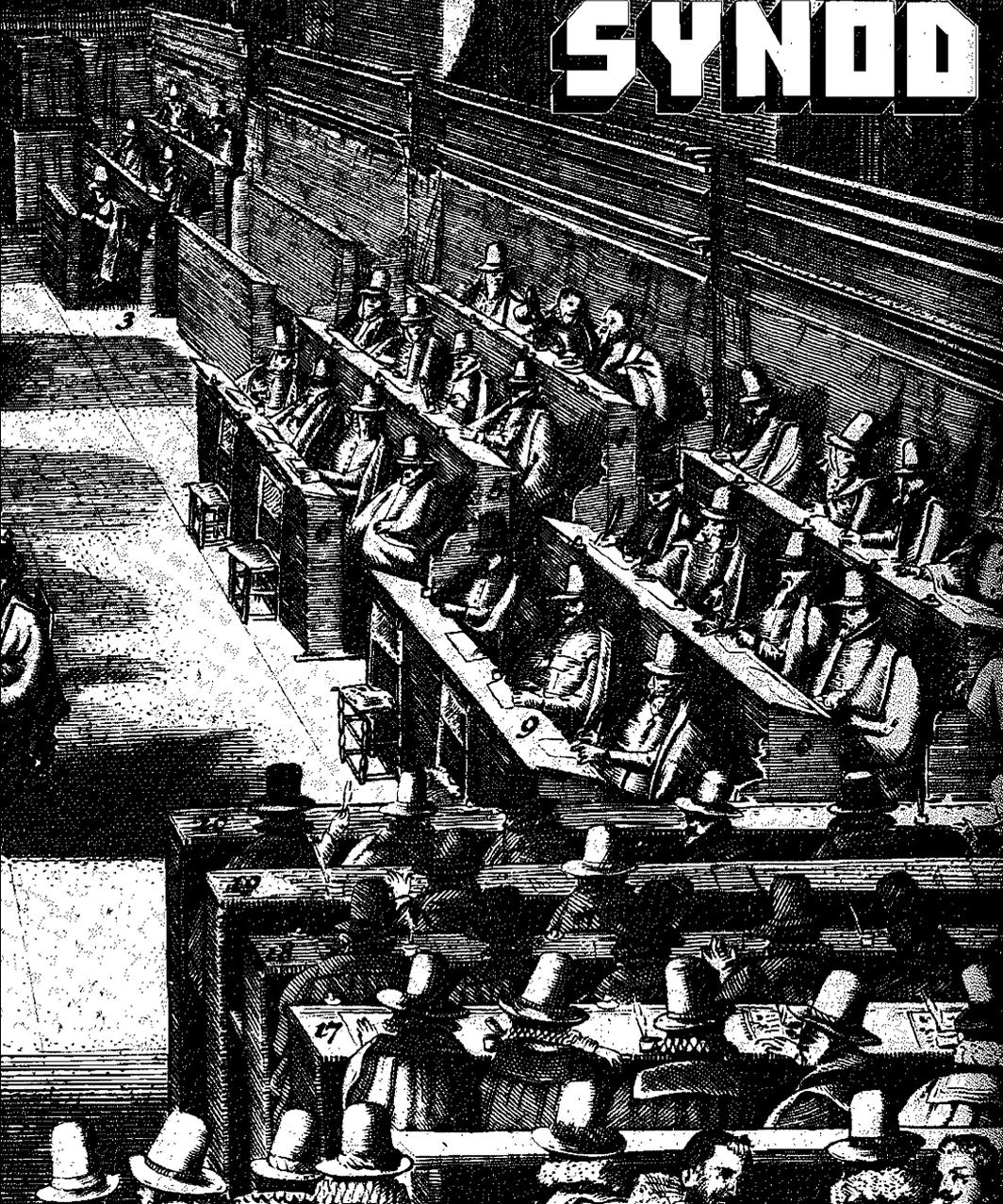


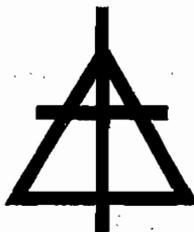
1977 ACTS OF SYNOD



1977 ACTS OF SYNOD

June 14 to 24, 1977

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



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

Prayer Service for Synod, 1977

Sponsored by

EAST PARIS CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH

Monday, June 13, 1977 — 8:00 p.m.

ORGAN PRELUDE: *Prelude and Fuge in C Major* - Bach
Grazioso - G. P. Telemann

CHOIR: *Sanctus* - Franz Schubert

SILENT PRAYER

*VOTUM AND SALUTATION

*PSALTER HYMNAL 312, *We Gather Together*

*APOSTLES' CREED - in unison

*GLORIA PATRI

PRAYER - concluded by Psalter Hymnal 489, *Hear Our Prayer, O Lord*

OFFERING - for Project Bonaire

OFFERTORY - *Adagio* - from Concerto 1 - J. S. Bach

*PSALTER HYMNAL 493, *Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow*

*OFFERTORY PRAYER

*PSALTER HYMNAL 327, *Praise to the Lord, the Almighty*

SCRIPTURE: Psalm 68:24-35

TEXT: Psalm 68:28, 29

SERMON: THE SOURCE OF OUR HOPE

CHOIR: *God Is My Strong Salvation* - A. Lovelace

PRAYER: For the Meetings of Synod, led by Mr. Lawrence Ottens

For the Missionary Outreach of the Church, led by Mr. Casey Boersma

For the Educational Work of the Church, led by Dr. Theodore Minnema

For the Future of the Church, led by Rev. William Van Rees

CHOIR: *The Lord's Prayer* - B. Cecil Gates

*PSALTER HYMNAL 124

(The stanzas to be sung are from Psalm 68, after the Dutch Psalter of 1773, selected stanzas by permission of Sietze Buning)

God will arise and God will fight.
His foes will scatter left and right.
Hate's empire now is shaking.
Hate's allies on the losing side
Are man's pomposity and pride,
Hypocrisy and faking.
Hypocrisy and pride and hate
Before God's eye evaporate
Like mist when day is breaking.
And vanity shall burn like flax,
Sin melt to nothingness like wax:
A hell of man's own making.

Your God, O Israel, through his Word
Has granted strength to those who heard.
O God, grant us that power.
Build up in us what you have wrought
And let your help for which we've sought
Exalt us from this hour.
Then all our leaders will observe
Your every wish as you deserve.
The true church bows before you.
And folk shall come from far and wide,
From earth's remotest lands they'll ride
To bring gifts and adore you.

All lands and races: sing, exult!
Send psalms up into heaven's vault,
Of old, God's throne and dwelling.
There he, in splendor passing bright,
Thunders his will with royal might
And rules, all kings excelling.
Give all your strength to God your Lord!
To us his flock he gave his Word
So one true church could love him.
Love him—the terrible and great!
Above the clouds and stars his state.
No majesty's above him!

*BENEDICTION

ORGAN POSTLUDE: *Basse et Dessus de Trompet Dialogue* - Clerambault

Mrs. Mickey Jelsema, Organist and Choir Director
Mrs. Constant Wiersma, Accompanist

*Congregation standing.

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ACTS OF SYNOD

of the

CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH

TUESDAY MORNING, JUNE 14, 1977

First Session

ARTICLE 1

The Rev. Gerard Bouma, pastor of the East Paris Christian Reformed Church of Grand Rapids, Michigan, the convening church, calls the assembly to order and leads in devotions, leading synod in the *Opening Prayer for Ecclesiastical Assemblies* in unison.

ARTICLE 2

On behalf of the convening church, the Rev. Gerard Bouma welcomes the delegates to synod and briefly addresses the assembly with respect to the work our Lord has committed to them, and exhorts the delegates to be open to the Lord's grace and work in the unity of the Spirit of Christ.

ARTICLE 3

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

DELEGATES TO THE SYNOD OF 1977

Classis Alberta North

Ministers.....	R. Stienstra S. De Waal	Elders.....	A. Elgersma N. Greidanus
----------------	----------------------------	-------------	-----------------------------

Classis Alberta South

Ministers.....	E. Den Haan D. Veldhuizen	Elders.....	H. Venhuis A. Kooy
----------------	------------------------------	-------------	-----------------------

Classis Atlantic Northeast

Ministers.....	P. Huisman Dr. J. Vander Laan	Elders.....	O. Kuipers F. Bosma
----------------	----------------------------------	-------------	------------------------

Classis British Columbia

Ministers.....	Dr. S. Greidanus H. Samplonius	Elders.....	H. Van Huizen A. Wisselink
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Classis Cadillac

Ministers.....	K. Van Wyk K. Tanis	Elders.....	J. Kooyer I. Verhage
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Classis California South

Ministers.....	D. J. Negen J. Koopmans	Elders.....	E. Brouwer H. Slegers
----------------	----------------------------	-------------	--------------------------

Classis Central California

Ministers.....	G. Hofland	Elders.....	C. Vanden Heuvel
	H. Bajerna		G. Visser

Classis Chatham

Ministers.....	L. Slofstra	Elders.....	H. Brouwer
	D. Hart		W. Van Arragon

Classis Chicago North

Ministers.....	J. Reiffer	Elders.....	B. Powell
	C. Van Essen		H. R. Schaafsma

Classis Chicago South

Ministers.....	G. P. Hutt	Elders.....	Dr. H. Cook
	J. A. De Kruyter		Dr. D. Bergsma

Classis Columbia

Ministers.....	J. L. Alferink	Elders.....	R. D. Taylor
	T. E. Dykman		L. Senti

Classis Eastern Canada

Ministers.....	A. Vanden Ende	Elders.....	J. Orkar
	D. Tigchelaar		J. Oegema

Classis Florida

Ministers.....	E. Heerema	Elders.....	H. Ottenhof
	J. Vander Laan		W. Wichers

Classis Grand Rapids East

Ministers.....	H. G. Vanden Einde	Elders.....	M. Vander Ark
	H. G. Entingh		J. A. Vander Ark

Classis Grand Rapids North

Ministers.....	J. H. Bergsma	Elders.....	C. Van Valkenburg
	W. Vander Hoven		J. De Meester

Classis Grand Rapids South

Ministers.....	J. D. Eppinga	Elders.....	G. Altena
	J. M. Hofman		C. De Vries

Classis Grandville

Ministers.....	L. J. Hofman	Elders.....	H. Koster
	H. Hoekstra		W. Gritter

Classis Hackensack

Ministers.....	C. Nieuwenhuis	Elders.....	T. Taylor
	S. Vander Klay		A. Andre

Classis Hamilton

Ministers.....	B. Nederlof	Elders.....	K. Knight
	J. G. Klomps		J. De Groot

Classis Holland

Ministers.....	K. Rietema	Elders.....	K. Marcus
	E. Bradford		Dr. M. Essenburg

Classis Hudson

Ministers.....	A. E. Likkel	Elders.....	J. Vander Ploeg
	L. J. Vander Zee		A. Snope

