformed Church." In keeping with this mandate your committee has compared the conclusions of its study report both with the new Form for the Ordination of Ministers of the Word adopted by the Synod of 1971 (and found in the 1971 Acts of Synod), and with the older Form for the Ordination of Elders and Deacons presently used in our churches.

a. Regarding the new Form for the Ordination of Ministers of the Word, we observe the following:

- 1) We find considerable agreement between the language, spirit, and general emphasis of this form and our conclusions. The understanding of the special ministries in terms of function and service found in our conclusions, for example, is also the emphasis of the introductory paragraph of the form. This paragraph describes special ministries with such statements as these: ". . . God . . . purposes . . . to give to his church such teaching and care that she may grow in faith and love and service. God, by a particular grace, uses men for service to these ends, appointing them . . . to a manifold ministry for the building up of the body of Christ" (Acts of Synod, 1971, p. 528).
- 2) If the synod adopts our conclusions as guidelines for the church, only two changes in this form would have to be considered. First, the wording of the paragraphs on page 528 concerning the assignment of the preaching of the gospel and the administration of the sacraments to the "ministers of the Word" rather than to the church may need alteration, since this wording is not consistent with our Conclusion 7. Second, some change may be required in the procedural instruction appearing on pages 530, 532, 533, and 535: "in the case of ordination, with the ceremony of the laying on of hands, other ministers present participating"—for this item appears to be inconsistent with our Conclusion 11.

b. Regarding the Form for the Ordination of Elders and Deacons, we observe the following:

- 1) To speak of the "ordination" of elders and deacons corresponds well with our conclusions regarding the meaning of ordination.
- 2) The material pertaining to the work of deacons corresponds favorably with our conclusions.
- 3) It is questionable whether scriptural evidence can be found to substantiate the claim that the office of elder "is based on the kingship of our Lord Jesus Christ" (paragraph 3). It is also questionable whether scriptural evidence can be found to support the statement that our Lord "when he ascended, left his church in the world and provided it with officers who would rule in his name" (paragraph 3), if by such officers are meant the elders, ministers, and pastors mentioned in the last sentence of the paragraph.
- 4) The language, tone, and emphasis of the material describing the work of the elders sometimes suggests a kind of "ruling" that may be at variance with our conclusions. This form, for

example, implies a distinction between “ruling” and “caring for” when it states, in the charge to the congregation, “May God give us to see in the ministry of the deacons the care and love of the Savior.” Our conclusions, on the other hand, regard *diakonia* (service) as basic in all offices or special ministries, and closely associate “ruling” with “caring for” (see especially Conclusions 1 and 5). This form also leaves the impression that the work of an elder is largely a matter of “policeman-ship.” Insufficient justice seems to be done, in our opinion, to the concept that the elder is also one who renders loving service to people in the name of Christ. If our conclusions are adopted as guidelines for the church, this form should be carefully scrutinized for possible revision.

#### IV. CONCLUSIONS

On the basis of its study and discussion, your committee has arrived at the following conclusions with respect to the nature of ecclesiastical office and the meaning of ordination:

1. The term for office in the Greek New Testament is **DIAKONIA**, meaning “service” or “ministry.” In this basic sense ecclesiastical office is one and indivisible, for it embraces the total ministry of the church, a ministry that is rooted in Christ.

2. This comprehensive ministry (office) is universal, committed to the whole church, not to a select group of individuals within the church. The task of ministry is shared by all and is not limited to a special, professional class. The ministry of the church is Christ’s ministry, shared by all who are in Christ.

3. It is not inconsistent with this universal office-sharing, and it is in keeping with apostolic practice, that some individuals within the church be appointed to certain special tasks. The Scriptures report a setting apart to special ministries or services. Both in the Old and New Testaments God calls particular people for particular tasks.

4. From the beginning these special ministries were functional in character, arising under the guidance of the Spirit primarily in the interests of good order and efficiency in the church, created as a means to the end of enabling the church to carry out Christ’s work in the world most efficiently and effectively.

5. The special ministries are primarily characterized by service, rather than by status, dominance, or privilege. The authority which is associated with the special ministries is an authority defined in terms of love and service.

6. The special ministries of some believers are to be distinguished not in essence but in function from the comprehensive ministry shared by all believers, and distinctions among the special ministries themselves are also functional. There is therefore no essential distinction but only a functional one between ministers, elders, deacons, and all other members of the church. There is a difference in manner of service, but all are commissioned to serve.

7. The tasks of the preaching of the Word and of the administration of the sacraments have been given by Christ to the church. Although in the Scriptures these tasks are not explicitly limited to special office-holders, historically they have been assigned to and carried out by those whom the church has appointed. The church assigns these functions to certain individuals not on the basis of an essential, priestly distinction between clergy and laity, but with a view to maintaining good order in the church so that it may carry out its ministry most effectively.

8. There are no valid biblical or doctrinal reasons why a person whom the church has appointed to bring the Word may not also administer the sacraments.

9. "Ordination" should be understood as the appointment or setting apart of certain members of the church for special ministries that are strategic for the accomplishment of the church's total ministry. In this sense of appointment or setting apart, ordination has biblical precedent and is valuable for the good order and well-being of the church.

10. The ceremony of the laying on of hands, often associated with the ordination of ministers, is not a sacrament, does not create a special priestly order in the church, and does not confer sacramental graces or mystical powers upon the one ordained. This ceremony is a symbolic rite by which the church may publicly confirm its call and appointment to special ministries, and as such it is useful but not essential.

11. There is no biblical warrant for limiting the laying on of hands to those being appointed to the special ministry of teaching and preaching the Word. Furthermore, to assign the act of the laying on of hands to ministers and not to elders is a departure from biblical example.

12. Because the Scriptures do not present a definitive, exhaustive description of the special ministries of the church, and because these special ministries as described in Scripture are functional in character, the Bible leaves room for the church to adapt or modify its special ministries in order to carry out its service to Christ effectively in all circumstances.

## V. RECOMMENDATIONS

A. That synod give the privilege of the floor to the following representatives of the study committee, when the report is discussed: Dr. Willis De Boer and Dr. Clarence Vos.

B. That synod adopt the following conclusions which have arisen from this study as guidelines toward the solution of practical problems in the area of office and ordination:

1. The term for office in the Greek New Testament is *DIAKONIA*, meaning "service" or "ministry." In this basic sense ecclesiastical office is one and indivisible, for it embraces the total ministry of the church, a ministry that is rooted in Christ.
2. This comprehensive ministry (office) is universal, committed to the whole church, not to a select group of individuals within the church. The task of ministry is shared by all and is not limited to a special, professional class. The ministry of the church is Christ's ministry, shared by all who are in Christ.

3. It is not inconsistent with this universal office-sharing, and it is in keeping with apostolic practice, that some individuals within the church be appointed to certain special tasks. The Scriptures report a setting apart to special ministries or services. Both in the Old and New Testaments God calls particular people for particular tasks.
4. From the beginning these special ministries were functional in character, arising under the guidance of the Spirit primarily in the interests of good order and efficiency in the church, created as a means to the end of enabling the church to carry out Christ's work in the world most efficiently and effectively.
5. The special ministries are primarily characterized by service, rather than by status, dominance, or privilege. The authority which is associated with the special ministries is an authority defined in terms of love and service.
6. The special ministries of some believers are to be distinguished not in essence but in function from the comprehensive ministry shared by all believers, and distinctions among the special ministries themselves are also functional. There is therefore no essential distinction but only a functional one between ministers, elders, deacons, and all other members of the church. There is a difference in manner of service, but all are commissioned to serve.
7. The tasks of the preaching of the Word and of the administration of the sacraments have been given by Christ to the church. Although in the Scriptures these tasks are not explicitly limited to special office-holders, historically they have been assigned to and carried out by those whom the church has appointed. The church assigns these functions to certain individuals not on the basis of an essential, priestly distinction between clergy and laity, but with a view to maintaining good order in the church so that it may carry out its ministry most effectively.
8. There are no valid biblical or doctrinal reasons why a person whom the church has appointed to bring the Word may not also administer the sacraments.
9. "Ordination" should be understood as the appointment or setting apart of certain members of the church for special ministries that are strategic for the accomplishment of the church's total ministry. In this sense of appointment or setting apart, ordination has biblical precedent and is valuable for the good order and well-being of the church.
10. The ceremony of the laying on of hands, often associated with the ordination of ministers, is not a sacrament, does not create a special priestly order in the church, and does not confer sacramental graces or mystical powers upon the one ordained. This ceremony is a symbolic rite by which the church may publicly confirm its call and appointment to special ministries, and as such it is useful but not essential.
11. There is no biblical warrant for limiting the laying on of hands to those being appointed to the special ministry of teaching and preaching the Word. Furthermore, to assign the act of the laying on of hands to ministers and not to elders is a departure from biblical example.
12. Because the Scriptures do not present a definitive, exhaustive description of the special ministries of the church, and because these special ministries as described in Scripture are functional in character, the Bible leaves room for the church to adapt or modify its special ministries in order to carry out its service to Christ effectively in all circumstances.

C. That synod return Overture 25 from the Acts of 1971 (p. 643) to Classis Alberta South, asking that classis reconsider it in the light of the guidelines given above. If after such reconsideration, classis should still deem it necessary to send another overture on this matter to synod, it may do so.

Ecclesiastical Office and Ordination Committee

John H. Primus, Chairman  
Anthony A. Hoekema, Reporter  
William P. Brink  
Willis P. De Boer  
John H. Kromminga  
Clarence J. Vos  
Louis A. Vos

# OVERTURES

## Overture 1 — Revision of Statement on Biblical Authority (Art. 32)

Classis Pacific Northwest overtures synod that:

1. Synod eliminate the phrase "the saving revelation of God in Jesus Christ" from point a. of the seven related points of pastoral advice (cf. *Acts* 1972, Art. 52, p. 68).

*Grounds:*

- a. This phrase is not found in our creeds either verbatim or materially.
- b. The nature and extent of biblical authority was being discussed, not the nature of Scripture. This phrase leaves the door open to subjective interpretations on the nature of Scripture.
- c. The phrase is not materially necessary to point a. itself—which makes good sense without the phrase; and its elimination does not alter the sense or meaning of the seven interrelated points of pastoral advice.

2. Synod substitute the phrase, "the self-revelation of God in Jesus Christ," for the phrase referred to above.

*Grounds:*

- a. This phrase is found materially in our creeds. (cf. Article II of the Belgic Confession and Question and Answer 19 and 95 of the Heidelberg Catechism, as two examples.)
- b. This eliminates the possibility of subjective interpretations on the nature of Scripture.
- c. The addition of this phrase strengthens point a. and clarifies the meaning of the seven interrelated points of pastoral advice.

Classis Pacific Northwest  
Jack Stulp, Stated Clerk

## Overture 2 — Change Church School Decisions (Art. 35)

Classis Zeeland respectfully overtures the Synod of 1973 of the Christian Reformed Church to:

1. Diverge from the 1970 decision of synod which made the Unified Church School Curriculum the pattern for religious instruction for *all* the churches within the denomination, and re-establish or recognize again catechetical instruction as we have known it in the Reformed heritage as an accepted mode for religious instruction.

2. Instruct the Board of Publications to continue research, development and publication of materials suited particularly for catechetical instruction of our covenant youth as historically practiced in the Christian Reformed Church for congregations that find the two-track (catechism and Sunday school) system necessary and preferable to the Unified Church School Curriculum.

*Grounds:*

1. A survey of all the churches of Classis Zeeland indicates that:

a. None of the churches of Classis Zeeland intend at this time to phase out the two-track (Sunday school-Catechism) system.

b. None of the churches of Classis Zeeland consider the materials being provided in the Unified Church School Curriculum to be adequate to replace catechism materials provided previous to the 1970 decision of synod.

c. The Unified Church School Curriculum necessitates placing the responsibility in the hands of those who are *not* pastors or elders; however, the churches of Classis Zeeland desire that the work of teaching the doctrines of the church should remain primarily the task of the pastors and elders.

2. The consistories of Classis Zeeland find it difficult to observe the spirit of articles 63 and 64 of the Church Order if they adopt the Unified Church School Curriculum, particularly in the requirements that:

"The instruction shall be given by the minister of the Word with the help, if necessary, of the elders or those appointed by the consistory,

"The Heidelberg Catechism and its compendium shall be the basis of instruction. Selection of additional instructional helps shall be made by the minister in consultation with the consistory."

Classis Zeeland,

Arthur Besteman, Stated Clerk

### Overture 3 — Amend Rules of Fund for Needy Churches

(Art. 37)

Classis Central California overtures the synod of the Christian Reformed Church to make the necessary changes in the rules of the Fund for Needy Churches in order that salaries paid in churches under the Fund for Needy Churches may be commensurate with those paid by the Board of Home Missions.

#### *Grounds:*

1. The home missionary who has labored diligently should not be "rewarded" with a large reduction in salary.

2. The laborer is worthy of his hire (Luke 10:7b and I Timothy 5:18).

3. The young church is in a critical stage and should not be threatened by the loss of its pastor with his particular gifts due to a reduction in salary which is beyond its power.