		Classis Huron	
Ministers.....	J. M. Koole P. Breedveld	Elders.....	J. Proper A. Kersten
		Classis Illiana	
Ministers.....	J. H. Piersma A. J. Verburg	Elders.....	Dr. H. Holwerda P. Persenaire
		Classis Kalamazoo	
Ministers.....	S. Draayer H. Bouma, Jr.	Elders.....	G. Zylstra J. Schaap
		Classis Lake Erie	
Ministers.....	G. Vander Weit A. D. Evans	Elders.....	A. Walcott R. Dornbush
		Classis Minnesota North	
Ministers.....	C. J. Toeset B. Becksvoort	Elders.....	A. Greenfield H. Minderhoud
		Classis Minnesota South	
Ministers.....	H. Baak J. Van Stempvoort	Elders.....	C. Mast W. Burgers
		Classis Muskegon	
Ministers.....	A. W. Hoogstrate J. Morren	Elders.....	R. Kunnen R. De Kuiper
		Classis Northcentral Iowa	
Ministers.....	J. Stoel C. Roelofs	Elders.....	J. Graves H. O'Kones
		Classis Orange City	
Ministers.....	J. Cooper Dr. P. Y. De Jong	Elders.....	H. Haarsma J. Lobbes
		Classis Pacific Northwest	
Ministers.....	H. Van Dyken A. Petroelje	Elders.....	M. Hamstra G. Rozeboom
		Classis Pella	
Ministers.....	H. Petersen H. Bossenbroek	Elders.....	B. Van Ee R. Klyn
		Classis Quinte	
Ministers.....	A. De Jager D. C. Los	Elders.....	W. Piersma J. Bulten
		Classis Rocky Mountain	
Ministers.....	M. Bierma S. Mast	Elders.....	C. Hanko H. Thomas, Jr.
		Classis Sioux Center	
Ministers.....	H. De Groot Dr. F. D. Steen	Elders.....	G. Bierma J. Vos
		Classis Toronto	
Ministers.....	L. Tamminga M. N. Greidanus	Elders.....	Dr. A. Wolters G. Kuiper

Classis Wisconsin			
Ministers.....	J. Hoeksema J. Van Schepen	Elders.....	F. G. Stremmer A. A. De Jong
Classis Zeeland			
Ministers.....	B. Mulder A. E. Rozendal	Elders.....	Dr. R. Plekker B. Mulder

ARTICLE 4

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

- A. President: Rev. Bastiaan Nederlof
- B. Vice-president: Dr. Peter Y. De Jong
- C. First Clerk: Rev. Louis Tamminga
- D. Second Clerk: Rev. Leonard Hofman

ARTICLE 5

The president of synod, the Rev. Bastiaan Nederlof, expresses the appreciation of synod to the president pro-tem, the Rev. Gerard Bouma, for his services connected with the opening of synod. He acknowledges with gratitude the confidence which has been placed in the chosen officers of synod by the delegates and he solicits the prayers of the delegates 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 to which the delegates respond with their assent.

ARTICLE 7

The president of synod welcomes the presidents of Calvin College and Seminary, the seminary faculty advisers, the denominational officers, the representatives of denominational boards, and 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 for the Synod of 1977:

COMMITTEE 1—*Appeals*

Chairman, the Rev. J. Bergsma; Reporter, the Rev. M. Greidanus; the Revs. G. Hofland, D. C. Los, C. Niewenhuis, K. Van Wyk; Elders H. Brouwer, R. Klyn, K. Knight, J. Schaap, A. Wisselink; Faculty Adviser, Dr. A. A. Hoekema.

COMMITTEE 2—*Church Order I*

Chairman, the Rev. E. Heerema; Reporter, the Rev. H. Petersen; the Revs. A. E. Rozendal, L. Slofstra, L. J. VanderZee, H. Van Dyken, J. Van Stempvoort;

Elders G. Bierma, N. Greidanus, H. O'Kones, P. Persenaire, I. Verhage; Faculty Adviser, Dr. C. Kromminga.

COMMITTEE 3—*Church Order II*

Chairman, the Rev. D. Hart; Reporter, Dr. D. Bergsma; the Revs. S. Mast, B. Mulder, C. Roelofs; Elders H. Haarsma, M. VanderArk, C. Van Valkenburg, G. Visser, J. Vos; Faculty Adviser, Dr. T. Minnema.

COMMITTEE 4—*Confessional Matters*

Chairman, the Rev. J. DeKruyter; Reporter, Dr. S. Greidanus; the Revs. H. Bossenbroek, H. Bouma, Jr., H. Hoekstra, R. Stienstra, J. Stoel; Elders A. DeJong, J. DeMeester, R. Kunnen, J. Lobbes, H. Minderhoud; Faculty Adviser, Prof. J. Stek.

COMMITTEE 5—*Ethical Matters*

Chairman, Dr. S. De Waal; Reporter, Dr. A. Wolters; the Revs. B. Becksvoort, H. DeGroot, A. Petroelje, Dr. J. VanderLaan; Elders J. Bulten, Dr. H. Cook, J. DeGroot, Dr. M. Essenburg, M. Hamstra, Dr. H. Holwerda; Faculty Adviser, Dr. B. Van Elderen.

COMMITTEE 6—*Radio and Publication Ministries*

Chairman, the Rev. W. VanderHoven; Reporter, the Rev. J. Hofman; the Revs. J. Cooper, P. Huisman, J. Koopmans, A. E. Likkel; Elders W. Gritter, J. Kooyer, G. Kuiper, C. Mast, L. Senti; Faculty Adviser, Prof. H. Dekker.

COMMITTEE 7—*Domestic Ministries*

Chairman, the Rev. E. Bradford; Reporter, the Rev. S. VanderKlay; the Revs. H. Bajema, A. D. Evans, C. VanEssen, D. Velthuizen; Elders A. Andre, W. Burgers, A. Kooy, B. Powell, J. Proper, H. Thomas, Jr.; Faculty Adviser, Prof. H. Dekker.

COMMITTEE 8—*World Ministries*

Chairman, the Rev. A. VandenEnde; Reporter, the Rev. J. Morren; the Revs. M. Bierma, T. Dykman, J. Reiffer; Elders F. Bosma, E. Brouwer, R. Dornbush, G. Rozeboom, R. D. Taylor, B. Van Ee; Faculty Adviser, Dr. R. DeRidder.

COMMITTEE 9—*Educational Matters*

Chairman, the Rev. J. Eppinga; Reporter, the Rev. J. VanderArk; the Revs. H. Baak, H. Entingh, J. Hoeksema, H. Samplonius, D. Tigchelaar; Elders H. Koster, H. Ottenhoff, Dr. R. Plekker, F. G. Stremmer; Faculty Advisers, Dr. J. Kromminga, Dr. A. Diekema.

COMMITTEE 10—*Interdenominational Outreach*

Chairman, the Rev. J. Piersma; Reporter, the Rev. H. Vanden Einde; the Revs. E. DenHaan, S. Draayer, G. P. Hutt, J. Koole; Elders G. Altena, O. Kuipers, B. Mulder, J. Orkar, H. Slegers, W. Wichers; Faculty Adviser, Dr. T. Minnema.

COMMITTEE 11—*Synodical Services*

Chairman, the Rev. A. DeJager; Reporter, the Rev. D. Negen; the Revs. J. L. Alferink, K. Tanis, J. VanderLaan, G. VanderWeit, J. VanSchepen; Elders A. Greenfield, T. Taylor, C. VandenHeuvel, H. Venhuis, G. Zylstra; Faculty Adviser, Dr. C. Kromminga.

COMMITTEE 12—*Appointments*

Chairman, the Rev. A. Hoogstrate; Reporter, Dr. F. Steen; the Revs. P. Breedveld, C. Toeset, A. J. Verburg; Elders A. Elgersma, J. Graves, W. Piersma, G. W. Van Arragon, J. Vander Ploeg; Faculty Adviser, Dr. R. DeRidder.

COMMITTEE 13—*Financial Matters*

Chairman, the Rev. J. G. Klomps; Reporter, K. Marcus; the Rev. K. Rietema; Elders R. DeKuiper, C. DeVries, C. Hanko, J. Oegema, H. R. Schaafsma, A. Snope, H. VanHuizen, A. Walcott.

ARTICLE 10

The Rev. Wilbur De Jong, Secretary of the Board of Trustees of Calvin College and Seminary, presents the following for information:

In 1962 (Acts of Synod, page 31, Art. 66, III, B) synod adopted "the following procedure in declaring candidacy for the gospel ministry in the Christian Reformed Church:

1. The Board of Trustees shall submit to the synod the names of and relevant information concerning the applicants recommended for candidacy.
2. The presence of the applicant for candidacy shall not ordinarily be required, but each candidate must be prepared to appear before synod if questions should arise which require his presence.
3. Having considered the materials submitted by the Board of Trustees, synod shall cast its vote on the admission of the applicants to candidacy, and a prayer of thanksgiving shall be offered.
4. Synod shall announce to the churches the names of the candidates with the time for eligibility for call.

The secretary also reminds synod of the new procedures regarding "Declaration of Candidacy" and the announcement of "Eligibility for Call" as set forth in the decisions of the Synods of 1975 and 1976.

ARTICLE 11

The president of synod announces the following appointments:

Reception Committee: The Rev. A. Hoogstrate and Elder M. Vander Ark
 Obituary Committee: Elder K. Knight and the Rev. K. Rietema
 Devotions Committee: The Rev. H. Bossenbroek and Elder J. De Meester
 Press Representatives: The Rev. M. Baarman and the Rev. H. Bode

ARTICLE 12

The morning session is closed with prayer by the vice-president, Dr. P. Y. De Jong.

TUESDAY AFTERNOON, JUNE 15, 1977

Second Session

ARTICLE 13

The Rev. Louis Tamminga, first clerk, opens the session with devotions.

ARTICLE 14

Before the Rev. Wilbur De Jong, secretary of the board of trustees presents the names of those recommended for candidacy, he reads the following:

For the purpose of personalizing the presentation of candidates to synod, the Board of Trustees submits a review of its contact and supervision of aspiring ministers.

First, an aspirant to the ministry is admitted to the seminary only after the board has received from the seminary faculty information as to his academic record, recommendation by his home consistory and college advisers, and an interview with members of the seminary faculty.

Second, the aspirant submits to an interview by the board of trustees, in consultation with the seminary faculty, before obtaining preaching license.

Third, the aspirant submits to periodic examinations by the faculty,

and is regularly visited by the members of the faculty during his years as a student.

Fourth, pursuant to the decision of the Synod of 1961, the board makes provision for one-to-one visits with senior seminarians about to enter the ministry.

Fifth, the aspirant submits to a thorough examination by the seminary faculty prior to the obtaining of a B.D. or M.Div. degree, and the seminary faculty presents a complete statement to the board of trustees of the student's qualifications and a recommendation regarding doctrinal soundness, spiritual fitness, and personality.

Sixth, the aspirant submits to an interview before the board of trustees for candidacy, and two sermon manuscripts are submitted for evaluation. The board of trustees presents its recommendations and report of interviews to synod, with synod's right to additional interview prior to declaration of candidacy.

Seventh, the aspirant has been under the scrutiny of the church during his two years of preaching, his summer field work assignment, and, in some instances, his year of service as seminary intern.

Upon recommendation of the seminary faculty, and after the interview by the board of trustees, the board recommends that synod declare the following as candidates for the ministry in the Christian Reformed Church:

Gary Bekker	Richard Hartwell	Ralph Pontier
Ronald Bouwkamp	David Jonkman	Peter Ravensbergen
Roger Bouwman	Gilbert Kamps	Ronald Scheuers
Peter Deckinga	Douglas Kamstra	Peter Slofstra
Bernard De Jonge	John Keizer	Donald Steenhoek
James Dekker	Duane Kelderman	Phil Stel
Roger De Young	Jake Kuipers	John Terpstra
Wayne De Young	Clayton Negen	Phil Touw
Dean Dyk	Thomas Niehof	David Van Gelder
Wiebe Geerts	Nico Peters	Gerrit Vreeman

A motion prevails that all thirty are declared candidates for the ministry in the Christian Reformed Church.

The following are declared candidates contingent upon the completion of academic requirements:

Thomas Klaasen	Henry Smidstra
Ronald Klimp	John Tenyenhuis
Gregg Martin	William Veenstra
Daniel Mulder	

Motion is made that Philip Touw, by way of exception, be declared eligible for call immediately upon his being declared a candidate by synod in connection with his entering the U.S. Army Chaplaincy School.

—*Adopted*

A recommendation is made that candidates be eligible for call June 28, 1977.

—*Adopted*

ARTICLE 15

The session is closed with prayer by the second clerk, the Rev. Leonard Hofman.

WEDNESDAY MORNING, JUNE 15, 1977

Third Session

ARTICLE 16

The session is opened with devotions.
The roll is called. All the delegates are present.
The minutes of June 14, 1977 are read and approved.

ARTICLE 17

Advisory Committee 2, *Church Order I*, the Rev. H. Petersen reporting, presents the following:

I. HERMENEUTICAL PRINCIPLES ON WOMEN IN ECCLESIASTICAL OFFICE

A. *Material*: Report 36.

B. *Analysis*: The committee reports that it has been unable to complete its work within the prescribed two-year period, and requests permission to present a completed report to synod in 1978.

C. *Recommendation*: That synod grant the Committee *re* Hermeneutical Principles on Women in Ecclesiastical Office permission to present a completed report to synod in 1978. —*Adopted*

II. CLASSICAL RATIFICATION OF SYNODICAL DECISIONS

A. *Material*: Overture 2.

B. *Analysis*: Classis Grand Rapids North overtures synod to revise Article 96 of the Church Order so that any revision of the Church Order "shall be made only by synod, provided that before any revision shall become binding and effective it shall be ratified by the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the classes."

C. *Recommendation*: That synod not accede to Overture 2 of Classis Grand Rapids North.

Ground: Article 47 of the Church Order adequately deals with the matter of ratification of changes in the Church Order when it states: "No substantial alterations shall be effected by synod . . . unless the churches have had prior opportunity to consider the advisability of the proposed changes." Synods have, therefore, postponed final ratification of substantial alterations in the Church Order until a following synod.

—*Adopted*

(The report of Advisory Committee 2 is continued in Article 38.)

ARTICLE 18

The Rev. A. Hoogstrate, in behalf of the Reception Committee, presents the Rev. H. Bode, Executive Secretary of the Chaplain Committee. The Rev. Mr. Bode introduces Chaplain Karl Willoughby and Chaplain Bruce Hemple. Chaplain Hemple addresses synod in connection with the military chaplaincy, Dr. D. Bergsma responds.

ARTICLE 19

Advisory Committee 3, *Church Order II*, Dr. D. Bergsma reporting, presents the following:

TRANSFER OF MAYFAIR CRC TO CLASSIS GRAND RAPIDS NORTH

A. *Materials:*

1. Overture 27
2. Communication 6

B. *Recommendation:* That synod approve the transfer of the Mayfair Christian Reformed Church from Classis Grand Rapids East to Classis Grand Rapids North, effective the end of the current calendar year.

Grounds:

1. The Mayfair Church has requested this transfer.
2. The Mayfair Church lies north of Fulton Street which traditionally has been the north boundary of Classis Grand Rapids East.
3. The transfer of Mayfair will provide a better balance in membership totals by reducing the size of Classis Grand Rapids East.
4. Both classes involved approve of the transfer. —*Adopted*

(The report of Advisory Committee 3 is continued in Article 42.)

ARTICLE 20

Advisory Committee 5, *Ethical Matters*, Dr. A. Wolters reporting, presents the following:

ADDITIONAL STATEMENT ON HOMOSEXUALITY REQUESTED

A. *Material:* Overture 3.

B. *Observations:* The actions that synod took in 1974 were in answer to the issue raised by the Kettering consistory, as evidenced by the introductory point made in the Acts of Synod 1974, Article 73, II, B, under "Fourth," (pp. 78-79).

C. *Recommendation:* That synod not accede to the overture of the Kettering Christian Reformed Church Consistory.

Ground: The Kettering consistory has not demonstrated that the present guidelines on homosexuality are inadequate in giving concrete pastoral advice to homosexual Christians. —*Adopted*

(The report of Advisory Committee 5 is continued in Article 41.)

The session is closed with thanksgiving to God.

WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON, JUNE 15, 1977

Fourth Session

ARTICLE 21

The session is opened with devotions.

The Rev. John Blankespoor, present as alternate to delegate Kermit Rietema, rises to indicate his agreement with the Forms of Unity.

ARTICLE 22

Advisory Committee 7, *Domestic Ministries*, the Rev. S. VanderKlay reporting, presents the following:

I. COMMITTEE ON BIBLE TRANSLATION

A. *Material:* Report 8.

B. *Recommendation*: That synod express thanks to the Bible Translation Committee for its work, and anticipate the continued publishing of its helpful reviews in our church papers. —*Adopted*

II. CHAPLAIN COMMITTEE

A. *Material*: Report 9.

B. *Observations*: During this past year the Revs. Al Hoogewind and Hans Uittenbosch were commissioned to study models of industrial chaplaincies. These studies surfaced many crucial questions for the church such as her relevance to the "business-world" dimension of her members' lives, her prophetic stance vis-a-vis industrial mindsets and structures of injustice, her competence in ministry to contemporary industrialized society. The immensity, complexity, and multifaceted nature of the subject has convinced the Chaplain Committee that the denomination would be well served if it could 1) continue to study, 2) design various industrial/business chaplaincy models, and 3) experiment with such models in action for a specified period, since it would be wise to become more sophisticated in this whole area *before* committing ourselves to such chaplaincy on a continuing basis. Although your advisory committee is not certain the present funding projections will adequately resource such a program we are convinced that such ministry research and development is strategic enough to begin "with all deliberate speed" (Report 9, Section V).

C. *Recommendations*:

1. That the Executive Secretary, the Rev. Harold Bode, and Dr. Melvin Hugen be permitted to speak at synod on matters affecting the Chaplain Committee. —*Adopted*
2. That active-duty chaplains, both institutional and military, who may be present while synod is in session be presented to synod, and that one of each type be allowed the privilege of speaking briefly to the members of synod. —*Adopted*
3. That synod grant permission to the Chaplain Committee to explore, design, and initiate active models of business and industrial chaplaincy for a period of three years.

Grounds:

- a. This would give the committee opportunity to set up evaluative criteria by which to judge models of business and industrial chaplaincy.
- b. This would give the committee time for further study through active models without committing ourselves to such chaplaincy indefinitely. —*Adopted*

III. CHRISTIAN REFORMED BOARD OF HOME MISSIONS

A. *Materials*:

1. Report 4.
2. Communication 12.

B. *Recommendations*:

1. That synod grant the privilege of the floor to its president, executive secretary, and treasurer when matters pertaining to the Board of Home Missions are discussed. —*Adopted*
2. That synod reappoint the Rev. Peter Borgdorff as Fields Secretary

of the Board of Home Missions for a four-year term. (See Report 4, Section III, C.) —*Adopted*

3. That synod reappoint the Rev. Duane VanderBrug as Personnel Secretary of the Board of Home Missions for a four-year term. (See Report 4, Section III, C.) —*Adopted*

4. That synod approve the Grant-in-Aid recommendations as presented in Section IV, G of Report 4. —*Adopted*

(The report of Advisory Committee 7 is continued in Article 29.)

ARTICLE 23

Advisory Committee 8, *World Ministries*, the Rev. J. Morren reporting, presents the following:

I. REPRESENTATION AT SYNOD

A. *Material*: Report 3, Section I, E.

B. *Recommendation*: That synod grant the president, executive secretary, treasurer, and business secretary permission to represent the board on all matters relating to world missions. —*Adopted*

II. PRESENTATION OF MISSIONARIES

A. *Material*: Report 3, Section I, F.

B. *Recommendation*: That synod set aside a time for the introduction of missionaries who are on home service and those preparing to leave for their first assignment in a foreign country. —*Adopted*

III. INVITATION TO CRWM-RELATED NATIONAL CHURCHES

A. *Material*: Report 3, Section II, C.

B. *Recommendation*: That synod authorize the CRWM board:

1. through the Interchurch Relations Committee create annually to invite one or two CRWM-related national churches to send delegates to sessions of synod, and

2. to underwrite the expenses of such delegates.