4. The precedent of the Board of Home Missions, the Board of Foreign Missions, and most of our Christian Schools whose salary scales reflect the value of experience with "years of service increase."

Classis Central California

Roger Kok, Stated Clerk

(Background information is appended and will be available for synod.)

### Overture 4 — Additional Rule for Classical Examinations

(Art. 48)

Classis Holland overtures synod to add the following to the rules for the examination of candidates for the Gospel ministry: In addition to the sermon on the *assigned* text, the candidate shall give to each of the sermon critics copies of two other sermons which he has preached as a student. These sermons (copies) are not to be those which have been used in practice preaching in the seminary, or previously evaluated by a professor in the seminary.

#### *Ground:*

There are occasions in which it is very difficult for classis to make a decision

based on the one sermon prepared by the candidate on an assigned text. In such cases it would do better justice to the candidate and be very helpful for classis to have available the evaluation of two other sermons which the candidate has preached.

Classis Holland,  
Walter Hofman, Stated Clerk

### Overture 5 — Relations with Reformed Church in America (Art. 45)

Classis Orange City overtures synod that all efforts toward unity and cooperation (such as suggested in the RCA-CRC statement), with the RCA on the denominational, classical and local levels include frank biblical and creedal discussions of our similarities and differences on the following and similar matters.

A. Covenantal consciousness is a doctrinal emphasis which comes to expression in our support for Christian education. The official position of the RCA does not support elementary and secondary Christian day schools.

"The venture (private education) cannot be forced upon the consciences of believers as a divinely sanctioned imperative. It is not an essential element in the Covenant of Grace, nor a necessary consequence of baptismal vows" (Statement of RCA Board of Education). The General Synod of RCA of 1957 received it and directed that it be sent to every pastor in the RCA for reading, reference and study.

B. Membership in the World Council of Churches.

The RCA is a full and participating member of the WCC while the Synod of the CRC has consistently said that we may not be. "It is not permissible for the CRC to join the fellowship of the WCC . . . ." Synod then gave a number of reasons for its decision (Acts of Synod, 1967, p. 89).

C. The two denominations are not creedally one.

A committee reported in 1944, ". . . the dropping of negative parts of the Canons of Dort by the RCA separates us creedally . . . from that church . . . . Past history suggests that we shall not easily rouse that church to a restoration of that part of the Canons to a normative position in its official creed" (Acts of Synod, 1944, p. 364). No official biblical and creedal study made specifically for relations between the RCA and CRC has been made since then.

D. The question of lodge membership is present.

The CRC Synod of 1970 said that, ". . . simultaneous membership in secret societies and the Christian Reformed Church . . ." is incompatible, while the RCA makes it a matter of individual consistorial decision.

E. Women as office bearers have been officially permitted in the RCA. Delegates to the General Synod of RCA ". . . approved women's serving as elders and deacons . . ." *Christianity Today* July 28, 1972. This is not the case in the CRC.

Classis Orange City,  
Harold Hiemstra, Stated Clerk

### Overture 6 — Footnotes for Heidelberg Catechism (Art. 27)

Classis Orange City overtures synod to add pertinent footnote references of the Belgic Confession and the Canons of Dort to the new translation of the Heidelberg Catechism soon to be published.

*Grounds:*

1. It will possibly make for greater use of our creeds by the minister in sermonic preparation and delivery.
2. It will instruct the congregation in our three major creeds instead of one.
3. It will give opportunity to the catechism instructor as well as the student to acquaint themselves more easily with the two other Reformed Creeds which are now somewhat neglected.
4. When parents answer the question at baptism, "Do you acknowledge the doctrine which is contained in the Old and New Testament, and in the Articles of the Christian Faith . . ." many parents will assert that they have never read these two other creeds; perhaps this will help to overcome the difficulty.
5. We must remain a creedal church. This may be an effective way to do so.

Classis Orange City,

Harold Heimstra, Stated Clerk

## Overture 7 — Revise Form of Subscription

(Art. 89)

In September of 1972 Classis Chicago South received an overture from Dr. Harry Boer in which he gave a synopsis of his rather extensive historical, theological and biblical study of the Form of Subscription.

We believe the present form has served the church exceedingly well in its purpose of maintaining our understanding of the Gospel, and that it is the part of wisdom therefore to change the present form as little as need be in order to correct its deficiencies.

For this reason Dr. Boer has not convinced us that we should undertake the writing of a new document to replace the present form. Nevertheless a careful study of his materials has demonstrated to us that the church would be well served if we recognized and removed a certain deficiency in the present form.

This deficiency succinctly stated is: "the form limits the process of creedal revision exclusively to the ecclesiastical assemblies."

This is so because the statement of the form, "we will neither publicly or privately propose, teach, or defend the same, either by our preaching or writing, until we have first revealed such sentiments to the consistory, classis or synod," has been understood to mean that, even though such "sentiments" were revealed to a consistory, the individual would not be allowed to publicly discuss them until synod has made its judgment concerning them.

The result is that in the basic and determinative area of possible creedal revision, the body of believers is intentionally excluded. This does an injustice to the principle of the Reformation, that the Holy Spirit is given to all believers, not just to office bearers.

It is, of course, the assemblies of the church (consistories, classes, synod) which must make the decision concerning any proposed creedal change, and rightly so. Nevertheless in accordance with the biblical example (Acts 15:4 and others) and the Reformed teaching of the nature of the church, the entire body of believers has the responsibility to participate in the discussions and reflections by which the church is led to a final decision. The present Form of Subscription does not allow for such participation in the course of the gravamen procedure.

We recognize that a creedal church cannot give a general, undefinable freedom or right to its leaders to publicly discuss views at variance with our standards of unity, even if these are expressed hypothetically, as synod has pointed out (Acts of Synod, 1946, Art. 136).

We are only asking that when a person comes to such a degree of certainty regarding differing sentiments about the creeds that he feels compelled to write

a gravamen, then at least at that point, he should be given the freedom to discuss his views publicly.

This would not make our creeds "an open forum" or an "endless debating ground" because the submission of the gravamen would officially obligate the assemblies of the church to examine and judge the sentiments expressed in the foreseeable future.

We therefore overture the Synod of 1973 to incorporate the following sentence into the Form of Subscription to be positioned as the fourth paragraph of the form:

By submitting such sentiments to the consistory for examination we shall obtain the right to discuss and defend them publicly, except in our preaching or official teaching, and the church may openly reflect upon them until the way of appeal is exhausted by synod making its judgment concerning them.

*Grounds:*

1. This amendment, in accordance with the biblical and Reformed teaching of the nature of the church, recognizes the right and responsibility of the whole body of believers, to whom the Holy Spirit is given, to reflect upon and prayerfully seek the will of the Spirit concerning any proposed changes or amendments of our doctrinal standards.

2. This amendment would not infringe upon the exclusive right which the assemblies of the church (consistories, classes, synod) have in adjudicating any proposed creedal change.

(Note: It might appear that the last phrase of the form conflicts with this proposed amendment because it says "and until a decision is made upon such an appeal, we will acquiesce in the determination and judgment already passed.")

This last paragraph of the form, however, is not speaking about a gravamen. It is essential to keep this last paragraph intact; otherwise someone could claim the right to publicly espouse "differing sentiments" simply because he personally does not consider his views to be contrary to the creeds.)

Classis Chicago South,

Richard M. Hartwell, Stated Clerk

## Overture 8 — Replace Article 41 of the Church Order (Art. 32)

Classis Alberta South overtures synod to replace Article 41 of the Church Order with the formulation proposed by the Church Order Revision Committee to the Synod of 1965: "In order properly to assist the churches, the president, on behalf of Classis, shall, at least once a year, interview the delegates of each church especially concerning church government and discipline, the ministry of mercy, missions, Christian Education, and such matters as synod and classis may consider of special importance. Admonitions, encouragements, and advice shall be given according to need," and add to it the following words: "In addition the following questions shall be asked: questions 5a, 5b, and 5c of the present formulation."

*Grounds:*

a. Synod, 1965, decided to replace the proposed formulation by the existing one in the old Church Order without giving any grounds for it.

b. In most classes Article 41 has become a dead letter.

c. Some of the questions in Article 41 are irrelevant (question 1 and 3), the other two cannot be answered by a simple Yes or No, and are to be discussed in church visiting and in this way reported to classis.

d. Synod, 1942, decided: "An inquiry on the part of classis into the spiritual state of its several congregations constitutes the central and principal task of classis and therefore should take precedence."

"This inquiry based on the questions of Article 41 should be taken up at the outset of classis. The attention of the churches is directed to the fact that these questions should never be answered in a perfunctory manner, but should serve as a basis for further examination" (Acts, 1942, Art. 110).

The formulation of Article 41 in the present Church Order encourages the perfunctory answering of these questions.

Classis Alberta South

Peter Van Tuinen, Stated Clerk

## Overture 9 — New Rules for Classical Examinations (Art. 48)

Classis Alberta South overtures synod to rule that the Classical Examination for Candidates be held by the student's home classis in May of the year in which he desires to be a candidate. The schedule to be followed might well be:

*February*—Interview by the Board of Trustees of the Seminary. They shall submit their report and recommendations to the home classis with a copy for synod. Other credentials and certificates shall be made available to the board by the seminary.

*April*—A student must successfully sustain a B.D. examination before becoming eligible for examination by his classis.

*May*—The home classis in the presence of the synodical deputies shall conduct the examination and recommend to synod that synod declare the student a candidate for the Ministry of the Word and Sacraments in the Christian Reformed Church. In the event that the student does not sustain the examination, he has the opportunity to appeal to synod. In case of a difference between the classis and the synodical deputies, or a protest by a church of the classis, synod shall interview and/or examine the candidate and adjudicate the matter.

*June*—Synod shall declare those who have successfully sustained the various steps as candidates eligible for a call.

*July-September*—A candidate may receive calls, accept one and move to the church. The home classis then shall send a certificate or credential to the classis in which the candidate shall serve. After classical approval, the counsellor may proceed with the ordination and installation.

### *Grounds:*

1. This procedure will make it possible for the candidate to make more definite plans for his immediate future following graduation from seminary. It will in most cases decrease the waiting time between graduation and the beginning of his work. It will also decrease the time of vacancy for the congregation.

2. In the instances where a student does not sustain the examination of the classis, he has the opportunity to appeal to the synod. Instead of being left "hanging" for almost a year, the student will know in June of that year whether or not he will be available for a call and subsequent ordination.

3. The order of procedure is more in harmony with Reformed Church polity:

a. The seminary declares him academically qualified.

b. The church assembly of classis including the home consistory, which knows him best, declares him spiritually qualified and recommends him to the church at large.

c. The synod, which was earlier involved through its deputies, then recommends him to the denomination for a call.

4. The classis which has had the greatest opportunity to know the student and has likely given financial support for his preparation is most interested and familiar with the prospective candidate. The classical student fund could perhaps provide travel expense for the trip from the seminary to the meeting of classis.

5. The difficulties encountered when an increasing number of men are becoming missionaries, chaplains, etc., requiring a special session for classis at an inopportune time such as during summer months would be eliminated.

6. It will minimize the difficult situation of a candidate who must serve a church after the consistory members may have listened to an examination in which he did not do well.

*Objections Considered:*

1. In some instances it may be difficult to determine the "home classis." Often older men with families transfer membership to a Grand Rapids church. In the majority of cases, however, the student is receiving financial aid from the classis from which he came.

2. Church Order Article 10a would require a minor change in order and wording so as to read, "The home classis of a candidate for the Ministry of the Word and Sacraments, in the presence of synodical deputies, shall examine him concerning his doctrine and life in accordance with synodical regulations. The ordination of a candidate requires the approval of the classis of the calling church. The ordination shall be accompanied by the laying on of hands by the officiating minister."

3. In this method, it is difficult to examine the student concerning his "call to the ministry," since he as yet has not received an actual call. He can be examined in the area of his convictions and why he desires to enter the ministry of the Word. The actual call then becomes a confirmation of his desire and intention. Furthermore, at the time of his ordination he is asked, "Do you feel in your heart that you are lawfully called of God's church, and therefore of God himself, to this holy office?"

4. There is the possibility of prejudicial treatment because the examination is in his home classis. Undoubtedly the presence of synodical deputies would safeguard against this. This prejudice, to be sure, is no greater than that caused now by the fact that the calling church is expecting and planning for the reception of its new minister. In years past great prejudice was added by the fact that the candidate had moved into the parsonage and the date for the ordination was set and announced long before the classical examination.

Classis Alberta South

Peter Van Tuinen, Stated Clerk

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## Overture 10 — Quota Proposed for United Calvinist Youth (Art. 25)

The Consistory of the Anaheim Christian Reformed Church overtures synod to establish a quota for the United Calvinist Youth Organization to assist in meeting basic operational costs.

*Grounds:*

1. The entire denomination has a basic interest in the entire youth program of the denomination.

2. The entire denomination benefits from the work of the United Calvinist Youth organization.

3. The lack of sufficient assured finances hampers and curtails the potential development of this ministry for the youth of the denomination.