Grounds:

a. The Mission Order, which was adopted by synod in 1976 states in Article IV, section 2, "With respect to national churches to which the Christian Reformed Church is related in its foreign mission work, the board and its missionaries are pledged to . . . serve them in the development of their ecclesiastical relationships, and promote reciprocal inter-church contact."

b. In order for CRWM-related national churches to be able to accept invitations, travel funds must be supplied. —*Adopted*

IV. MISSION ORDER REVISION

A. *Materials*:

1. Report 3, Section II, D.

2. Overture 13.

B. A motion is made to delete Article II, Section 12, d. of the Mission Order, which states: "Ordinarily a member of the executive committee shall serve the full year of his appointment even though he moves to a new location. If the executive committee, however, deems that distance

or circumstances makes his continued membership on the executive committee inadvisable, his alternate shall serve in his place." —*Adopted*

C. Synod declares that the decision above is its answer to Overture 13. —*Adopted*

V. MAJOR WORLD LANGUAGES LITERATURE STUDY COMMITTEE

A. *Materials:*

1. Report 3, Section II, D.
2. Overture 13.

B. *Recommendations:*

1. That synod request the CRWM board to bring recommendations to the Synod of 1978 regarding the feasibility of forming a permanent committee to plan, organize and publish needed Reformed literature in major world languages.

Grounds:

a. The record of the Spanish Literature Committee demonstrates the value of such a program.

b. There are needs in other major languages for similar literature.

c. A unified literature program may be more efficient than splinter operations.

d. A denominational endeavor such as this goes beyond the mandate of an existing board or committee.

The task or mandate of such a study committee would be as follows:

- 1) a study of possible languages to be covered and the order of their priority;
- 2) needed staffing and budget;
- 3) survey of present CRC activity in foreign language publication; and
- 4) study structure and synodical relationships. —*Adopted*

2. That synod request the CRWM board to include personnel from the Home Mission Board, the Back to God Hour Committee, and the Publications Board, as they implement 1 above.

Ground: The work and interests of these boards is such that should involve them in this common task. —*Adopted*

VI. BANGLADESH

A. *Material:* Report 3, Section IV, B, 4.

B. *Recommendation:* That synod authorize the CRWM board to adopt Bangladesh as a mission field and to recruit two ordained missionaries for this field in 1978.

Grounds:

1. The CRWRC already has three workers in Bangladesh, and the preaching/teaching ministry should be present where doors are open.

2. There is a great need for the gospel in this land which now has only 140 missionaries serving 76 million inhabitants. —*Adopted*

VII. AUSTRALIA

A. *Materials:* Report 3, Section IV, B, 4.

Copies of letters from congregations in Australia and from their home missions committee.

Copy of a letter from the Ministerial Information Service.

B. *Observations:*

1. The Australian churches express great appreciation for the work done by the Christian Reformed pastors loaned to them in the years before they had graduates from their small Theological School in Geelong, Victoria, Australia.

2. They also lament the fact that their own small theological school has not been able to provide sufficient ministers for their current needs.

3. They are much aware of the additional economic needs of pastors who come from, and intend to return to, North America.

C. *Recommendations:*

1. That synod encourage the Australian churches and their Home Missions Committee to call pastors from the CRC.

2. That supplemental support for these pastors be channeled through CRWM, and supplied by synod, up to an eventual maximum number of five ministers. Such support to be \$5,000 annually per ministerial family to cover social security, pension, health insurance, and travel.

3. That synod request the CRWM board to recruit such pastors for 1978.

4. That the CRWM be appointed to determine the qualifications in terms of the health and psychological stability of the persons called and sent. —Adopted

VIII. CENTRAL AMERICA

A. *Material:* Report 3, Section V.

B. *Recommendation:* That synod decide to enlarge the Central America field to include, in addition to the countries in which we are already working; namely, Honduras and Nicaragua, the countries of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Panama.

Grounds:

1. These countries have a great deal of cultural homogeneity, and affinity in language.

2. There is openness to the gospel in these countries.

3. There is little of the much-needed Reformed witness in these countries.

4. Treating these countries as a single field gives the board the room to deploy missionary forces where and when needed. —Adopted

(The report of Advisory Committee 8 is continued in Article 43.)

ARTICLE 24

Advisory Committee 11, *Synodical Services*, the Rev. D. Negen reporting, presents the following:

I. HISTORICAL COMMITTEE

A. *Material:* Report 13.

B. *Recommendations:*

1. That synod note with thankfulness the labors of Messrs. E. R. Post and D. VanVliet as they do much of the legwork required in the accomplishment of the work. —Adopted

2. That synod urge the united cooperation of all the churches and officebearers with the committee and its representatives in the pursuit of its goals. —*Adopted*

II. MINISTERIAL INFORMATION SERVICE

A. *Material*: Report 16.

B. *Recommendations*:

1. That synod take grateful note of the work performed by the Ministerial Information Service Committee. —*Adopted*

2. That synod encourage the ministers to maintain current profiles with the committee.

Ground: This service is much appreciated by many vacant churches and the value of the service is enhanced by updated profiles. —*Adopted*

III. AGENCIES' REQUEST FOR MISSION SUNDAY 1977

A. *Materials*:

1. Communication 16.

2. Report 3-A (3), 1-A.

B. *Information*: The request reads: "The agencies request synod to designate Sunday, September 25, 1977, as Mission Sunday and encourage all churches to participate in this denomination-wide celebration of the mission opportunities facing the Back to God Hour, the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee, the Board of Home Missions, and the Board of World Missions."

C. *Recommendation*:

1. That Mr. Jerry Jonker be given the privilege of the floor to represent these agencies. —*Adopted*

2. That synod do not accede to this request.

Grounds:

1. Two previous synods have discouraged the proliferation of Sundays that are designated by terms other than the Lord's Day. (Cf. Acts of Synod 1964, Article 45, p. 26; and 1972, Article 18, p. 24.)

2. Such a day may conflict with mission emphasis weeks or Sundays currently observed in many churches.

3. Such a day may hinder the distinctive appeal of each agency.

—*Adopted*

IV. SYNODICAL COMMITTEE ON RACE RELATIONS

A. *Material*: Report 19.

B. *Information*: The Synod of 1971 established the present Synodical Committee on Race Relations with the continuing mandate given to the Race Commission under the Board of Home Missions in 1968. Some suggested functions to assist the committee in implementing the mandate included activities such as: educating the church with appropriate materials, providing counsel and advice, supervising scholarships to minority groups, giving assistance when possible, and serving as agents of reconciliation in consultation with ecclesiastical and other agencies involved.

C. *Recommendations*:

1. That synod grant the privilege of the floor to the executive secre-

tary, Karl Westerhof, and to the chairman of the committee, Vernon Geurkink, when SCORR matters are discussed. —*Adopted*

2. That synod continue the ministry of SCORR for a period of three years with the mandate as formulated in 1968 and reiterated in 1971 as follows: "to design, organize and implement programs through which the denomination, individual churches, and members, can effectively use all available resources to eliminate racism, both causes and effects, within the body of believers, and throughout the world in which we live." —*Adopted*

3. That synod approve the reappointment of Karl Westerhof as Executive Secretary of SCORR for three years. —*Adopted*

V. ACTS OF COUNCIL - CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCHES IN CANADA 1976

A. *Material*: Acts of Council 1976

B. *Recommendation*: That synod receive the Acts of Council 1976 as information. —*Adopted*

(The report of Advisory Committee 11 is continued in Article 49.)

The afternoon session is closed with prayer.

THURSDAY MORNING, JUNE 16, 1977

Fifth Session

ARTICLE 25

The session is opened with devotions.

The roll is called and all delegates are present.

The minutes of the fourth session, June 15, 1977, are read and are approved.

The chairman welcomes Mr. Henry C. Boss, elder from the Presbyterian Church in America.

ARTICLE 26

Advisory Committee 9, *Educational Matters*, Elder J. VanderArk reporting, presents the following:

I. REPRESENTATION AT SYNOD

A. *Material*: Report 2-A.

B. *Recommendation*: That synod give the privilege of the floor to Dr. Edwin Roels, first vice president of the board of trustees, and to Rev. Wilbur L. De Jong, secretary of the board of trustees, to represent the board of trustees in matters pertaining to Calvin College and Seminary. —*Adopted*

II. NEW APPOINTMENTS TO STAFF POSITIONS

A. *Materials*:

1. Report 2.

2. Report 2-A.

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

1. Blankespoor, Ronald L., Ph.D., Associate Professor of Chemistry for two years
2. Bratt, Kenneth, M.A., Instructor in Classical Languages for two years
3. Carvill, Barbara, M.A. (expects Ph.D. in June 1977), Assistant Professor of Germanic Languages for two years
4. Class, Bradley, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Romance Languages (Spanish) for two years.
5. De Witt, Calvin, Ph.D., Visiting Calvin Fellow for one year, terminal
6. Ebels, Daniel M., M.S. (Ph.D. expected in 1977), Assistant Professor of Economics for two years
7. Ericson, Edward, Ph.D., Visiting Professor of English for two years
8. Hoitenga, Dewey, Jr., Ph.D., Professor of Philosophy for one year, terminal
9. Holtrop, Philip, B.D., Th.M., Assistant Professor of Religion and Theology for two years, terminal
10. Konyndyk, Roger, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Mathematics for one year, terminal
11. Leegwater, Arie, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Chemistry for two years (effective September 1978)
12. Libolt, Clayton, M.A., Instructor in Religion and Theology for one year, terminal
13. Manweiler, Robert, Ph.D., Visiting Assistant Professor of Physics for one year, terminal
14. Mellema, Gregory, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Philosophy for two years (effective September 1978)
15. Mulder, Carl, Ed.D., Associate Professor of Education for two years
16. Mullins, Judith, M.Ed., Dean of Women for two years
17. Pauw, Robert J., M.A., Instructor in Philosophy for one year, terminal
18. Otten, Charlotte, Ph.D., Associate Professor of English for two years
19. Pederson, Ronald, M.F.A., Visiting Instructor in Art for one year, terminal
20. Pettinga, Jeffrey, M.A., Assistant Professor of Physical Education for two years
21. Smidt, Corwin E., Ph.D., Visiting Assistant Professor of Political Science for two years
22. Timmerman, John, Jr., Ph.D., Associate Professor of English for two years
23. Van Laar, Timothy J., M.F.A., Instructor in Art for two years
24. Van Hook, Jay, Ph.D., Professor of Philosophy for one year, terminal
25. Wassenaar, John D., M.A., Instructor in Economics for one year, terminal
26. Wilkinson, Loren, Ph.D., Visiting Calvin Fellow for one year, terminal

—Adopted

III. REAPPOINTMENTS WITH TENURE

A. *Material*: Report 2.

B. *Recommendation*: That synod approve the following reappointments with tenure to the faculty of Calvin College:

(italics indicates change of rank)

1. Beebe, John, Ph.D., *Professor* of Biology
2. Besselsen, Gilbert, Ph.D., Professor of Education
3. De Vries, Bert, Ph.D., *Professor* of History
4. Konyndyk, Kenneth, Ph.D., *Professor* of Philosophy
5. Lamse, James, Ph.D., Professor of Germanic Languages
6. Lucasse, Philip, Ph.D., Professor of Education
7. Roberts, Frank, Ph.D., *Professor* of History
8. Stapert, Calvin, Ph.D., *Professor* of Music
9. Terborg, Robert, Ph.D., Professor of Psychology
10. Van Poolen, Lambert, Ph.D., *Professor* of Engineering
11. Walters, Mary, Ph.D., *Professor* of English
12. Westra, Dorothy, M.A., Assistant Professor of Education

—Adopted

IV. REAPPOINTMENTS TO THE STAFF

A. *Materials*:

1. Report 2
2. Report 2-A

B. *Recommendation*: That synod approve the following reappointments to the staff of Calvin College:
(italics indicates change of rank)

1. Faculty

- a. Ariza, Sandra, M.A., two years as *Instructor* in Romance Languages (Spanish)
- b. Baldwin, Claude-Marie, A.B. (expects M.A. in June 1977), two years as Visiting *Instructor* in Romance Languages (French)
- c. Blok, Kathryn, M.A., Ed.S., two years as Visiting Assistant Professor of Education
- d. Bosma, Bette, M.A., two years as Instructor in Education
- e. De Haan, Sander, M.A., two-year terminal appointment as Instructor in Germanic Languages (German)
- f. De Vries, Robert, Ph.D., two years as Assistant Professor of Political Science
- g. Diephouse, David, Ph.D., two years as Assistant Professor of History
- h. Dykema, Eugene, M.B.A., two years as Assistant Professor of Economics and Business
- i. Greenway, Edna, M.A., two years as Instructor in Romance Languages (Spanish)
- j. Hageman, Dolores, M.A., two years as *Instructor* in Physical Education
- k. Hoeksema, Thomas, Ph.D., two years as Assistant Professor of Education
- l. Hoesch, Karla, A.B. (M.A. expected in summer 1977), two years as Visiting *Instructor* in Physical Education
- m. Holquist, David, M.A., Ed.S., two years as Assistant Professor of Speech
- n. Huisman, Gertrude, M.A., M.Mus., two years as Assistant Professor of Music
- o. Kuipers, Kenneth, M.B.A., two years as Assistant Professor of Economics and Business
- p. Penning, James, Ph.D., two years as Assistant Professor of Political Science
- q. Read, Lois, M.A., one-year terminal appointment as Assistant Professor of Romance Languages (French)
- r. Stegink, LeRoy, M.A., two years as Assistant Professor of Education
- s. Te Brake, Wayne, Ph.D., one-year terminal appointment as Assistant Professor of History
- t. Tiemstra, John, Ph.D., two years as Assistant Professor of Economics and Business
- u. Tigchelaar, Peter, Ph.D., two years as Associate Professor of Biology
- v. VanderPloeg, W. Stevens, Ph.D., one-year terminal appointment as Assistant Professor of Philosophy
- w. Van Halsema, Brenda, B.A. (M.A. expected summer 1977), two years as *Instructor* in Art
- x. Van Noord, Nancy, M.A., two years as Instructor in Physical Education
- y. Weaver, Glenn, M.Div., M.A. (Ph.D. expected summer 1977), two years as Visiting Assistant Professor of Psychology

—*Adopted*

2. Administrators

- a. Laarman, Joan, M.S.W., one year as Counselor in the Broene Counseling Center
- b. Pekelder, Bernard E., B.D., M.A., continuing appointment as Vice President for Student Affairs and College Chaplain
- c. Vande Guchte, Peter, Ed.D., continuing appointment as Vice President for College Advancement

—*Adopted*

V. PROMOTIONS OF CALVIN COLLEGE FACULTY MEMBERS

A. *Material*: Report 2.

B. *Recommendation*: That synod approve the promotions in rank of the following faculty members:

1. Klooster, Beverly, Ph.D., to Professor of Biology
2. Stouwie, Roger, Ph.D., to Professor of Psychology

—Adopted

VI. RETIREMENTS OF CALVIN COLLEGE STAFF MEMBERS

A. *Material*: Report 2

B. *Recommendations*:

1. That synod confirm the action of the board of trustees in granting retirement and conferring the appropriate titles upon the following members of the Calvin staff:

- a. De Beer, John, Ed.D., — Professor of Education, Emeritus
- b. Wolhuis, Enno, Ph.D., — Professor of Chemistry, Emeritus

2. That synod recognize with appreciation the services rendered by the named retirees at a testimonial dinner to be held on Tuesday evening, June 21, 1977 at 7:00 p.m.

3. That the president of synod appoint a committee to make all necessary arrangements for this testimonial dinner.

—Adopted

VII. TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF APPOINTMENT TO THE FACULTY OF CALVIN COLLEGE

A. *Material*: Report 2-A.

B. *Recommendation*: That synod recognize the 25th anniversary of the appointments to Calvin College of the following at a testimonial dinner to be held on Tuesday evening, June 21, 1977 at 7:00 p.m.

1. Otten, Arthur, D. de Pl., Professor of Romance Languages (French)
2. Otten, Robert, Ph.D., Professor of Classical Languages
3. Tuuk, David, M.A., Assistant Professor of Physical Education

—Adopted

VIII. REAPPOINTMENT OF DR. M. HUGEN

A. *Material*: Report 2.

B. *Recommendation*: That synod reappoint Dr. Melvin Hugen as Professor of Pastoral Care with tenure.

—Adopted

IX. REAPPOINTMENT OF DR. M. SNAPPER

A. *Material*: Report 2.

B. *Recommendation*: That synod reappoint Dr. J. Marion Snapper as Professor of Church Education for two years.

—Adopted

X. EARLY CANDIDACY EXAMINATION

A. *Material*: Report 2.

B. *Recommendation*: That synod approve the plans made for early candidacy examination for seminarian Carl Bruxvoort.

—Adopted

XI. REAPPOINTMENT OF THE REV. J. SCHUURMANN

A. *Material*: Report 2-A.

B. *Recommendation*: That synod approve the reappointment of the Rev. John Schuurmann as special assistant in the theological division of the Library for one year.

—Adopted

XII. APPOINTMENT OF THE REV. M. GOOTE

A. *Material*: Report 2-A.

B. *Recommendation*: That synod approve the appointment of the Rev. Marinus Goote as special assistant in the theological division of the Library for one year. —*Adopted*

XIII. APPOINTMENT OF DR. D. BOSCH

A. *Material*: Report 2-A.

B. *Recommendation*: That synod approve the appointment of Dr. David Bosch to teach one elective course in the seminary during the third quarter, 1977-78, subject to a favorable interview by the board of trustees next February. —*Adopted*

XIV. APPOINTMENT OF DR. F. L. BATTLES

A. *Material*: Report 2-A.

B. *Recommendation*: That synod approve the appointment of Dr. Ford Lewis Battles as Visiting Professor of Church History in the seminary for three years. —*Adopted*

XV. RECOGNITION

A. *Material*: Report 2-A.

B. *Recommendation*: That synod, at its testimonial dinner, recognize the completion of twenty-five years of service to Calvin Seminary by Dr. John Kromminga and to Calvin College and Seminary by Dr. Bastiaan Van Elderen. —*Adopted*

XVI. VACANCY IN SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY

A. *Material*: Report 2-A.

B. *Recommendation*: That synod take note of the impending retirement of Dr. A. A. Hoekema from his professorship in Systematic Theology at the seminary and of the intention of the board of trustees to submit a nomination to fill this position to the Synod of 1978. —*Synod takes note*

XVII. EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE TO CHURCHES ABROAD

A. *Material*: Report 11.

B. *Recommendations*:

1. That synod approve the work of the committee.
2. That synod recommend to the churches that they take note of the committee's need for "good used theological books, Bible commentaries, concordances, and dictionaries" (cf. Acts of Synod 1976, p. 21). —*Adopted*

XVIII. DORDT COLLEGE

A. *Material*: Report 25.

B. *Recommendation*: That synod take grateful note of God's continued blessing on Dordt College as reported by the synodical representative, and that synod ask the churches to continue to remember the specific needs of the college in their prayers. —*Adopted*

XIX. REFORMED BIBLE COLLEGE

A. *Material*: Report 30.

B. *Recommendation*: That synod note with appreciation the continued service of Reformed Bible College in training young men and women for Christian service and that synod commend the RBC to the continued prayer support of the congregations. —*Adopted*

XX. TRINITY CHRISTIAN COLLEGE

A. *Material*: Report 32.

B. *Recommendation*: That synod take grateful note of the progress made at Trinity Christian College, as reported by the synodical representative, especially the achievement of full accreditation by North Central Association in July, 1976, and that synod commend the college to the prayer support of the congregations. —*Adopted*

XXI. UNITED CALVINIST YOUTH

A. *Material*: Report 33.

B. *Recommendations*:

1. That synod take grateful note of the continued service of the United Calvinist Youth organizations as reported by the synodical representatives, noting that there is no report on the Calvinist Cadet Corps. —*Adopted*

2. That the Rev. James Lont, Director of the Young Calvinist Federation, be permitted to address synod briefly during its sessions. —*Adopted*
(The report of Advisory Committee 9 is continued in Article 53.)

ARTICLE 27

Advisory Committee 6, *Radio and Publication Ministries*, the Rev. J. Hofman reporting, presents the following:

I. CHRISTIAN REFORMED BOARD OF PUBLICATIONS

A. *Material*: Report 5.

B. *Recommendations*:

1. That synod give the privilege of the floor to the Rev. C. Boomsma, president of the board, to Mr. A. James Heynen, Acting Director of Education and Theological Editor (in all matters pertaining to the Education Department); to Mr. P. Meeuwssen, Business Manager (in all matters pertaining to the business aspects of the board's operation); and the editors Dr. L. De Koster and the Rev. Wm. Haverkamp (in all matters pertaining to their respective periodicals). —*Adopted*

2. That synod approve the concept of an expanded ministry in the distribution of Reformed church education beyond the Christian Reformed Church. —*Adopted*

3. That synod declare that the goal of the Young Adult Curriculum Planning Report is to nurture within the life of each student a relationship to Jesus Christ as Savior and as Lord, shown by

a. A meaningful profession of faith.

b. Full participation in the life and work of the church.

c. A broader expression of Christian discipleship in the service of God and man in every area of life. —*Adopted*

4. That synod approve the Young Adult Curriculum Plan as proposed by the Education Committee of the Board of Publications. —*Adopted*

II. CHRISTIAN REFORMED BOARD OF PUBLICATIONS

A. *Material*: Communication 3.

B. *Analysis*: The Rev. C. Boomsma has completed twenty-two years of denominational service in the area of education and publications. He has been the president of the Board of Publications since its inception in 1968. He has rendered exceptional service and has committed much time, energy and devotion to this work.