4. The present method of soliciting offerings from the churches is not meet-

ing the need for the potential development of this organization and the challenge presented in ministering to the youth of the denomination.

The Consistory of the  
Anheim Chr. Ref. Church  
Harlan R. Roelofs, President  
Tom Millard, Clerk

The above overture was presented to Classis California South on January 17, 1973. It was duly considered but not adopted by classis.

### Overture 11 — Request for Declaration on War

(Art. 72)

Classis Lake Erie overtures synod to provide a clear biblical-theological understanding on the matter of war in a manner that will provide the church's membership with an ethical framework for decision-making about war and peace. Specifically, though not exclusively, we request that synod develop (a) extensive and incisive criteria for a just war, especially in the light of the Second Indochina War and potential wars of "national liberation," (b) guidelines for those who are conscientiously opposed to all war, and (c) a statement defining the church's institutional responsibilities, i.e., whether church members should act *only* as individuals or whether church members should *also* act corporately as the body of Christ.

In discharging its duties, the synod is urged (a) to take into account synodical actions and discussions in 1939, 1964, 1969, and 1972; and (b) to communicate with the Reformed Church in America and the Gereformeerde Kerken of the Netherlands regarding their recent discussions about these matters.

#### *Grounds:*

1. In 1939, 1969 and 1972 synodical actions do not provide an ethical framework for those individuals who must make decisions about whether and how they should participate in war; for those whose duty it is "to instruct, advise, and counsel" such individuals; nor for those individual church members, who as members of an informed national citizenry, must evaluate and act upon national policies pertaining to war and peace.

2. Past synodical statements have not provided specific criteria for a just war. The "Testimony Regarding Christian Attitudes Toward War and Peace" of 1939 does not provide any criteria. "A Statement on Warfare" prepared for the 1964 synod does have a few limited statements concerning just war. This statement was not adopted by synod.

3. There are a number of our fellowship who are conscientiously opposed to all war and look to the church for further guidance. Previous statements of synod have proved insufficient in providing this guidance.

Classis Lake Erie,  
Carroll E. Keegstra, Stated Clerk

(Classis Lake Erie also submits background material, which will be available to synod.)

### Overture 12 — Appeal re Church Help Fund

(Art. 37)

Classis Alberta North respectfully overtures the Synod of 1973 to instruct the Church Help Fund Committee to reverse its decision to reject the loan application of Trinity, Edmonton, for \$20,000 (twenty thousand).

## I. HISTORY

Trinity, Edmonton, first made its application to the Church Help Fund via classis, January, 1971. The May, 1971, classis went on record endorsing this application in principle:

"Classis endorses in principle the request of Trinity, Edmonton for a loan of \$20,000 for their new auditorium from the Church Help Fund." (Minutes of Classis Alberta North, Art. 31 c)

During July, 1971, the application was rejected by the Church Help Committee on the following two grounds:

- A. Insufficient funds in the Church Help Fund,
- B. Congregation exceeded the limit of seventy-five families.

In October, 1971, the Home Missions Committee recommended to classis that "classis endorse the appeal of Trinity, Edmonton, to the Church Help Fund which denied its application for a loan." (Art. 50) Classis adopted this recommendation. This appeal, endorsed by classis, was also rejected.

## II OVERTURE

Following this history of events classis has decided to present the overture above to the Synod of 1973.

### *Grounds:*

A. One of the reasons given for the rejection of the application was that the congregation was in excess of seventy-five families. (At the time of the application there were ninety-seven families.) This reason, however, is not in accordance with the by-laws of the committee, as established in Acts of Synod 1962. We cite by-law 4 (a) which requires "that the congregation is financially weak and unable to obtain the funds it needs through other normal channels or credit agencies." This by-law does not specify any number of families.

B. The purpose of the Church Help Fund is to make loans available to congregations of the Christian Reformed Church which are in need of financial assistance. The following factors indicate the financial need of the Trinity Church:

1. At the organization of Trinity Christian Reformed Church in November, 1968, the congregation had seventy-six families. At the time of application, the number had risen to ninety-seven families. The congregation envisioned this rapid growth because of the following factors:

- a. extensive suburban growth,
- b. the near location of the third Christian school,
- c. the building of the senior citizens' home.

In view of these factors, the congregation was obliged to erect an edifice able to accommodate a large congregation.

2. The congregation consisted largely of young families with young children. These young families did not as yet have financial stability.

3. The present funding for the structure is as follows:

a. \$75,000 at 8.5% interest from Classis Alberta North Extension Fund over twenty years;

b. approximately \$65,000 borrowed from individuals at 6.5% interest in the form of debentures, repayable on demand;

c. a \$20,000 loan, repayable on demand, at 7.5% interest. This \$20,000 loan was necessitated by the C.H.F.'s initial refusal of Trinity's application. This loan therefore places an additional burden of \$1,500 per year in interest charges.

4. The 1973 budget requires a \$458.33 per family contribution. This amount includes interest on all the loans but allows for payments on the capital of only the \$75,000 loan. This keeps a capital debt of \$85,000 untouched.

5. The Trinity congregation has taken upon itself the burden caused by the modern socio-economic trend of urbanization. This growing population consists largely of first and second generation immigrants who, in general, have little fi-

nancial power. In view of these facts, there is an inequity in charging this congregation with 100% of the starting cost for their facilities, which hampers them in the opportunity to contribute faithfully toward causes which are in the mandate of Christ to the Church. This young church faces a burden which the denomination should ease with a budgetary relief of \$1,500 per year for the period the Church Help Fund loan is granted.

Classis Alberta North

Peter Van Drunen, Stated Clerk

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### Overture 13—Augment Church Order, Article 17

(Art. 32)

Classis Hudson overtures the Synod of 1973 to augment Article 17 of the *Church Order* to include provision 17-b (with the present b, and c. relisted as c. and d., respectively): "The released minister's credentials, after a time agreed upon by classis, and with that body's approval, may be transferred to the consistory of another Christian Reformed Church within that classis."

*Grounds:*

1. The "intolerable situation" which first precipitated the release of a minister from his consistory is likely to influence adversely their continuing relationship.

2. A neutral consistory may be in a better position to deal fairly and objectively with a released minister and to receive that minister's cooperation than would be the consistory from which that minister is estranged.

Note: Though current practice of church order places the burden of supervising a released minister's doctrine and life upon the consistory from which he was estranged, Article 17, as it presently reads, lists no such specific provision whatever. What we are suggesting, then, is not formally an *alteration* but an addition. The supervision of an estranged minister's *doctrine and life* by a neutral consistory is, in any event, consistent with what is presently listed as article 17-b: "The consistory shall provide for the support of the released minister in such a way and for such a time as shall receive the approval of classis."

Classis Hudson

R. Opperwall, Stated Clerk

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### Overture 14 — Personalizing Denominational Foreign Missions

(Art. 26)

Quota payments to the Board of Foreign Missions are cold and impersonal. There is very little contact with foreign missionaries by the average congregation. The smaller congregation, especially, feels no sense of partnership. It does not know the particular needs of any given foreign missionary nor the people with whom he is working. Banner articles are fine, but cannot be considered to be personal contact.

For many years, the Reformed Church in America has personalized its missions program. This is done by "Partnership in Mission," commonly called the "share system." This builds bridges between the local churches and the missionary and his people. This often enables a given congregation to go above its "share" in helping meet particular needs of a given missionary whose work they share, such as providing communication equipment. Personal visits take place whenever and wherever possible. The congregation prays publicly and privately for the worker with whom it is related as well as for all fields supported by the denomination. The congregation receives news through the Sunday bulletins, newsletters, pulpit announcements, etc. about the work in which it has a special interest. A brochure

entitled "Partnership In Mission" is available giving further details.

Recommendation: that synod personalize denominational foreign missions by means of a "Partnership In Mission" or "share system."

Classis Chicago North,

O. Breen, Stated Clerk

(Note: a \$500.00 share includes necessary administrative expense.)

### Overture 15 — Amend Rules of Fund for Needy Churches

(Art. 37)

Classis Rocky Mountain of the Christian Reformed Church overtures the Synod of 1973 to instruct the Fund for Needy Churches Committee to include a "years of service" allowance in the salary schedule of the FNC ministers, similar to the policy of the board of home missions.

*Grounds:*

1. This will recognize the value of experience.
2. This will help home mission churches keep home missionaries as their pastors, when these churches mature to become independent of the board, without causing a significant change in salary or undue burden on the young church.
3. This is already an approved procedure by both the home mission and foreign mission boards in their salary schedule.
4. Most schools have "years of service" as a basic part of the salary schedule.

Classis Rocky Mountain

C. Oliver Buus, Stated Clerk

### Overture 16 — Relations with Reformed Church in America

(Art. 45)

Classis Sioux Center overtures synod to mandate its Inter-Church Relations Committee to discuss all biblical and creedal differences between the CRC and the RCA in the future meetings for the promotion of unity and cooperation.

(Note: The grounds of Overture 16 are identical with those of Overture 5, with the exception of one additional ground which follows—Wm. P. Brink, S.C.)

*Ground:*

The view of Scripture is a major difference between the RCA and the CRC. The Acts and Proceedings of the General Synod of the RCA 1963 states, "Scripture as the work of the faithful God is infallible and inerrant in *all that it intends to teach* and accomplish concerning faith and life" (p. 265, italics added). This statement means that the church must determine what the Bible does and does not intend to teach or what man ought not to believe for salvation.

Classis Sioux Center

William Dryfhout, Stated Clerk

### Overture 17 — Synodical Examination of Candidates

(Art. 48)

Classis Sioux Center again presents its overture, this time to the synod of 1973, with the following recommendations for the examination of prospective candidates by synod itself:

1. That synod itself shall examine all prospective candidates for the ministry of the Word and Sacraments in the Christian Reformed Church.

*Grounds:*

a. This is properly the task of an assembly in which the whole church is officially and duly represented.

b. This is a task of utmost importance for the spiritual welfare of the congregations, and that for years to come. The argument that time is lacking because of the press of many matters on the synodical agenda can and should be met by having the churches in synod weigh priorities of responsibility carefully. Classis Sioux Center is convinced that the time of synod is often spent on matters of far less moment for the welfare of the churches than this, even though such matters may deserve some attention.

2. That synod adopt the following as its method for examining prospective candidates for the ministry of the Word and sacraments in the Christian Reformed Church:

a. Synod shall set aside the second full day of its sessions for this work.

b. Synod shall present at its first session, through the Stated Clerk, to all the delegates a dossier in written form on each prospective candidate containing the following information:

1) personal information: including name, age, church membership, family details (whether married, number of children);

2) faculty evaluation of the prospective candidate's academic and spiritual fitness for the gospel ministry;

3) statement of the candidate's summer assignment(s) with summary of the consistorial evaluation(s);

4) information, if such is available, of the candidate's desire to serve in a position other than that of the local congregation, e.g. home and foreign missions, chaplaincy, teaching, etc.

The above information is necessary for the delegates to be able to make a judgment before God on the candidates and their fitness and to be of assistance to congregations in their area who may desire and need such information.

c. Synod shall assign one hour for the examination of each group of no more than five prospective candidates.

d. Synod shall examine the prospective candidates personally on at least the following matters:

1) their commitment to the gospel ministry, especially the commission to preach and teach;

2) their view on the authority, infallibility and efficacy of the Scriptures;

3) their understanding of the nature, urgency and goal of preaching;

4) their commitment to the creedal standards of the Christian Reformed Church as well as to the regulations of the Church Order;

5) their understanding of and commitment to specific positions and practices adopted by the Christian Reformed Church with respect to:

—the preaching and teaching of "the sum of doctrine" contained in the Heidelberg Catechism;

—the place and necessity of Christian day schools;

—the incompatibility of membership in oathbound secret societies with membership in Christ's church;

—"close" or supervised communion by the consistories.

e. Synod shall assign the task of examining the prospective candidates to the first-named ministerial delegate of each classis by rotation, so that each classis through one of its delegates shall within the space of a few years have a direct part in the work.

f. Synod, at the conclusion of the examination of all the prospective candidates, shall meet in executive session to deliberate and decide upon each examinee individually, whether or not he shall be admitted to candidacy in the Christian Reformed Church.

g. Synod shall through its vice-president notify personally all those who have successfully sustained the examination; whereupon they shall be called into full synodical session so that its president may address them and offer appropriate prayer to God.

h. Synod shall make disposition of each case in which a prospective candidate has not successfully sustained the examination in the manner which it deems appropriate to the welfare of the churches and of the individual involved.

Classis Sioux Center

William Dryfhout, Stated Clerk

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## Overture 18 — A New Form of Subscription (Art. 89)

From time to time it is necessary for the church to re-examine the validity of positions long held and of practices long followed. A Reformed Church should always be in the process of reforming itself. We stand committed to this principle and, as occasions arise, we apply it. We are at present considering augmenting our creedal standards. Large questions like divorce, amusements, ecumenicity and missions have over the years engaged our concern.