C. *Recommendation*: That synod recognize the invaluable service rendered by the Rev. Clarence Boomsma at the testimonial dinner to be held Tuesday, June 21, and with thanksgiving to God, express its gratitude to the Rev. Mr. Boomsma and extend to him the opportunity to respond. —*Adopted*

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

ARTICLE 28

Advisory Committee 1, *Appeals*, the Rev. M. Greidanus reporting, presents the following:

MR. R. TIMMERMANS APPEALS FROM A DECISION BY CLASSIS HAMILTON

A. *Material*: Personal Appeal 2.

B. *History*: Mr. R. Timmermans is the owner-operator of a coin-operated laundromat which is open seven days a week. The business was acquired in March, 1973. In the summer of 1974 Mr. Timmermans was elected to serve as elder in First Hamilton Christian Reformed Church. During a 1976 family visit an objection was made to the Sunday operation of the business; the family sent a letter of protest to the consistory in June, 1976. The consistory on July 12, 1976 adopted the following: "That the consistory urge our brother, elder Timmermans, to discontinue the operation of a coin-operated laundromat on Sundays, as this is not compatible with his office of elder of this church."

Mr. Timmermans then requested the consistory to permit him to continue to operate his business on Sunday, mentioning a synodical decision on Sunday labor which says:

"And if somehow the performance of such labors is tolerated in the case of members in general, this is not to be tolerated in the case of elders and deacons excepting in extraordinary conditions, the presence of which shall be determined by the consistory concerned" (Acts of Synod 1940, Art. 93, IX, D, p. 103).

He gave the following grounds:

1. Personally I do not work on Sundays.
2. I have nobody in my employ who must work on Sundays.

The consistory denied this request on September 13, 1976.

On September 17, 1976 Mr. Timmermans appealed this decision of his consistory to Classis Hamilton, repeating the decision of the 1940 Synod and stating that his two grounds qualified as "extraordinary conditions."

Classis Hamilton appointed a committee to meet with the appellant and the consistory and to advise the January classis meeting. The committee offered this advice:

"1. That classis do not sustain the appeal of elder Timmermans.

Grounds:

a. The decision of the consistory of First CRC of Hamilton is in keeping with the synodical position expressed in the Acts of 1940, 'this is not to be tolerated in the case of elders and deacons excepting in extra-ordinary conditions, *the presence of which shall be determined by the consistory concerned*' (italics ours).

b. The grounds which the appellant raises do not fall under the 'extra-ordinary conditions' of the performance of such labors as engaged in by officebearers.

1) The operation of the laundromat is not a work of charity or necessity.

2) Even though he or his employee does not labor on Sunday, the appellant invites and encourages others to do unnecessary work, and thus violates the sanctity of the Lord's Day.

3) The sole purpose of the operation of the business on Sunday is for financial gain.

"2. That classis advise the appellant to follow the advice of the consistory as decided on July 12, 1976."

Classis accepted this advice and did not sustain the appeal.

Mr. Timmermans now appeals to synod:

"Therefore, brethren, I hereby appeal from the decision of Classis Hamilton not to sustain the appeal of Elder Timmermans.

Grounds:

1. With reference to ground a of classis it appears that Classis Hamilton judges the decision of the First CRC of Hamilton to agree with the decision of Synod, 1940, without knowing the grounds for this decision. The local consistory never provided grounds.

2. In ground b, 1) classis works with the framework of charity or necessity in apparent opposition to New Testament teaching concerning the abrogation of the Old Testament sabbath with its resultant situation of charity or necessity for the New Testament Christian community as it refers to the Sunday. (See Matt. 12:1-14; Mark 2:23-28; Luke 6:1-11; John 5:1-18; Acts 15:1-35; Rom. 14:5,12; Col. 2:16; Gal. 3, complete chapter.)

3. In ground b, 2) classis erroneously suggests that the appellant invites and encourages others to do unnecessary work. Furthermore classis fails to show from Scripture how the appellant violates the sanctity of the Lord's Day, when he and his family join the local congregation for worship on the Lord's Day (See Heid. Cat. L.D. 38).

4. Classis wrongly suggests that there is something evil in obtaining financial gain on the Lord's Day, whereas a previous synod has taken note of that fact without adding a condemnation. (See Agenda for Synod 1940, Part I, page 53.)"

C. *Analysis:* Our committee notes some misunderstanding on Mr. Timmermans' part of the "extra-ordinary conditions" mentioned by the

1940 Synod. The classical committee of advice has properly noted that it is up to the *consistory* to determine whether such "extra-ordinary conditions" exist. Such conditions are not to be found in the type of work that is being done on Sunday, but in the situation of the congregation. Report 3, 1940 states: "Were the rule of 1881 to be applied strictly, some of these churches would have great difficulty in organizing a consistory. In other churches the best talents in the congregation would be unavailable. Out of these conditions the overture of California arose." (See Agenda, 1940, Part I, p. 53.).

Therefore classis is also justified in sustaining the consistory's interpretation that the "extra-ordinary conditions" mentioned in 1940 do not apply in this case. The texts listed by Mr. Timmermans in the second ground of his appeal do not set this judgment aside.

Mr. Timmermans admits that he values rest and worship on Sunday for himself, his family, and employees. But he fails to realize that an open laundromat invites and encourages others to do their laundry on Sunday, and that in this way the operation of his business contributes to the secularization of the Lord's Day.

Mr. Timmermans misunderstands the decision of classis when in the fourth ground of his appeal he begins to discuss whether it has been proven that there is something evil about financial gain from Sunday work. The point of classis appears to be that the laundromat is open on Sunday not for reasons of religion, mercy, or necessity, but for his livelihood. The classical committee reports:

"Weekends are a prime time for usage by the public and therefore financially profitable. He claims that this prime-time-use is a necessity for providing a livelihood for him and his family."

D. *Recommendation*: That synod do not sustain Mr. R. Timmermans' appeal.

Grounds:

1. The classis made its investigation by means of a committee which met with the appellant and the consistory: the decision of classis was made with knowledge of the reasons for this decision by the consistory;

2. The classis is correct in its interpretation that the grounds adduced by Mr. Timmermans do not belong to the "extra-ordinary conditions" considered in 1940.

—*Adopted*

(The report of Advisory Committee 1 is continued in Article 47.)

ARTICLE 29

Advisory Committee 7, *Domestic Ministries*, the Rev. S. VanderKlay reporting, presents the following:

(The report of Advisory Committee 7 is continued from Article 22.)

DETROIT COMMUNITY/NARDIN PARK UNION-CHURCH REQUEST

A. *Materials:*

1. Report 4, Sections IV, F, and VII, E.
2. Communication 12.

B. *Analysis*: Having worked and worshiped together during the past year the Detroit Community and Nardin Park churches have requested

permission to become a single congregation with membership in both the Reformed and Christian Reformed denominations. Classis Lake Erie endorsed the request in January and sent it on to the Board of Home Missions. Since there is no Church Order provision for such, the board requests synod to appoint a study committee to address the "question of union churches." Classis meeting in May, decided to request synod "to give tentative approval for the current arrangement . . . and to set up an evaluative procedure to assist them in the decisions to be made about this church." Your advisory committee does not believe that all ecclesiastical procedures governing "the question of union churches" need to be spelled out and officially adopted before some assistance can be given Classis Lake Erie "in the decisions to be made about this church."

C. *Recommendations:*

1. That synod mandate the Interchurch Relations Committee to study the Detroit Community CRC/Nardin Park RCA relationship in consultation with that local fellowship, Classis Lake Erie, the Christian Reformed Board of Home Missions, and the appropriate agencies of the Reformed Church in America and report with recommendations to Synod of 1978.

Ground: Church-polity and other ecclesiastical issues raised by the question of a potential union-church should be resolved by careful study.

—*Adopted*

2. That synod permit the present arrangement until its study is completed and synod acts.

—*Adopted*

3. That synod declare this to be our answer to both the Board of Home Missions and Classis Lake Erie.

—*Adopted*

(The report of Advisory Committee 7 is continued in Article 36.)

ARTICLE 30

Advisory Committee 6, *Radio and Publication Ministries*, the Rev. J. Hofman reporting, presents the following: (The report of Advisory Committee 6 is continued from Article 27.)

THE BACK TO GOD HOUR

A. *Materials:*

1. Report 1.
2. Report 1-A, CRC-TV Mission Report.

B. *Recommendations:*

1. That synod grant the privilege of the floor to Dr. Joel Nederhood and to the Rev. R. Venema or the Rev. H. Vanderwell, president and secretary of the Back to God Hour Committee.

—*Adopted*

2. That synod extend to the Rev. Aaron Kayayan the privilege of addressing synod on behalf of the Back to God Hour.

—*Adopted*

3. That synod grant the Back to God Hour staff the privilege of showing the first of the video tape programs, "A Special Kind of Book," during the early Tuesday afternoon, June 21.

—*Adopted*

4. That synod inform the delegates that a 23-minute video tape film about the equipment, the facilities and the techniques of TV production will be shown Tuesday, June 21, at 1:00 p.m.

—*Adopted*

(The report of Advisory Committee 6 is continued in Article 63.)
The morning session is closed with prayer.

THURSDAY AFTERNOON, JUNE 16, 1977

Sixth Session

ARTICLE 31

The session is opened with prayer.

Dr. Paul Schrotenboer, Executive Secretary of the Reformed Ecumenical Synod is recognized and welcomed.