Basic to all such consideration and reconsideration, as well as to the witness within and outside the church, is our creedal commitment. The confession of the church defines both our understanding of the Gospel and the freedom that we have in Christ to reflect on its meaning for contemporary life. The maintenance of the integrity of our confessions deserves the deepest concern of the church.

Close examination of the Form of Subscription gives, I fear, extensive reason to believe that, in its present form, it seriously interferes with the exercise of this concern. My reasons for entertaining this view are the following:

1. The present Form of Subscription appears to be an hierarchical, and, therefore, not a Reformed instrument. By hierarchical I understand government of the church by ecclesiastical judicatories without reference to the church as a whole. The form limits the process of creedal revision exclusively to ecclesiastical assemblies. The church to whom the creeds belong and out of whose life and concern with the Scriptures they arise has no voice in the discussion leading to final official action on proposed amendment of the creed. Even the most qualified theologians among us are barred from giving support to proposed changes, however convinced they may be of their scriptural character, if these changes contravene the accepted doctrine. Assemblies called upon to deal with gravamina are, when they do so, officially cut off from communion with the Church as a whole. The Scriptures nowhere sanction such an hierarchical division in the church. It is recorded in both the Old and the New Testaments that great questions of the faith were openly discussed by the people of God, notably the definitive issue confronting the Jerusalem assembly on the question of the circumcision of Gentile believers. It is scriptural to limit the right and authority of creedal revision to the institutional church in her official assemblies. It is, however, wholly against the New Testament conception of the nature of the church that the church as a whole should be officially excluded from the discussion and reflection out of which the official decisions respecting creedal change arise.

2. There have been only two gravamina in the history of the Christian Reformed Church. The story of their adjudication is a humiliating one. The first of these (treated by the synod as substantially a gravamen although it was not one technically), submitted by Professor D. H. Kromminga in 1945, made no progress at three synods and concern with it was terminated by his death. The

gravamen submitted by Dr. C. Boersma in 1952 took ten years to dispose of without any verdict being rendered.

3. Our denominational history shows that the Christian Reformed Church is very zealous in holding office-bearers to their ordination vows. At the same time, the church herself has not manifested the same zeal in discharging its obligations, set forth in the same ordination vows, in responding to gravamina which were presented to her for adjudication. She stands officially committed to *examine* and to *judge* them when they are submitted. She did neither in each of the two cases coming before her. A person of no less stature than Professor D. H. Kromminga, in a communication to the Synod of 1947 shortly before his death, deplored with moving eloquence the failure of the church to render the examination and judgment which the church "has bound itself to do by the ordination pledge."

If we are sensitive to the faithfulness which covenanted obligation places upon the church no less than upon her office-bearers, we should be deeply concerned how the church may be recalled to her solemnly pledged duty to *examine* and to *judge* gravamina when the exercise of that duty is invoked by an office-bearer.

4. The failure to discharge an obligation solemnly made to office-bearers in the presence of God and of the church in ordination and installation ceremonies would appear to be a direct result of the nature of the gravamen process. It excludes the church of Christ, notably the vast majority of her ministers and nearly all her eldership, from public concern with her own deepest interests. The Holy Spirit has been given to *the church*. Ecclesiastical assemblies may claim his guidance when in matters arising they are in communion with the body in which he pre-eminently dwells. The church does not derive the Spirit from the official assemblies, but the official assemblies derive him from the church. We cannot rightly assume the gift of guidance and illumination from the Holy Spirit for church assemblies which are in law and in fact cut off from the body to which the Holy Spirit in his illuminating power has been given. Is this not the very reason why the Reformed, along with other Protestant bodies, have always adamantly refused the hierarchical structuring of the church? What is left of the priesthood of believers when at the point that should count so heavily in the life of the church it stands disqualified even in her most gifted sons and daughters?

5. The vitality of the church's theology, her preaching, and her witness depend in the long run on the openness of the church to the Word of God. This openness does not exist in the basic and determinative area of creedal revision with its necessary condition of freedom of inquiry into and discussion of the meaning of the Spirit as he speaks to us through his Word.

6. The Form of Subscription with its absoluteness in wording and severity of openly threatened sanctions makes a signing of it with mental reservations inevitable. Who believes that Paul wrote Hebrews? Who "detests" the Anabaptists? Who believes that the definition of Christ's presence in the Lord's Supper according to the Belgic Confession is an adequate scriptural statement of that presence? Yet all office-bearers are required, by signing "sincerely and in good conscience before the Lord," to declare that they "heartily believe and are persuaded that all the articles and points of doctrine contained in the Confession and Catechism of the Reformed Churches, together with the explanation of some points of the aforesaid doctrine made by the National Synod of Dordrecht, 1618-19, do fully agree with the Word of God." And if we promise diligently to teach and faithfully to defend the aforesaid doctrine why is there a well-nigh universal silence in our churches and especially among our ministers on the doctrine of reprobation?

For these reasons I overture the synod to undertake the writing of a new instrument to replace the present form which

1. will be theologically and practically congruous with the Reformed conception of the church,
2. will make the obligation of the church to the office-bearer as explicit as that of the office-bearer to the church,
3. will reflect this mutuality in a new name for the Form of Subscription, such as The Ordination Covenant,
4. will recognize the fallible human aspect of the creeds and qualify the statement that the creeds "do fully agree with the Word of God,"
5. will include the provision that the submission of a gravamen carries with it both the right of the proposer to defend his view publicly and the right of the church as a whole to reflect openly on its scriptural validity or non-validity,
6. will provide that no synod shall accept a gravamen unless it has first been acted upon by the lower assemblies, namely by a consistory according to its competence, of which classis shall judge; and by the classis in terms of *examination* and *judgment*.
7. will require consistories, classes and synods to act on any gravamen that may be submitted to them with all deliberate speed.

In submitting this overture to synod, I respectfully call its attention to a series of nine articles on the Form of Subscription which I published in the Reformed Journal from October, 1970, to August, 1971. In the nature of the case, the rather extensive historical, theological, and biblical documentation, which I presented in them in support of the position which I now overture to the synod, could not be reproduced in the overture. Should the synod in responding to it decide to inquire into the adequacy of the present Form of Subscription, I request that the articles in question be made a part of its study.

Harry R. Boer

(The above overture was submitted to Classis Chicago South which "thanked Dr. Boer for his illuminating study" but did "not endorse the overture of Dr. Boer that 'synod undertake the writing of a new instrument to replace the present form'." —Wm. P. Brink, S.C.)

## Overture 19 — Rescind Decision on Biblical Authority

(Art. 32)

The consistory and members of the congregation of the Second Christian Reformed Church of Toronto have studied synod's decisions of 1972 with regard to the "Nature and Extent of Biblical Authority" and the guidelines for the churches in Report 44. Having given these matters study and careful consideration, we find ourselves unable to accept and/or to be bound by these guidelines, the pastoral advice, or the implications which arise from them.

Two things must be made clear:

1. While we must agree with the committee that these decisions do not have the status of a confession, yet these decisions come under Article 29 of the Church Order and are "*settled and binding for the churches . . .*" Then note: We have *guidelines* for our *understanding* and future *discussion of the nature and extent of biblical authority*. We are now bound by these guidelines as they set the direction and mark the way in which we must understand and discuss biblical authority. The same can be said for the pastoral advice.
2. We judge that a scholarly committee, working on behalf of synod, and synod itself in two regular meetings do mean what they say, i.e., that the many qualifications which appear in this report are limitations of the nature and extent of biblical authority and we no longer have an authoritative Bible. We believe that the authority of Scripture is neither derived from nor dependent on its content, but it is derived from and dependent on its Author.

We list a number of reasons for our decision.

## I. CONCERNING THE GUIDELINES AND PASTORAL ADVICE:

A. Synod presents a position in which the nature and extent of Biblical authority is determined or conditioned by the contents of the Bible. The Bible is said to be *authoritative only* when it speaks of saving revelation in Jesus Christ. Whereas in fact the nature of the Scripture's authority is divine and the extent is total because God is the author. With Synod's decision every man *has his own Bible* and is entitled to decide what relates to saving revelation.

To illustrate: "In this way the *nature* and *extent* of biblical authority involve both the authority of the divine author and the content and purpose of his authoritative message. These are like two sides of one coin" (Acts of Synod, 1972, p. 508). For further illustration, see Appendix to I, A.

B. Synod claims that Scripture is solely and exclusively redemptive in character (Acts of Synod, 1972, pp. 508-513). Whereas the Bible clearly teaches that it transforms and hardens, brings life and death, redemption and judgment.

To establish this point, we believe synod has fallen into the kind of erroneous exegesis against which it itself warns. On page 508 of the Acts of 1972, the committee quotes from John 20:30, 31, Romans 1:16 and II Timothy 3:15-17 to establish that Scripture is solely and *exclusively* redemptive. These passages do prove that Scripture is redemptive in character and purpose, but *not* that it is *exclusively* so. There is *more* in Scripture concerning its purpose. It declares itself to be a savor of life unto life and death unto death. It declares its proclamation to be unto heart transformation and also unto heart hardening. (Isaiah 6 as also quoted by Christ regarding his parables Matthew 13, Acts 28). The Bible both speaks of and brings about both life and death, redemption and judgment. (Cf. also Heidelberg Catechism, Lord's Day 2, question 2 and Lord's Day 31, question 84.) We must not suppose that the Word of God hardened only some people to whom it was first addressed.

By means of such erroneous exegesis synod presents the Scripture as man-focused rather than God-focused. It is, of course, true that the Scriptures are written for and to man. But the guidelines and advice are speaking of the purpose and intent of the Scriptures. They state that the purpose and intent of the Scriptures is redemptive. In reality, the purpose and intent of the Scripture is to *accomplish the purposes of God*, including the redemption of his own, to his praise and glory. This he does through covenantal revelation to man. This covenant God has bound himself to his promises, and we cannot bind him in his revelation to us to a final purpose that ends in man.

C. Synod demonstrates unresolved confusion of the distinction between authority and interpretation. Whereas the Bible clearly teaches that all Scripture bears the same authority, that of its author, God, which is in no way affected by the interpretation and application men may make. The nature of that authority is always divine and the extent total.

One example in which authority, interpretation and application are hopelessly confused in a single sentence would be, "Similarly, while the extent of Scripture's *authority* is plenary and verbal, the words must be *understood* in the context in which they are given and with the meaning *intended* by the divine author." (Acts of Synod, 1972, p. 510). For further illustrations, see Appendix to I, C.

D. Synod makes a clear and unqualified confession of the Bible's historical *reliability impossible*. This being true of the whole Bible, this also is true of any part. Whereas the Scripture's testimony of itself provides an unshakable foundation for the believer's confession. *All* that the Scripture says is to be believed because the author says so.

The guidelines deprive the believer of his right and privilege to apply the authoritative Word of God to the situations of life, or in any way to follow up the

biblical mandate to discover the wolves among the sheepfold. They create the necessity of an oracle (a scientist or scholar) to interpret either general or special revelation. Thus the guidelines tend to become guidelines to confusion where clearcut distinctions are no longer possible. Consequently, the officebearer's signature on the Formula of Subscription becomes meaningless. For illustrations, see Appendix to I, D.

E. Synod asserts the plenary authority of general revelation (Acts, 1972, pp. 506f and 537f). This assertion equates general and special revelation (makes revelation in the Bible and revelation in nature equal). The understanding of the biblical record of Genesis is called into question in the light of what some scientists have discovered. In effect, this does more than equate: It makes general revelation superior, giving it priority above the Bible. For explanation, see Appendix to I, E.

#### II. OUR CONCERN FOR THE WAY IN WHICH SYNOD DEALT WITH THIS MATTER:

The matter was brought to the floor of synod and decided in a manner which effectively deprives the member churches of the right to study, appeal or protest. We do not believe in such a form of church government—it is synodocratic.

Report 44, which certainly was a matter of tremendous concern and importance for the churches, did not even come before the churches until the Agenda for Synod was published. This meant that no congregation, consistory, or person could present any evaluation officially before the churches before synod dealt with it. This is especially pertinent and deplorable when one considers the amount of concern Report 36 elicited from the churches and the fact that the Committee maintains the same basic thrust and approach in Report 44. It is a fact that this report is made up of some fifty-three pages of *confusing and difficult material*.

#### III. OUR RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER CHURCHES:

We are concerned about the effect on the relationship to other denominations with whom we were in correspondence. Churches which criticized the Christian Reformed denomination for possible trends toward liberalism have in some measure been censured and now have a redefined relationship to the Christian Reformed Church.

Talks with two denominations, the Orthodox Presbyterian and the Canadian Reformed, have been broken off. Both are known as orthodox denominations who question the trend toward liberalism in our churches. To quote the editor of the *Presbyterian Guardian*, "Whatever trend toward liberalism may or may not exist within the Christian Reformed Church, that church seems clearly to feel more at home with the more liberal of its brother and sister churches."

#### DECLARATION AND REQUEST:

In view of the above, which of necessity was put in summary form, we cannot be bound by the adopted guidelines and pastoral advice. Since under the guidelines and pastoral advice a variety of views are possible, this material does not lend itself to a formal protest. To attempt a formal protest would lead to further confusion, endless, frustrating dialogue, with the result that the historic faith is further eroded.