ARTICLE 32

Advisory Committee 10, *Interdenominational Outreach*, the Rev. H. VandenEinde reporting, presents the following:

I. JOINT COMMISSION RCA/CRC FOR STUDY OF THEOLOGY OF EVANGELISM

A. *Material*: Report 43.

B. *Observation*: Dr. Herman Ridder, representing the RCA at the Synod of 1973, extended a number of invitations to our denomination, one of which was that our two denominations appoint a joint commission whose mandate would be the study of the theology of evangelism. Report 43 is the result of the work of that joint commission. This Evangelism Manifesto has been in the hands of the churches and denominational boards and agencies for two years, and is now presented in its final form with accompanying Scripture references.

C. *Recommendations*:

1. That synod recognize Dr. Richard S. Wierenga and Dr. Richard De Ridder as representatives of the joint commission at synod and that they be given the privilege of the floor when this report is under consideration.
—*Adopted*

2. That synod accept the Evangelism Manifesto as a guideline for further study and action by the churches and denominational agencies.
—*Adopted*

3. That synod take note of the recommendations in Report 43, Section IV and refer these to the appropriate agencies and to the churches for implementation whenever and wherever circumstances permit. —*Adopted*

4. That synod thank the committee for its work and declare that its assignment is herewith completed and the committee discharged.
—*Adopted*

II. INTERCHURCH RELATIONS COMMITTEE

A. *Representation at Synod*

1. *Material*: Report 14.

2. *Recommendation*: That the president, Dr. John H. Kromminga, and the secretary, the Rev. Tymen E. Hofman, of the Interchurch Relations Committee, be given the privilege of the floor. —*Adopted*

B. *Hospitality Committee*

1. *Material*: Report 14, Section O.

2. *Recommendation*: That the Reception Committee appointed by synod work closely with the Hospitality Committee of the IRC in the reception of fraternal delegates, and that members of this committee be given meal privileges while on duty at synod.

Ground: Such an arrangement will make for the proper reception of and hospitality to our guests in attendance at synod. —*Adopted*

C. *Churches in Ecclesiastical Fellowship*

1. The Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church

a. *Material*: Report 14, Section B, 2.

b. *Recommendation*: That synod receive the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church as a church in ecclesiastical fellowship, with all six categories of said fellowship applying, contingent upon equivalent action by the next synod of the ARPC.

Grounds:

1) The ARPC has long been a "correspondence church" with the CRC.

2) The ARPC is a member church of the RES.

3) The ARPC is Reformed in its creedal commitment and is seeking to strengthen its confessional position in areas where there has been concern.

4) The ARPC leadership is very desirous of establishing this relationship. —*Adopted*

2. Transfer of Membership

a. *Material*: Report 14, Section B, 2.

b. *Recommendations*:

1) That synod advise the consistories, under normal circumstances, to grant transfer of membership rather than a certificate of dismission to members seeking to affiliate with a church in ecclesiastical fellowship.

Grounds:

(a) It is consistent with the relationship of cooperation and trust existing between churches in ecclesiastical fellowship.

(b) It is desirable for the building of trust and the promotion of good relationships.

(c) It is a time-honored practice which held in sister-church relationships and which should also hold for churches in ecclesiastical fellowship. —*Adopted*

Dr. P. Y. De Jong requests that his negative vote be recorded.

2) That synod mandate the SIC to propose to the 1978 Synod a more appropriate method of sharing membership information when members move within or out of the denomination.

Grounds:

(a) The present form for transfer of membership has not officially been adopted by past synods.

(b) The present form does not provide for adequate sharing of information in view of the need for continuity of care. —*Adopted*

D. *RES Cape Town 1976*

1. *Material*: Report 14, Appendix B.

2. *Recommendations*:

a. **Race Relations:**

1) That synod take grateful note of the August 13 and August 20, 1976 RES resolutions (Sections A & B) and actions relating to the riots and the unrest in South Africa. —*Adopted*

2) That synod take grateful note of the RES action on the recommendation of the CRC Interchurch Relations Committee and encourage the RES Interim Committee to do all in its power to carry out the important task "to interpret the insights and experience of the world wide Reformed community to their South African fellow members and to interpret the attitudes and actions of the South African churches to their Reformed fellow members throughout the world" (Art. 120). —*Adopted*

3) That synod again draw the attention of the Christian Reformed churches to the race resolutions 14 and 15 of Sydney 1972 reported to the RES through the General Secretary on CRC actions in terms of resolutions 14 and 15, and make relevant materials on aspects of racial problems available to other RES churches. (Cf. RES Acts 1972, p. 330 and CRC "Synodical Decisions on Doctrinal and Ethical Matters," p. 69). —*Adopted*

4) That synod respond to the RES request (Art. 122) to "give serious attention to the problem involved in creating an atmosphere of dissatisfaction and unrest in . . . (our) own lands and throughout the world, and . . . do all in . . . (our) power as Christian churches to promote justice, order and peace everywhere," by referring it to the churches in general and to SCORR for specific action. Note: It is our understanding that the RES is here concerned to call the attention of the churches to problems of poverty, discrimination, prejudice, etc., which create an atmosphere of dissatisfaction and unrest. —*Adopted*

5) That synod adopt the revisions made in resolutions 9, 11, and 12 of the Lunteren-Sydney resolutions on race and that the revised Lunteren-Sydney-Cape Town resolutions be printed in the next revision of *Synodical Decisions on Doctrinal and Ethical Matters*. —*Adopted*

6) That synod express its appreciation to the IRC for the letter addressed to the RES as recorded in Appendix A of Report 14. —*Adopted*

b. **Ecumenical Matters**

1) That synod receive as information the RES Cape Town 1976 decisions on membership of RES churches in the WCC. —*Adopted*

2) That this matter be referred to the IRC for further study. —*Adopted*

3) That synod take note of the decision of the RES with respect to the GKN. —*Noted*

4) That synod engage in prayer and other appropriate actions, as requested by the RES, that the GKN, ourselves, and "all our other churches remain faithful to Scripture and . . . profess and maintain the Reformed confessions." —*Adopted*

5) That synod take cognizance of the fact that its new "single category of churches in ecclesiastical fellowship" has been reported to the RES.

—*Adopted*

6) That synod take note of the 1976 RES decisions on Ecumenical Relations with bodies other than the WCC (Art. 56, 1-3).

—*Noted*

7) That synod receive as information the RES actions relating to consultations between the RES Interim Committee and representatives of the WCC, take account of the report of the consultation held in 1975 and reported in the publication entitled "The Nature of the Church and the Role of Theology," and of the consultation planned for 1978 on "The Calling of the Church in Society."

—*Adopted*

c. Missions, Evangelism and World Relief

1) That synod refer the new instruction concerning the Committee on Missions (RES) to the Board for World Missions, the Back to God Hour Committee and the CRWRC for implementation (Art. 35).

—*Adopted*

2) That synod receive the "Message to the Churches Concerning Their Missionary Task and Their Equipment for it" (Postscript to Report 14), and that it direct the boards of Home Missions, World Missions, World Relief, and the Back to God Hour Committee, and the faculties of Calvin Seminary and Calvin College to implement this statement as fully as possible; and that synod commend it to all consistories and to those faculties of higher education associated with the CRC.

—*Adopted*

3) That synod refer the GKN statement on "Proclamation of the Gospel Among Israel" to the Back to God Hour Committee, the CR Board of Home Missions, the CR Board for World Missions, and the CRWRC for consideration (Art. 39).

—*Adopted*

4) That synod instruct the Back to God Hour Committee to carry out the 1976 RES decision re the Radio and Television Sub-Committee (Art. 38).

—*Adopted*

5) That synod ratify the RES decisions concerning RES Diaconal Involvement (Art. 79) and refer these decisions to the CRWRC and the boards of Home Missions and World Missions.

—*Adopted*

6) That synod instruct the Interchurch Relations Committee to consider the advisability of holding regional conference(s) with other RES member churches in North America on issues of mutual concern.

—*Adopted*

d. Theological Issues

1) That synod receive as information the RES report on "Baptism of the Holy Spirit" and call it to the attention of the churches.

—*Adopted*

2) That synod take note of the decisions of the RES on the Sabbath/Sunday question and call to the attention of the churches the message of the RES in this matter.

—*Adopted*

3) That synod receive as information the RES appointment of a major study committee (with regional subcommittees) on "The Calling of the Church in Society" and await its report.

—*Adopted*

4) That synod receive the items regarding a World Survey of Re-

formed Theological Education, Scripture, laying on of hands at the ordination of officebearers, women in office, and matters pertaining to theological interchange as information. —*Adopted*

e. Organization and Finance

1) That synod note with gratitude the interest of other churches in the RES and their consideration of membership in the RES. —*Noted*

2) That synod approve the RES action leading to the appointment of a full-time Associate General Secretary for the RES. —*Adopted*

3) That synod note that the next meeting of the RES is scheduled for 1980 at a place to be designated by the Interim Committee, and that synod make provisions for considering items for the RES agenda. —*Adopted*

4) That synod encourage all its members, churches and agencies to promote, support and cooperate with the RES in all possible ways so as to promote the cause of Reformed ecumenicity within the CRC and throughout the world. —*Adopted*

E. North American Presbyterian and Reformed Council

1. Amendment of the Constitution

a. *Material*: Report 14, Section J-1.

b. *Recommendations*:

1) That synod approve the amendment of the constitution of NAPaRC, which reads, "Confessing Jesus Christ as only Savior and Sovereign Lord over all of life, we affirm the basis of the fellowship of Presbyterian and Reformed churches to be full commitment to the Bible in its entirety as the Word of God written, without error in all its parts, and to its teaching as set forth in the Heidelberg Catechism, the Belgic Confession, the Canons of Dort, the Westminster Confession of Faith, and the Westminster Larger and Shorter Catechism." —*Adopted*

2) That synod declare that the proposed revision of the constitution of NAPaRC does not bind the CRC beyond that which recent synods of the CRC have endorsed (cf. Acts of Synod, 1959, 1961, 1972). —*Adopted*

3) That synod approve that two copies of the minutes of NAPaRC be sent to each consistory. —*Adopted*

2. Concurrent Synods of NAPaRC Churches

a. *Material*: Report 14, Section J-2.

b. *Recommendations*:

1) That synod approve a joint service of prayer, to be ordered by the Concurrent Synods Committee, to be held on June 19, 1978. —*Adopted*

2) That synod declare that with respect to other joint activities, the Concurrent Synods Committee be given power to act in cooperation with the Arrangements Committee of Calvin College and Seminary. Note: It should be clear that the joint service of prayer is not intended to displace the regular prayer service for synod arranged by the host church which will be held on June 12. —*Adopted*