For this reason we ask synod to rescind its decision. It is our prayer that synod may repent of its decision. Further, we leave our future in the hand of our gracious and Almighty Father in heaven.

May our God of grace bless you and lead you as you consider our deep concern.

Consistory, Second Christian Reformed Church  
of Toronto, Ontario

J. J. Byker, Pres.

N. Gazendam, Corres. Clerk

## Overture 20—Change Ministers' Pension Fund Rules

(Art. 42)

Classis Minnesota North overtures synod to instruct the Ministers' Pension Committee to change its ruling which states that only one minister from each church comes under the quota payment to read ". . . that all Christian Reformed ministers who are serving individual congregations as assistant pastors, or are working in the congregation, or are employed as a 'team ministry' by the congregation become eligible for benefits under the Pension Plan by means of quota payments," and that the quota be adjusted to meet the proportionate expense.

### *Grounds:*

1. The present ruling does financial injustice to churches that engage in a "team ministry" or churches that employ more than one minister in their congregation.

2. The changing nature of the ministry within the local church (involvement in counseling, education, evangelism) necessitates a "team ministry" effort on the part of many churches.

3. The "team ministry" approach, by necessity, involves the local consistory in the involvement and supervision of the second pastor, and also involves the second pastor in the life of the calling and supporting church.

4. The present arrangement of the Pension Committee (\$950 for each additional minister in the congregation for pension) discriminates against the church that is desirous of maintaining the "team ministry" approach.

5. The quota adjustment for this change would necessitate a \$.01½ increase per family per year for each additional minister not now included in the Pension Plan Quota payment.

Classis Minnesota North

Carl J. Toeset, Stated Clerk

## Overture 21—Relations with Reformed Church in America

(Art. 45)

Classis Holland overtures the Synod of 1973 to instruct the Inter-Church Relations Committee to determine whether there are any areas of disagreement in the interpretation and application of Scripture between the Christian Reformed Church and the Reformed Church in America, before the various joint ventures being recommended are approved.

### *Grounds:*

1. Synod must determine agreement in principles before approving and recommending joint practices with another religious group in such strategic areas as: missions, education, worship, and youth activities.

2. The unity which Christ requires is not merely a unity of action. (John 17:22b—" . . . that they may be one, EVEN AS WE ARE ONE . . .").

Classis Holland

Walter Hofman, Stated Clerk

## Overture 22—A Guideline for Quota Increases

(Art. 83)

The Consistory of the First Christian Reformed Church of Kalamazoo overtures Synod of 1973 not to exceed the national annual family income increase guideline acknowledged by the Synod of 1968 in granting quota increases. (See

Acts of Synod 1968, Article 118, IV. B. 1. page 90 and Supplement 45, page 504, paragraphs 2 and 3.)

*Grounds:*

1. The average increase in quotas per year for the last six years has been 8.4%. (See the chart below)
2. Congregations are finding it necessary to decrease local commitments in order to pay denominational quotas.
3. Increasing resistance at annual congregational meetings to paying ever-increasing denominational quotas. This situation tends to adversely affect the spirit of Christian brotherhood and the communion of the saints which we prayerfully seek at these meetings.
4. Denominational unity will be seriously harmed if such resistance is not acknowledged by keeping quotas strictly in line with the ability to pay.

Denominational Quotas				National Annual Family Income Increase		
Year	Total	Increase	%	Acts	Year	%
1967	\$103.60	\$		1968 p. 504:	1962-1967	5.3%
1968	114.00	10.40	10.0%	1969 p. 82:	6.3%	with 3.9% inflation
1969	121.25	7.25	6.4	1970 p. 82:	7.5%	with 6.0% inflation
1970	127.40	6.15	5.1	1971 p. 120:	6.8%	
1971	143.50	16.10	12.6	1972 p. 81ff:	N.A.F.I.I.	not cited
1972	155.50	12.00	8.4			
1973	168.00	12.50	8.0			

(Average quota increase is 8.4%)

Kenneth Alphenaar, Clerk

(A motion to submit this overture was considered by Classis Kalamazoo on Jan. 19, 1973 and was defeated.)

## Overture 23 — Revise Form for Excommunication

(Art. 17)

Classis Muskegon overtures synod as follows

1. To revise the present form for excommunication.

*Ground:*

The present form is not clear and simple; its language is archaic and subject to misunderstanding.

As instances of archaic language we present the following:

- recover himself, line 4
  - we should be constrained further to grieve for him, line 12
  - at the present time compelled to proceed, line 13
  - yet incurable member, line 16
  - keep no company with him, line 27
  - fearing thy judgments which thou bringest upon the stiff-necked, line 55-56
- As instances in which the language is subject to misunderstanding:
- the great sin committed and the grievous offense given, line 2
  - by his stubbornness he daily aggravates his transgression, which in itself is not small, line 9-10
  - compelled to proceed to his excommunication according to the command and charge given us in God's Holy Word, line 13-14
  - so long as he persists obstinately and impenitently in his sins, he is excluded from the fellowship of Christ, line 21-22
  - Further, we exhort you, beloved Christians, to keep no company with him,

to the end that he may be ashamed; yet count him not as an enemy, but at times admonish him as you would a brother, line 27-29

2. To study the possibility of providing a method other than excommunication whereby the consistory of a church can terminate membership.

*Grounds:*

1. It is essential that the church maintain the high importance of membership and at the same time deal with its members in good order. Due to the fact that there are cases in which membership should be terminated by excommunication is too severe a measure, we should provide an appropriate method for such termination.

2. Some churches are using other methods of terminating membership which are neither uniform nor approved.

Classis Muskegon

Walter Tolsma, Stated Clerk

## Overture 24 — On Amnesty

(Art. 78)

*History*—On December 18, 1972, the Ann Arbor Campus Chapel Household for Peace petitioned the Consistory of the Ann Arbor Christian Reformed Church to overture Classis Lake Erie to overture synod to support a national policy of amnesty for those who by reason of conscience could not participate in the Second Indochina War. Believing that such a policy is consistent with our denomination's earlier decisions, the Ann Arbor Consistory voted to approve the request and sent the overture to Classis Lake Erie.

The overture was not sustained by Classis Lake Erie at its January 12, 1973 meeting. We, however, believe that this issue deserves denominational consideration especially at this time when amnesty is being discussed by leaders and citizens of our country. Therefore, the Consistory of the Ann Arbor Christian Reformed Church at its March 12, 1973 meeting decided to appeal the decision of Classis Lake Erie in rejecting the overture, and ask the Synod of 1973 to consider this most timely matter.

(Some members of classis privately suggested a few changes for clarification. These changes were made in the background material and are reflected in the overture as it is now presented. However, the overture remains substantially unchanged as that presented to Classis Lake Erie.)

*Overture*—Inasmuch as the Christian Reformed Church has supported the principle of selective conscientious objection and since this alternative is not recognized by Federal statute, the Consistory of the Ann Arbor Christian Reformed Church overtures synod:

1. To urge pastors, consistories, and its church membership to fulfill their duty to extend Christian love and concern to all who have been directly or indirectly punished for resisting the Second Indochina War because of conscience which has been informed by Scripture.

We also request synod, as the voice of the church's membership:

2. To fulfill its duty to extend Christian love and concern by again sending our 1939 and 1969 decisions regarding the Christian attitude toward war and peace to the President and each member of Congress with the following statement:

In 1969 we sent to you our TESTIMONY REGARDING THE CHRISTIAN'S ATTITUDE TOWARD WAR AND PEACE, a document adopted by our denomination in 1939 and reaffirmed in 1969. With that document we also sent to you decisions that were made by our denomination in 1969. Those documents still represent the position of our denomination.

Based on this position and in respect for individual conscience, in the interest of national reconciliation and in the name of Christian love and justice we urge the President of the United States and Congress to grant, at the earliest opportunity, amnesty for those who by reason of their Christian conscientious objection to the Second Indochina War are in exile, at large, incarcerated, or deprived of the full rights of citizenship. We do not dishonor, but respect, the consciences of those who fought and died.

*Grounds:*

1. Although synod has never declared a specific war to be just or unjust, it has always supported the man who could not in good conscience before God bear arms in a given war. The request for amnesty for such men does not make a judgment on the justness or unjustness of the war; it does support the man who in good conscience could not bear arms in the present war.

2. A request to declare amnesty for conscientious objectors to the Second Indochina War is a concrete action which implements the words of synodical decisions especially the 1969 decision urging us to “. . . extend Christian love and concern to all the draft eligible including those who struggle with the decision regarding selective conscientious objection and *its consequences*” [Italics ours] (Acts of Synod, 1969, p. 99).

3. Such a statement also implements our responsibility as a denomination to speak the Word of God as we perceive it to those in authority over us, a responsibility clearly recognized by the 1969 Synod which sent our decisions to Washington.

4. Amnesty is consistent with the biblical message of love, compassion, reconciliation, justice, and the message of individual accountability before God.

*Comment*—The background information leading to this overture is included for your consideration. Although we have certain reservations on some of the statements expressed, they will help in understanding the thoughts of the persons who drafted the overture.

Harvey Vredeveld, Clerk

## Background

### I

## AMNESTY AND OUR RELIGIOUS HERITAGE

Few issues have received less unanimity within the historic Christian community than those questions which relate to the status and prerogatives of the secular state. Throughout its history different segments of the church have developed very different responses to the question of how and when a Christian should serve the policies of his government. The Christian Reformed Church also includes within its membership that diversity of opinion. In its theology, however, as well as in its history and background, the Christian Reformed Church is committed to a singular strand of Christian interpretation as articulated by John Calvin (especially *Institutes*, Book IV, Chap. 20). The tradition to which we are committed is bipolar, concurrently emphasizing our responsibility to the state and our ultimate loyalty to God. Since no Calvinist has ever identified the will of the state as being one with the will of God, the relationship between those poles can be either cooperative or antagonistic depending on the moral responsibility of the state.

All of this is obvious, yet it is extremely important that we approach the question of amnesty fully aware of the basic insights of our tradition. A question of this importance ought not to be merely considered in terms of our current political climate but also against the background of our tradition.

*Amnesty and the Decisions of Synod*—In 1939, 1964, and 1969, synod specifically responded to the questions surrounding the military draft and the responsibility of Christians in time of war. Synod noted that both Scripture (Romans 13:1-5) and its own Confession (Confession of Faith, Article XXXVI) required man to obey the civil magistrate. However, synod also acknowledged that these same sources recognized not only “the right of Christians but even the duty under certain definite circumstances to refuse obedience to the civil magistrate” (Acts of Synod, 1969, p. 98).

The only conscientious objector to military service whose claim the church cannot repudiate is he who, recognizing his duty to obey his government and to defend his country in response to its call to arms, has intelligent and adequate grounds to be convinced that the given war to which he is summoned is an unjust war . . . The only course open to such a person is to resort to passive resistance and to refuse to bear arms in that given war (Acts of Synod, 1939, p. 249).

The position of the church then is clear: The Christian Reformed Church recognizes only two choices as legitimate: to serve one’s country or to refuse to serve when there is objection to the justness of a specific war. All other kinds of objection to warfare including objection to all war are not acceptable.

*Amnesty and the Law*—The United States government has also made a stand on that matter of conscientious objection, but a stand quite contrary to that of our church. Exemption from military duty is only granted to those who are conscientiously opposed to *all* war, a position rejected by Synod in 1939. In short, the government recognizes one type of conscientious objection and the church another. The result is obvious and tragic. For those who found pacifism reprehensible and yet found the war in Indochina contrary to the dictates of their moral judgment, there was no legal recourse including alternative service. They had either to violate the law or their conscience.

There were many both in and out of our fellowship who had “intelligent and adequate grounds to be convinced” that the Second Indochina War was an unjust war. As a result, there now exists a group of young men for whom the combination of events, the church’s teachings, and their own conscience has resulted in incarceration or exile.

*The Church’s Responsibility*—Understanding that the ultimate loyalty of a Christian is not to government but to God (Acts 5:29), synod, in 1969, recognized the need to counsel and support that ultimate loyalty.

Synod urges pastors, consistories, and other spiritual counselors to fulfill their duty to instruct, advise, counsel, and extend Christian love and concern to all the draft eligible, including those who struggle with the decision regarding selective conscientious objection *and its consequences* [Italics ours] (Acts of Synod, 1969, p. 99).

In short, synod recognized the needs of those men who have been trapped between the teachings of our church and the laws of the land.

Our church has promised these men “Christian love and concern.” The church has publically supported their choice even when it meant violating the law. Therefore, once hostilities cease, it becomes incumbent upon the church to defend that choice before the civil magistrate by pleading for amnesty—a legal tool which our system can provide for just this kind of situation. Inasmuch as these convictions, ideals, and choices were nurtured in the church, the failure to support amnesty would be tantamount to abandoning the church’s own principle of selective conscientious objection.

Petitioning both the President and Congress for amnesty is a concrete action which implements the decision of Synod in 1969 to extend special concern for those facing the consequences of selective conscientious objection. Supporting amnesty is not only consistent with past synodical actions but *is the end result of our official position* and necessary for the integrity of synod. The request for

amnesty does not make a judgment on the justness or unjustness of the war; it merely supports the man who in good conscience could not bear arms in the present war.

## II

### OTHER REASONS FOR SUPPORTING AMNESTY

Central to our argument is that the call for amnesty is the inevitable consequence of our denomination's teachings and earlier decisions. There are other reasons for supporting amnesty which are not as generic to our religious heritage but rest upon more pragmatic grounds. *These reasons are not intended to support the present overture*, but since these reasons are part of the present national debate on amnesty, they are included here to lend an additional perspective on our discussion.

*Amnesty and the Nature of Punishment*—Some contend that amnesty should be granted because the purposes of punishment are likely to be frustrated with respect to the conscientious objector. One purpose of punishment is to make restitution for evil. But this purpose is meaningless for the conscientious objector since he believes that his resistance is not an evil but a good.

Other purposes of punishment are (1) to deter crime, (2) to protect society, and (3) to rehabilitate the criminal. But in the case of the conscientious objector, there is (1) no criminal intent to deter, (2) no violence against society to thwart, nor (3) is there anything about the conscientious objector to rehabilitate.

*Benefits of Amnesty*—Amnesty also deserves to be supported because of its benefits to individuals directly involved and to the nation at large. Amnesty should help to heal the wounds and divisions of war and thereby restore a measure of confidence in our government on the part of those who have been alienated by the war. For the individuals directly involved, amnesty will remove the legal restrictions against convicted resisters who are barred by state laws from voting or running for public office. Technical felonies and dishonorable discharges restrict entrance into certain sectors of the labor market. Finally, amnesty will put an end to the emotional and economic suffering of the families of those who resisted the Second Indochina War.

Many ask whether amnesty would be an affront to the 55,000 Americans who died and the hundreds of thousands who were wounded in the Second Indochina War. We recognize that human need to preserve significance and justification for all those who suffered and died. We share with the affected families their sense of loss and broken spirits. There are no words nor tribute that can compensate for their loss.

## III

### OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

How amnesty should be provided raises an additional set of considerations—should amnesty be conditional or unconditional, universal or selective. In addition, people ask whether there are historical precedents and ask when should amnesty be given. *The overture does not make a judgment about these issues*; they can only be resolved through national debate. On some of these issues, the Household for Peace has certain opinions which are reflected in the comments below. Although the appeal is silent with respect to these issues, they are included here because such considerations are an inevitable part of any discussion on amnesty.

*Who May Be Affected by Amnesty*—When discussing amnesty, it is important that we not limit our discussion to the stereotyped long-haired upper-middle class

young man who went to Canada or prison. For example, some men did not come to a negative judgment about the war until after they had entered the armed forces and then deserted. Obviously, not all men who refused to bear arms did so conscientiously. However, for their exercise of conscience, the following classes of individuals fled to an alien country, were incarcerated, remained-at-large, were court martialed, or were punished in some other manner:

1. Those who refused conscription because of their conscientious objection to this war.

2. Those who were already in the armed forces but could not conscientiously participate in the armed forces while the Second Indochina War continued.

3. Those who were already in the armed forces and were punished for their anti-war activities such as promoting anti-war literature.

4. Those who were conscientious objectors to all wars but were denied C.O. status either by their draft board or military unit.

5. Those who spoke out as civilians and were punished for actively resisting the war, e.g., assisting resisters within the armed forces.

All five classes may become eligible for amnesty but the overture speaks largely to the first two classes of individuals.

*Conditional or Unconditional Amnesty*—Some believe that amnesty should be conditional, i.e., amnesty will be provided if former resisters engage in some form of alternate service when they return to society. The appeal to synod does not address the question of whether amnesty should be conditional or unconditional. Many of the Household for Peace believe that amnesty should be unconditional because conditional amnesty implies forgiveness earned by making restitution through alternative service. Etymologically, amnesty means to *forget*, not to *forgive*. Forgiveness implies previous guilt. The purpose of amnesty is to give due recognition to the exercise of individual conscience despite its conflict with civil law.

Others believe that conditional amnesty should only apply to those who deserted or fled the country and not to those who were imprisoned. The underlying assumption is that there is something inherently regrettable about breaking a law despite its lack of justness and that the noble course of action is to submit to the consequences of violating the law by submitting to imprisonment. The inference of this assumption is that those who left the country are second class conscientious objectors, and should, therefore, be treated differently when amnesty is declared. Indeed, the conscientious objector must be prepared to suffer the consequences of his decision. However, considering prison conditions today, it is inappropriate, if not arrogant, for society, to expect the conscientious objector to choose prison rather than exile. It would, therefore, be inappropriate to discriminate between "deserving" and "non-deserving" conscientious resisters.

*Universal or Selective Amnesty*—Ideally, amnesty should be selective rather than universal, i.e., amnesty should be provided on the basis of one's conscientious objection to the war. It follows then, that some judicial procedure would be required to discriminate between those whose motives were sincere and those whose motives were not sincere. The Household for Peace believes that such a procedure would theoretically be desirable but in reality would not be able to function well. Sincerity of motive is difficult to determine, and in some cases, decisions were made hastily under duress. No judicial process would be sufficiently discriminating. Earlier experiences with amnesty review boards have proved how difficult it has been to determine sincerity and to achieve any degree of equity. The overture to synod does not speak directly to this issue, but the Household believes that because proof of conscience is inherently difficult to establish, universal amnesty should be given due consideration.

*Historical Precedent*—Amnesty is not new in our country. On numerous other occasions, both Congress and the President have seen fit to provide some form of amnesty (*Congressional Record*, June 13, 1972, p. S9257). In 1795 George Washington granted a full, free and entire pardon to those involved in an insurrection in Pennsylvania against the United States. Abraham Lincoln extended a limited amnesty to those who fought on behalf of the Confederacy or deserted the Union Forces. In 1868 Andrew Johnson proclaimed a *universal and unconditional amnesty*. A limited amnesty was provided after World War II.

*When Should Amnesty Be Given*—The end of the war would be a logical time to declare amnesty. The Vietnam War ended technically on January 27, 1973. However, in Indochina, as earlier in Korea, some amount of American involvement is likely to continue indefinitely. Abraham Lincoln issued a partial amnesty already during the Civil War. The Household for Peace suggests that the moment when draftees are no longer required to fight in Indochina would be an appropriate time to declare amnesty. That moment has now been long passed.

#### IV

### CONCLUDING STATEMENT

The Household for Peace believes that a national policy of amnesty should be supported irrespective of one's position on the war. The call for amnesty makes no explicit or implicit judgment about the justness or unjustness of the war; it merely respects the integrity of those who could not serve because of conscience.

From a secular point of view, amnesty for selective conscientious objectors would indicate a continuing national commitment for the principle of individual accountability reaffirmed at Nuremberg after World War II. The Nuremberg Principle creates a tremendous dilemma for a man of military age who is held personally responsible for his acts, and yet who, if he refuses to serve in a war or disobeys orders he considers unjust or immoral, will be imprisoned or court martialed. Amnesty provides a means of resolving this dilemma.

A special responsibility has been placed upon the Christian Reformed Church. It too has upheld the principle of individual accountability before God. More specifically, our denomination has limited the range of choices it considers biblically justified with respect to war. That range is limited by the principle of *selective* conscientious objection which often places a young man in direct conflict with our government which only permits *total* conscientious objection as an alternative to military service. Our church has promised "Christian love and concern" to those caught on the horns of this dilemma. The call for amnesty implements that love and concern.

### Overture 25 — Amend Church Order 36a

(Art. 80)

Classis Eastern Canada overtures Synod of 1973 to amend Article 36a of the Church Order, changing the words, ". . . The meeting shall be presided over by the minister, . . ." to read: ". . . Ordinarily the meeting shall be presided over by the minister . . ."

#### *Grounds:*

1. The offices of ministers and elders as rulers are equal.
2. There are experienced elders who are quite capable of chairing meetings of consistory.
3. In critical (crucial) times, such as when a congregation is without a pastor, elders preside over the meetings and have proven themselves capable to do so quite adequately.

4. The minister is called and ordained to a prophetic and pastoral office and is not necessarily the best qualified member of consistory to serve as chairman.

Classis Eastern Canada

Adrianus Velthoen, Stated Clerk

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### Overture 26 — Rules for Admission of Candidates

(Art. 48)

Classis Eastern Canada overtures synod to change the rules for admission of candidates into the ministry so that a candidate—otherwise acceptable to the churches—may still be asked, after his admission into the ministry, to remove such weaknesses as may become apparent during the examination, in consultation with a person appointed by classis, out of pastoral concern and only for one year, provided this meets with the approval of the synodical deputies present at the examination. The classis must decide in each instance whether a supplementary examination will be required or whether a report of the person appointed by the classis is sufficient.

*Grounds:*

A candidate may be sufficiently qualified to enter the ministry when one takes into account the total results of an examination, and yet be deficient on one or two points which will need strengthening for an overall effective ministry.

Under the present rules, there is no way to require the strengthening of such weaknesses short of denying admittance of the candidate into the ministry.

Many candidates enter the pastorate of a small church where they will have the time to strengthen weaknesses but they may not have sufficient motivation to do so unless classis ensures it is done.

A plan such as this may be helpful in checking the trend of ministers leaving the ministry after one or two charges and will help strengthen the total ministry of the denomination.

*Note:* The word "weaknesses" is not to be interpreted to include doctrinal convictions not in accordance with Scripture and the creeds.

Classis Eastern Canada

Adrianus Velthoen, Stated Clerk

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### Overture 27 — Modify Rules of Fund for Needy Churches

(Art. 37)

The Garfield Christian Reformed Church Consistory and Classis Chicago North overture the synod to modify or completely rewrite present Fund for Needy Churches guidelines so that young churches growing out of mission work in population centers can come directly under new guidelines for assistance.

**STANDPOINT:**

Few if any growing churches in the population centers of North America can be considered for assistance from the Fund for Needy Churches except by way of exception to present rules. Current Fund for Needy Churches guidelines have been tailored to meet the needs of rural or suburban, middle-income congregations established through geographic extension rather than through evangelical outreach.

*Grounds:*

1. The original relationship of the Fund for Needy Churches to Home Missions structures and the current goal of Evangelism Thrust to establish evangelism as a priority in our denomination are a challenge to seriously re-evaluate the operating principles of this important synodical committee.

2. Present rules requiring thirty families (in order to qualify) discourage the development of indigenous spiritual leadership.

3. Present per-family contributions requirements fail to take into account varying economic conditions within the United States. (Such variety is acknowledged for Canada.) Population centers are typically low-income areas which nevertheless have a high cost of living. Moreover, interracial ministry typically involves young churches in costs higher than those in churches now eligible for FNC assistance.

4. Present FNC rules were formulated without serious consideration of the needs of Indian, Oriental, Spanish, and Afro-American churches. To avoid prejudice in favor of a single ethnic group, the Fund for Needy Churches Committee should be mandated explicitly to serve all nations in Christ's church.

Garfield Christian Reformed Church  
Benjamin Powell, Clerk  
Classis Chicago North  
O. Breen, Stated Clerk

## Overture 28 — Special Assistance from Fund for Needy Churches

(Art. 37)

The Garfield Christian Reformed Church Consistory and Classis Chicago North overture synod to instruct the Fund for Needy Churches Committee to provide assistance of \$8,000 for salary subsidy beginning January 1, 1974, by way of exception to the present rules for one year.

### *Grounds:*

1. The Fund for Needy Churches was originally part of the Home Missions structure. Arguments for its present rules have always included assurances of flexibility for special cases in serving the mission of the church.

2. Our mission outreach remains strong. In the 1970 *Yearbook* we listed 10 families, in the 1973 *Yearbook* we are able to list 18 families. This percentage of increase, and especially the number received through evangelism, compares well with other churches in our classis. This numerical increase is but one index of the Lord's blessing on the work which the 1972 and 1973 grants from the Fund for Needy Churches have enabled us to continue uninterrupted.

3. Numerical growth can actually decrease per-family giving in an urban church even when stewardship is given priority. It is most important that we heed James 2:2, 3 in welcoming new members into our fellowship. Moreover, we are convinced that the spiritual well-being of our church and its place in the denomination require stewardship in benevolence, Christian day school costs, and denominational quota contributions alongside of basic church budget items. (This year's budget projects full quota participation. Last year's figure of \$11.25 included only Ministers' Pension Fund quota contributions.)

4. The purpose for which the fund is intended, *i.e.*, salary subsidy, is consistent with the purpose of the Fund for Needy Churches. Garfield Church is able to pay other major items of actual salary, such as parsonage, through weekly per family budget of \$12.10.

5. We hope that this overture for continued denominational support of our mission in East Garfield through the FNC concerns the churches in common (Church Order, Art. 28b).

Garfield Christian Reformed Church  
Benjamin Powell, Clerk  
Classis Chicago North  
O. Breen, Stated Clerk

## Overture 29 — Reject Proposed Marriage Guidelines (Art. 62)

The consistory of the Second Christian Reformed Church of Wellsburg, Iowa, urges synod to reject Report 40 (Marriage Guidelines) and to re-assert the positions on divorce and remarriage adopted by the Synods of 1956 and 1968.

### Grounds:

1. The report, in minimizing the *contractual, covenant* nature of marriage in favor of a "relationship of fidelity," makes its real beginning and ending points depend on some undefined personal commitment to each other and therefore subject to rationalizing premarital sex and divorce as a lively option when the commitment fades.

2. Asking consistories to recognize *no* innocent parties in marital breakdowns is to do a gross injustice and slander to those "extremely rare" instances where there is *relative* guilt. This is not Christian mercy. It is judging rashly and unheard. True, consistories should hesitate to conclude innocence simply because of an act of intercourse outside of marriage by the other party, yet there are situations of *relative* guilt which should subject only one to formal discipline; for example, where one partner, for all his faults, is at least trying to repair the breakdown by confession, forgiveness, and counseling, while the other continues to destroy the possibilities for reconciliation by the insult of an extra-marital relationship and hurried arrangements for a divorce that will allow for a re-marriage. If the mere presence of contributing shortcomings must stop all talk of innocence, the church has abdicated its power of judgment and discipline given to her by the Lord, and surrendered it to the constantly changing and even conflicting opinions of marriage counselors, psychiatrists, and social workers. The warning of I Corinthians 6:1-8 against such a surrender is as applicable to marriage relations as to the property matters of the original context.

3. The report, in asking for a clean distinction between internal marriage breakdown as always wrong, and legal divorce as a last resort way out, is asking that the overt act be declared less sinful than the processes leading up to it. *Every* marriage is between two *sinners* whose failings could lead to discord. The Bible's warning against divorce reminds us all, "Work it out with God's help. Having taken your vows before him for life, you have no choice." He who seeks divorce is asking to be freed from this obligation of believers to work things out. If the church adopts the report, it will be saying, in effect, to some, "We don't believe God's grace is sufficient for you. Some things are impossible with God. You are therefore free of your obligation to seek any more help from him in solving your marital problems." When the report asks that we recognize "dead marriages," and those which have become but "empty shells," it is using language foreign to the Scriptures which strikes at the very heart of our faith in the power of God's grace.

4. The report is totally unbiblical in recommending that we allow re-marriage as a viable option simply because of a positive response to pastoral guidance and care. The committee fails to apply the thrust of I Corinthians 7:10-13, which is that the marriage relationship is so binding in the Lord, that should a separation take place, the door to possible reconciliation *not* be closed by remarriage to others. Confident that the grace of God can restore the most fractured human relationships, the separated must show their faith that God can do this to their own broken relationship *by remaining unmarried*. When Paul adds, "I give charge, yea not I, but the Lord," he is showing that this is not mere cultural adaptation of the gospel, but a permanent principle. When Peter objected to Jesus' strong words on divorce in Matthew 19:9 as too stringent, Jesus said, "Not all men can receive this saying, but they to whom it is given" (11). Believers, with whom the church presumes to be dealing in its discipline, are the ones given the grace

to keep such sayings, even if it means living as "eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake" (12), which is the effect of remaining unmarried out of obedience to Christ.

5. Although the committee did not choose the term, "Guidelines" suggests option and flexibility, which is hardly to be encouraged in an area of life so carefully guarded by God's law. It conflicts with the earnest desire of the thankful believer to do *all* the will of God, as expressed in question 94 of the Catechism, "so that I leave and forsake all creatures rather than do even the least thing against his will."

Second Chr. Ref. Church of  
Wellsburg, Iowa

John H. Elenbaas, President

John E. Riekema, clerk

### Overture 30 — Response to Neo-Pentecostal Report

(Art. 76)

The council of the Western Springs Christian Reformed Church presents the following overture for synod's adoption:

The report on neo-Pentecostalism indicates much research through interviewing of neo-Pentecostals and study of neo-Pentecostal literature and of studying reports on neo-Pentecostalism in other denominations. Texts of the Scripture have also been studied. The committee is to be commended for its study. However, the committee itself admits that they acknowledge the same tentativeness about their own analysis. If the analysis of neo-Pentecostalism is tentative, the counsels based on this type of analysis can only be tentative, at the most. In the analysis the premise, that the more "spectacular" gifts of the Spirit are continuous throughout the New Testament age, is not satisfactorily proved from history nor the Scriptures. That Scripture is silent concerning the continuity of gifts does not prove the continuity. The history of the church demonstrates the non-continuity of "spectacular" gifts of the Holy Spirit.

The council of the Western Springs Christian Reformed Church overtures Synod of 1973 to declare that the counsels of the (majority) report on neo-Pentecostalism are ambiguous and impractical on the following grounds:

1. The hermeneutical technique of the neo-Pentecostal is in contradiction to the hermeneutical technique used by the broad spectrum of Protestantism and particularly our Reformed hermeneutical principles. The counsels imply that these two disparate techniques can live in the same church. An "experience" founded on neo-Pentecostal principles of interpretation is directed to express itself in a Reformed way.

2. The individualistic interpretation of Scripture cannot be harmonized with the Reformed interpretation of Scripture which is corporate, covenantal and which supplies the foundation for our distinctive world and life view.

a. This individualism is reflected in the lack of kingdom awareness.

b. This individualism is demonstrated by the stress on experience (inner) almost to the exclusion of the objective work of Christ of whom it is written, "by the knowledge of himself shall my righteous servant justify many" (Is. 53:11).

c. This individualism is shown by the emphasis on spontaneity in interpreting Scripture rather than by careful study of the Scripture through the use of historically developed tools.

3. The committee has not satisfactorily addressed itself to the texts which speak of the Holy Spirit as an earnest or guarantee (Eph. 1:14; Eph. 4:30; II Cor. 1:22; 5:5). These texts are mentioned but are not compared with the

meaning of the fullness of the Spirit or "be filled with the Spirit." Furthermore, if so much stress is placed on Acts 11:28 to leave open the door for considering prophecy as foretelling, is it possible to use I Kings 18:46 and Acts 8:39, 40 as proofs of miraculous transportation?

4. The premise, that the "more spectacular" gifts of the Spirit are continuous throughout the New Testament age, is contrary to the testimony of the history of the church and the accepted interpretation of Scripture by Reformed theologians.

5. The techniques and practices of neo-Pentecostalism lead to divisiveness and unrest. The counsels advocated by the committee will add to the unrest and will promote division.

a. Does the committee advocate exorcism?

b. Is the counsel for the church "to renew her . . . desire of the gifts of the Spirit" a counsel concerning all the gifts of the Spirit? If so, how does this accord with the statement of I Corinthians 12:31?

c. To "neither approve nor endorse extra-ecclesial assemblies" and yet urge neo-Pentecostal brothers and sisters "to exercise restraint in these meetings" appears to be contradictory.

Western Springs Chr. Ref. Church  
 Wilmer R. Witte, President  
 John Hendrikse, Clerk

Forwarded to the Synod of 1973 by  
 Classis Chicago North without comment.  
 In Session May 16, 1973.

Oliver Breen, Stated Clerk

### Overture 31 — Transfer Title of Manhattan Building (Art. 80)

That synod grant the building now occupied by the Manhattan Christian Reformed Church to the Manhattan Christian Reformed Church as a gift.

#### *Grounds:*

1. The Board of Home Missions has informed us that only synod has the authority to make such a gift. Therefore, it is a synodical matter.
2. It is part of the biblical understanding of missionary outreach, that the cost is part of the total endeavor. There is no charge for the Gospel.
3. There is no logical ground for separating building costs from other costs.
4. There are examples in other denominations of the successful and meaningful transference of property in a missionary program (i.e., Methodist Church in the Caribbean).
5. Ownership provides maximum flexibility, a flexibility necessary to maintain and fully program the building in the life of the church.

Manhattan Christian Reformed Church  
 James B. White, President  
 Barney Sikma, Clerk

## PRINTED APPEALS

### 1. — Classis Toronto Appeals Decision of Christian Reformed Board of Home Missions

(Art. 37)

Classis Toronto appeals to the Synod of 1973 to instruct the Board of Home Missions to continue the *Cochrane* field as a special ministry to a geographically and ethnically unique situation for a period of two years, after which both minister and field are to be re-evaluated.

*Grounds:*

The Cochrane field should be evaluated in terms of its special history and nature, and not as a traditional suburban ministry.

1. In the past ministers have been sent mainly to care for a decreasing congregation. Because of the peculiar immigrant setting little was done to reach the community in its diversity of English and French speaking Canadians and of native Canadians, Indian and Eskimo.

2. There is a demonstrated willingness and ability on the part of the Cochrane members to share the Gospel with their community, but creative leadership of a home missionary who is ready to learn the local language is needed.

3. After numerous visits, studies, and reports Classis Toronto is convinced that the Cochrane field has a unique potential and need which should not be by-passed in the present Canadian situation. (See addendum—"Cochrane: Its Potential As A Special Home Mission Field".) (The Addendum is placed on synodical file. W.P.B., S.C.)

4. Since the Board of Home Missions decided to terminate this field, the Back to God Hour has begun to broadcast in French over the nearby Timmins station. The Board of Home Missions may not have been aware of this intention and of the increased need for a local home missionary to work hand in hand with the radio broadcast.

5. The "properties" of which the BHM wishes to dispose belong to the local congregation. No further capital investments are required. The total indebtedness is only \$2,557.

Classis Toronto

L. W. Van Dellen, Stated Clerk

### 2.—First Bellflower Consistory Appeals Decision of Classis California South re Place of Lay Members in Worship

(Art. 46)

#### I. HISTORY

The Church Visiting report concerning the visit to Anaheim Christian Reformed Church was presented at the January 17, 1973, meeting of Classis California South. The report was received for information and tacit approval was given to the advice offered by the Church Visitors concerning "lay-exhortation" at the worship services. We quote the report:

"Your Church Visiting team of Meyer and Bierling met with the Council of the Anaheim Christian Reformed Church on Monday, December 18, 1972.

"There was one question which was raised and we were asked to give our advice to it. We were informed that on certain occasions, notably the services which are held on special days, lay members of the church occasionally give brief sermonettes. However, the services continue to be led by the pastor. The question which was raised had to do with whether or not this practice was in line with Article 54 of the Church Order which explicitly states that 'in the worship service the Minister of the Word shall officially explain and apply Holy Scripture.' A second question which was related to it was this. If this practice is continued, would these lay members have to be licensed by classis to exhort?"

"We made the observation that we presently have a synodical study committee working on the whole question of the meaning of Ecclesiastical Office and Ordination. Perhaps they will eventually give us further light on the whole question. But for the present, we judged that the Anaheim practice is in harmony with Articles 53 and 54 of the Church Order. First of all, the services continue to be led by the pastor. Secondly, the sermonettes are not full length sermons, but should be seen as brief opportunities for lay people to share certain scriptural insights which God has given them. And third, this is not a weekly practice, but something which is done only on certain special occasions. In fact, our judgment was that this was not only an allowable practice, but a good practice, one which other churches might very well follow. However, if classis has a different judgment on this matter, the question could perhaps be opened up for discussion."

Fraternally,

John S. Meyer

William A. Bierling

At the May 16, 1973 meeting of California South, Bellflower First overturned classis to declare the practice of "lay-exhortation" as not in agreement with the Church Order. Classis failed to approve the overture. The delegates of First Bellflower informed classis they reserved the right to appeal. Such appeal was enacted by decision of the consistory of First Bellflower at its regular meeting on May 21, 1973.

## II. THE APPEAL BY THE CONSISTORY OF FIRST BELLFLOWER

The consistory of First Bellflower appeals the decision of California South in giving suggested approval to "lay-exhortation" at worship services on special occasions and respectfully requests synod to reverse the ruling of Classis California South, May 16, 1973, when it failed to approve the following overture of First Bellflower:

"The Council of the First Christian Reformed Church of Bellflower overtures Classis California South to declare that lay exhortation as noted by church visitors to Anaheim Christian Reformed Church at January 17, 1973 report, is not in agreement with the directives of the Church Order and should not be endorsed as an example for other churches.

### *Grounds:*

1. The synodical study committee report mentioned is concerned only with ecclesiastical ordination of lay workers and not liturgical conduct of a worship service.

2. As correctly noted, Article 54a of Church Order, "In the worship services the Minister of the Word shall officially explain and apply Holy Scripture" forbids such practice.

3. Opportunity for lay members to share their faith testimonially is not to be substituted for preaching or exhortation nor is it to be construed as reading a sermon at a duly constituted worship service. Article 53 of Church Order:

- 'a. Ministers of the Word shall conduct the worship services.
- b. Persons licensed to exhort and anyone appointed by the consistory to read a sermon may conduct worship services. They shall, however, refrain from all official acts of the ministry.
- c. Only sermons approved by the consistory shall be read in the worship services.'

4. The Church Order recognizes no difference officially in worship services conducted on special days, Article 51b of Church Order, 'Worship services shall be held in observance of Christmas, Good Friday, Easter, Ascension Day and Pentecost, and ordinarily on Old and New Year's Day and annual days of prayer and thanksgiving,' or worship services as mentioned in Article 54a."

The Council of First Bellflower Church  
 Walter Ackerman, President  
 Donald Adema, Clerk

*Grounds:*

- 1. The claim of our overture that the practice is contrary to the Church Order was not disproved.
- 2. There is need for synodical clarification of a practice that is causing unrest among the churches.

The Council of First Bellflower Church  
 Walter Ackerman, President  
 Donald Adema, Clerk

**3.—Oakdale Park Consistory of Grand Rapids Appeals Decision of Classis Grand Rapids East**

(Art. 50)

Classis Grand Rapids East, meeting on May 17, 1973, by a majority vote, decided to grant the request for organization of 28 families and 6 individuals. The consistory of the Oakdale Park Christian Reformed Church now respectfully appeals this decision to synod, and requests synod to disapprove of this action.

(Notes and supplementary materials received are placed on synodical file—Wm. P. Brink, S.C.)

*Grounds:*

1. The Committee of Classis (henceforth known as the committee) declared that Church Order and Synodical Procedure permit the organization of a new congregation with the approval of classis. The Consistory of Oakdale Park Christian Reformed Church (henceforth known as the consistory) contends that classis is not compelled to grant every request for organization and that this particular request was not a normal, routine granting of a request for organization.

a. This request for organization was, in essence, a declaration on the part of a small group that their needs and goals could not be met in any existing Christian Reformed Church. The request sought to organize a congregation which is different in "concept" from all other existing Christian Reformed congregations.

b. The need for another Christian Reformed congregation in Southeast Grand Rapids has not been established. Seven of our existing congregations within this area have decreased in membership in the last six years by an average of fifty-six families per congregation. Some of these congregations are facing crisis situations. There are presently within this area small congregations which are heavily subsidized. The need for another small congregation in this area cannot be established.

c. The impact of this proposed congregation extends far beyond the area of concern of Classis Grand Rapids East.

1. A number of the families signing the request are members of a congregation which is part of Classis Grand Rapids South.
2. The group is presently meeting within the area of Classis Grand Rapids North.
3. The movement which led to this request has been closely associated with Calvin College. The church life of Calvin's staff and student body is a matter of denominational concern.
4. This movement has had an impact on our entire Christian Reformed community, and therefore one classis should not assume responsibility for giving this movement organizational sanction.

d. The fact that classis dealt with this request at great length in three separate sessions, and that the concern of the denomination at large came to expression in this regard, indicates that this was not a normal request for the organization of a new congregation.

2. The committee bases its recommendation on the technical grounds that the request does not violate the Creeds and the Church Order. This is a purely negative consideration. The Consistory contends that there is a deeper principle involved which should guide the life of the church, namely the biblical principle of the welfare of the church. This principle the committee has ignored.

a. The objections of our two neighboring classes were not discussed at the meeting of Classis Grand Rapids East on May 17, 1973, but were simply set aside. Please note two quotations from page 2 of the "Meeting With Classes Grand Rapids North and South held January 25, 1973:"

"It is evident that the delegates from Classes North and South have serious misgivings about the organization of the petitioning group as a congregation in Classis Grand Rapids East.

"We advise classis to receive our report for information with the knowledge that the concerns of Classes Grand Rapids North and South will be fully considered in the discussion on the floor of classis."

The objections of our sister classes were not answered by Classis Grand Rapids East, nor were they discussed at the meeting of May 17, 1973.

b. The requesting group has stated that their goals and patterns are "out of harmony with" and "would lead to alienation and frustration" on the part of the members of the churches of which they are presently members as well as all other Christian Reformed Churches. This alienation would naturally extend to the denomination on a broader level if these goals and patterns form the basis for the organization of a separate congregation.

c. All of the statements of the group indicate that it is their hope and intent to change the structures and patterns of the Christian Reformed Church. Such a movement can only impair the unity of the church. The group admits that it "could have this result."

d. Although the group now seeks to dissociate itself from the former "Fellowship of the Acts," they have chosen to perpetuate their dissent from the Christian Reformed Church by forming a separate congregation with its own unique goals and patterns. Such separatism does not promote the welfare of the church.

3. The committee seeks to justify the "diversity" in worship which the group seeks by an appeal to the decision of the Synod of 1930. The consistory contends that this is a misinterpretation of the decision of Synod of 1930.

a. The Synod of 1930 dealt with objections to a new Order of Worship which included the "absolution." Synod declared that this new Order could not be forced upon the church. This implied that the churches which did not adopt the new order remained with the status quo. At no time has synod given the churches freedom to introduce any change they may desire into their liturgy.

b. The Church Order (Art. 51-62) and the Guide for Church Visiting approved by synod, establish specific prescriptions for the liturgy of our churches.

c. The Synod of 1972 based one of its decisions (Acts 1972, p. 49) on the ground of "the desirability of maintaining identifiable unity and uniformity in our worship."

d. The constant appeal for "diversity" in worship on the part of the requesting group is not in harmony with the history and practice of our Christian Reformed Church.

e. The group admits that Communion every Sunday conflicts with the provision for "using the prescribed forms only" and the "preparatory" and "applicatory" service.

4. The request of the group involves certain basic doctrinal matters pertaining to the life of the church, such as:

- (1) Changing the basic structure of the church;
- (2) Shifting the responsibility for supervision of the worship service from consistory to congregation;
- (3) Restudying the role of the various office bearers.

The group now argues that they only "intend(s) to study" these questions.

The consistory contends that such study can be pursued more responsibly within their present congregations rather than in a small separatistic congregation.

a. By conducting this study in a small separatistic group, they close off the counsel and judgment of their brethren in a broader fellowship.

b. Such separatism violates the principle of the unity of the church. See I Corinthians 12.

c. The request abounds in references to *our* needs, *our* longings, etc. Such sentiments conflict with the biblical injunction, "We who are strong should bear with the failings of the weak and *not to please ourselves.*" Romans 15:1.

Done in Consistory, May 22, 1973.

Oakdale Park Consistory  
William Heynen, President  
Cornelius Vogel, Clerk

#### 4.—Faith Consistory of Grand Rapids Appeals Decision of Classis Grand Rapids East

(Art. 50)

The Consistory of the Faith Christian Reformed Church of Grand Rapids, Michigan, appeals to the Synod of 1973 the decision taken by Classis Grand Rapids East in session May 17, 1973 at Fuller Avenue Christian Reformed Church granting permission of organization to the Oakhill Fellowship through the Eastern Avenue Christian Reformed Church.

(References to Classical Minutes have been deleted from this printed page and placed on synodical file—Wm. P. Brink, S.C.)

We appeal this decision for the following reasons:

1. The need for a new congregation has always and normally been precipitated by the need to proclaim the Gospel at a particular place. This need to proclaim the Gospel in a new place in this city by this group has not been demonstrated.

2. The goals of this proposed congregation, as they have been revised to read, are in many ways similar to those existing congregations and therefore do not justify a new congregation.

3. The only appreciable difference between this petitioning group and the existing congregations expressed by a spokesman on the floor of classis was the desire for weekly observance of the Lord's Supper. If this is such an important issue, should not it be a matter for denominational consideration and not be cited simply as a reason for the organization of a new congregation?

4. The petitioning group contends, "Many (i.e., members of present congregations, and congregations, also) would find several of our (i.e., goals) to be out of harmony. For us then to seek to impose our goals on them would lead to alienation on their part (p. 5, "Clarification and Amplification of the August 18, 1972 request for the formation of a new congregation)." We contend that just as this would be true in a local congregation, it would also be true in the classis and in the denomination.

5. The petitioning group has "concluded" that they cannot "impose our goals and patterns on them (the existing churches)." There is no evidence given that they have properly sought implementation of their goals through their respective consistories.

We respectfully request synod to declare that the action taken by Classis Grand Rapids East granting permission to the Oakhill Fellowship to organize as a congregation is unfounded and thus declared null and void.

The Consistory of Faith Christian  
Reformed Church  
Jerome Julien, President  
James Swart, Clerk

Done in Consistory May 29, 1973.

### NOTIFICATION OF APPEALS

1. Mr. Roy Van Kooten appeals decisions of Calvary, Pella, and Classis Pella.  
(Art. 86)
2. Mr. John Slager appeals decision of Synod of 1972.  
(Art. 46)
3. Two church visitors appeal decision of Classis Rocky Mountain pertaining to observance of Lord's Supper procedure.  
(Art. 86)
4. Dr. Harry R. Boer appeals decisions of the Christian Reformed Board of Foreign Missions. (withdrawn)
5. Mr. Robert R. Broekema appeals decision of Calvin Board of Trustees.  
(Arts. 13, 79)

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QUOTAS AND RECOMMENDED CAUSES  
FOR 1974

I. DENOMINATIONAL CAUSES

	Per Family for 1974
<b>A. Denominational Quotas</b>	
Back to God Hour .....	\$ 16.00
Board of Publications:	
a. Spanish Literature .....	.50
b. "De Wachter" .....	.25
c. Unified Church School Curriculum .....	2.00
d. Denominational Building Addition .....	1.00
Calvin College and Seminary .....	*32.10
Chaplains' Deposit Fund .....	.50
Foreign Missions .....	29.00
Fund for Needy Churches .....	12.75
Home Missions .....	41.10
Ministers' Pension Fund .....	22.75
Synodical Expense Fund .....	3.25
a. SCORR .....	1.40
<b>Total Yearly per Family Quota .....</b>	<b>\$162.60</b>

\*Allocated on an area basis as indicated below.

In agreement with the decision of the Synod of 1962, Synod approved the following regional or area quotas for Calvin College and Seminary for 1974

Area No. 1—comprises Classes Grand Rapids East, Grand Rapids North, Grand Rapids South, and Grandville .....	\$44.00
Area No. 2—comprises Classes Cadillac, Holland, Kalamazoo, Lake Erie, Muskegon and Zeeland .....	40.25
Area No. 3—comprises Classes Chicago North, Chicago South, Florida, Illiana and Wisconsin .....	33.75
Area No. 4—comprises Classes Minnesota North, Minnesota South, Northcentral Iowa, Orange City, Pella and Sioux Center .....	16.00
Area No. 5—comprises Classes Hackensack and Hudson .....	44.00
Area No. 6—comprises Classes Columbia, Pacific Northwest, California South, Central California and Rocky Mountain .....	29.25
Area No. 7—comprises Classes Alberta North, Alberta South, British Columbia, Chatham, Eastern Canada, Hamilton, Huron, Quinte and Toronto .....	15.25

Areas which benefit from a quota reduction should employ the monies saved to finance their present area colleges (Acts of Synod, 1962, pages 54, 104, XXV).

**B. Denominational Causes for One or More Offerings**

1. Armed Forces of the Board of Home Missions
2. Back to God Hour for above-quota needs
3. Back to God Tract Committee
4. Board of Foreign Missions for above-quota needs
5. Board of Home Missions for above-quota needs
6. Chaplain Fund
7. Committee for Educational Assistance to Churches Abroad
8. Minority Student Scholarship Fund
9. Supplemental Relief Fund of Ministers' Pension Fund Committee

**C. Denominational Benevolence Cause for One or More Offerings**  
Christian Reformed World Relief Committee**D. Denominational Related Youth Causes for One or More Offerings**

1. Calvinettes (division of United Calvinist Youth)
2. Calvinist Cadet Corps (division of United Calvinist Youth)
3. Young Calvinist Federation (division of United Calvinist Youth)
4. Young Calvinist Servicemen's Ministry

**II. NON-DENOMINATIONAL CAUSES RECOMMENDED FOR FINANCIAL SUPPORT**

The following non-denominational causes are recommended for financial support, but *not necessarily for one or more offerings*. The number of offerings, or any amount to be given to these causes, is a matter that *each council should decide*.

**A. Benevolent Causes**

1. Bethany Christian Home, Inc.
2. Bethesda Hospital
3. Calvary Rehabilitation Center
4. Christian Sanatorium Association
5. Christian School Employees Relief Fund (only when specifically requested)
6. Eastern Christian Children's Retreat
7. Elim Christian School
8. The Luke Society
9. Pine Rest Christian Hospital Association (includes Children's Retreat and Sheltered Workshop)
10. Roseland Christian School

**B. Educational Causes**

1. Association for Advancement of Christian Scholarship
2. Christian Schools Educational Foundation (NUCS)
3. Dordt College, Inc.
4. National Union of Christian Schools (general fund)
5. Reformed Bible College
6. Trinity Christian College
7. Westminster Theological Seminary

**C. Miscellaneous Causes**

1. American Bible Society (U.S. churches only)
2. American Calvinist Fellowship
3. Canadian Bible Society (Canadian churches only)
4. Christian Labour Association of Canada (Canadian churches only)
5. Christian Laymen's League
6. Faith, Prayer, and Tract League
7. Gideons (for Bible distribution only)
8. Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship
9. Lord's Day Alliance of the U.S. (U.S. churches only)
10. T.E.L.L. (The Evangelical Literature League)
11. World Home Bible League (includes Canadian Home Bible League)