F. *Committee Membership*

1. *Material*: Report 14, Section M.
2. *Observation*: The terms of three committee members expire this year, those of the Rev. Jacob D. Eppinga and the Rev. Tymen E. Hofman, and of our Canadian representative, the Rev. Jacob Kuntz, and only the last named is eligible for reelection.
3. *Recommendation*: That synod thank the Revs. Jacob D. Eppinga and Tymen E. Hofman for their services to the committee. —*Adopted*

III. AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY

- A. *Material*: Report 22.
- B. *Recommendation*: That synod express its appreciation for the work of the American Bible Society, and thank the synodical representative. —*Adopted*

IV. CANADIAN BIBLE SOCIETY

- A. *Material*: Report 23.
- B. *Recommendation*: That synod express its appreciation for the work of the Canadian Bible Society, and thank the synodical representative. —*Adopted*

V. LORD'S DAY ALLIANCE OF CANADA

- A. *Material*: Report 27.
- B. *Recommendations*:
 1. That synod maintain representation in the alliance for 1978.
 2. That synod express its appreciation for the report and thank the synodical representative. —*Adopted*

VI. LORD'S DAY ALLIANCE OF THE UNITED STATES

- A. *Material*: Report 28.
- B. *Recommendations*:
 1. That synod continue representation to the Lord's Day Alliance Board. —*Adopted*
 2. That our churches and individuals within our denomination continue to support with our prayers the work of the Lord's Day Alliance so that the renewed objectives and goals may be put to work for the King of the Church. —*Adopted*
 3. That synod express its appreciation for the report and express its condolences to Mrs. Fisher in the death of her husband, our representative. —*Adopted*

VII. WORLD HOME BIBLE LEAGUE

- A. *Material*: Report 34.
- B. *Recommendations*:
 1. That synod recommend the World Home Bible League to the churches for prayer and support. —*Adopted*
 2. That synod express its appreciation for the work of the World Home Bible League, and thank the synodical representative. —*Adopted*

VIII. INTERCHURCH RELATIONS COMMITTEE - MANDATE OF THE IRC

A. *Material*: Report 14, Section L.

B. *Recommendations*: That synod adopt the following paragraphs, covering the Basic Mandate, the Scope of the Work of the IRC, and the Specific Responsibilities of the IRC, as the mandate of the IRC:

I. Basic Mandate

A. The Interchurch Relations Committee is a standing committee of the Christian Reformed Church, authorized by Article 49 of the Church Order:

“a. Synod shall appoint a committee to correspond with other Reformed churches so that the Christian Reformed Church may exercise Christian fellowship with other denominations and may promote the unity of the church of Jesus Christ.

b. Synod shall decide which denominations are to be received into ecclesiastical fellowship, and shall establish the rules which govern these relationships.”

B. The basic mandate of the committee is expressed in Church Order Article 49: namely, to serve as the official agency of liaison between the Christian Reformed Church and other churches throughout the world. As a committee of synod the Interchurch Relations Committee shall exercise only those powers which are assigned by synod. C. Synod of 1944 has adopted the following principles relating to the ecumenical responsibilities of the Christian Reformed Church: (Acts of Synod 1944 pp. 83ff; 330-367)

1. The Christian Reformed Church is closely related to other Christian churches as being with them a manifestation of the church, which is the one body of Christ.

2. Though organizational unity is not the paramount interest of the church, its spiritual unity should come to expression as much as possible.

3. Where organizational unity cannot be realized, churches should relate to each other in the spirit of Article 49 of the Church Order.

4. For the purpose of implementing interchurch relations in the spirit of Church Order Article 49, the churches of Christ may be roughly classified into four groups: Eastern Orthodox churches, the Roman Catholic Church, non-Reformed Protestant churches, and Reformed churches. Hence the Christian Reformed Church may maintain a variety of types of interchurch relations.

5. The Christian Reformed Church should seek unity in the truth with all churches of Christ but should attach priority to churches which are Reformed as to confession, polity, and liturgy, as determined not only by their formal standards but also by their actual practice.

6. The unity of those churches which are Reformed in confession, polity and liturgy should come to organizational expression as soon and as fully as possible.

7. In shaping this organizational unity, consideration should be

given to such circumstances as language, distance, and non-essential differences in formal standards and practice.

II. Scope of the Work of the Interchurch Relations Committee

A. The Committee on Interchurch Relations shall actively seek to promote and maintain relations of the Christian Reformed Church:

1. with churches in ecclesiastical fellowship,
2. with other churches of Reformed persuasion,
3. with ecumenical organizations in which the Christian Reformed Church cooperates with other denominations of Reformed faith, in accord with Church Order Article 50.

B. Relationships of the Christian Reformed Church with other churches of Reformed practice shall be governed by the following regulations of synod (Cf. Acts of Synod 1974, p. 57):

1. There shall be one relationship with other Reformed churches designated by synod as "Churches in Ecclesiastical Fellowship."
2. The receiving of churches into ecclesiastical fellowship implies, and where possible and desirable involves:
 - a. exchange of fraternal delegates at major assemblies,
 - b. occasional pulpit fellowship,
 - c. intercommunion (i.e., fellowship at the table of the Lord),
 - d. joint action in areas of common responsibility,
 - e. communication on major issues of joint concern,
 - f. the exercise of mutual concern and admonition with a view to promoting the fundamentals of Christian unity.

C. The committee shall maintain a broader interest in the church at large through study and contact with ecumenical organizations and other denominations.

III. Specific Responsibilities of the Interchurch Relations Committee

A. The Interchurch Relations Committee shall continue close relationships with the denominations which have been named by synod as churches in ecclesiastical fellowship.

B. The Interchurch Relations Committee shall recommend to synod which additional churches are to be received into ecclesiastical fellowship.

C. The Interchurch Relations Committee shall recommend which specific kinds of fellowship and cooperation shall apply to each church in ecclesiastical fellowship.

D. The Interchurch Relations Committee shall initiate and/or pursue contact and closer relationship with churches other than those referred to in A, B, C, above in accord with the principles laid down in I, C above.

E. Ecumenical Organizations - The Interchurch Relations Committee shall serve as the agency of contact with ecumenical organizations.

1. It shall serve as the agency of liaison of the Christian Reformed Church with those ecumenical organizations with which the CRC

is affiliated, such as the Reformed Ecumenical Synod and the North American Presbyterian and Reformed Council.

2. It shall welcome suggestions from the churches and present to synod names of nominees as delegates to the Reformed Ecumenical Synod and shall designate those who are to serve as delegates to NAPA RC and its various committees.

3. It shall study the activities of the above two ecumenical organizations and present to synod reports on the work of these organizations and such recommendations as may be necessary.

4. It shall observe and study various other ecumenical organizations and report the results of such observations and studies to synod.

5. It shall maintain contact as circumstances warrant with ecumenical organizations with which the Christian Reformed Church has not affiliated.

F. The Interchurch Relations Committee shall annually present to synod in its printed agenda a report of its activities which shall include a resumé of all the interchurch relations comprehended in the mandate detailed above. —*Adopted*

(The report of Advisory Committee 10 is continued in Article 54.)

ARTICLE 33

In response to a letter from the secretary of the Association of Christian Reformed Laymen, dated June 16, 1977, requesting permission to tape the proceedings of synod, synod decides to deny the request.

ARTICLE 34

The Rev. A. Hoogstrate of the *Reception Committee* presents the Rev. B. Madany of the Back to God Hour, who introduces the Rev. A. Kaya-yan of the French Back to God Hour. He informs synod of the great challenge of the French broadcast. The Rev. Donald Negen responds.

ARTICLE 35

The Rev. A. Hoogstrate introduces the Rev. W. C. Brownson, Jr., fraternal delegate of the Reformed Church in America, who addresses synod. Dr. John Kromminga responds.

ARTICLE 36

Advisory Committee 7, *Domestic Ministries*, the Rev. S. Vander Klay reporting, presents the following: (The report of Advisory Committee 7 is continued from Article 29.)

APPEAL OF CLASSIS GRAND RAPIDS EAST IN RE SYNODICAL DEPUTIES' REPORT

A. *Materials:*

1. Minutes of Classis Grand Rapids East, September 4 and 18, 1975, Articles 10, 11.

2. Minutes of Classis Grand Rapids East, May 20, 1976, Article 10.

3. Minutes of Classis Grand Rapids East, September 16, 1976, Articles 19, 20.

4. Minutes of Classis Grand Rapids East, January 20, 1977, Article 5.
5. Letter of May 6, 1976 from the Rev. V. C. Patterson.
6. Community Counseling and Personal Growth Ministry Theological Statement.
7. Chaplain Committee endorsement dated January 13, 1976.
8. Report of Committee to the Classis of September 16, 1976.

B. *Analysis*: the Rev. Terry Hager is employed in a pastoral counseling capacity at Community Counseling and Personal Growth Ministry, an ecumenical program. At the September 1975 sessions of Classis Grand Rapids East, the Madison Square Christian Reformed Church requested approval to call the Rev. Mr. Hager as associate minister with the understanding that he continue to work at CCPGM. Following the advice of classis, Mr. Hager sought and received endorsement from the denominational Chaplain Committee. At the May, 1976 session of classis where that endorsement was given, a "Theological Statement" of the CCPGM was read. Classis responded by appointing a committee "to investigate further this type of ministry and to advise classis and to recommend how supervision of this type of ministry may best be accomplished." At classis in September 1976 this committee recommended that classis approve the request of Madison Square on the basis that the work of the Rev. Terry Hager was "spiritual in character and directly related to the ministerial calling," that the Rev. Mr. Hager himself was "consciously aware of his responsibility to integrate into his work his Reformed perspectives and . . . free within the structure of the ministry to do so," and that the denominational Chaplain Committee had endorsed Mr. Hager's ministry at the CCPGM. The committee of classis also submitted a plan for supervision which included several structures of accountability. Classis adopted the recommendations of her committee. The synodical deputies did not concur on the ground that the theological statement of the CCPGM was "unacceptable, and therefore we cannot approve placing a Christian Reformed minister on the staff of an organization that operates with that theological statement." In the context of continued nonconcurrence of the synodical deputies at the January sessions of classis, the matter comes to synod for adjudication.

C. *Recommendation*: That synod sustain the appeal of Classis Grand Rapids East.

Grounds:

1. The nonconcurrence of the synodical deputies was based upon their evaluation of the CCPGM rather than an evaluation of the Rev. Terry Hager's ministerial task in accordance with Article 13 of the Church Order.

2. The Rev. Mr. Hager himself was "consciously aware of his responsibility to integrate into his work his Reformed perspectives, and . . . free within the structure of the ministry to do so," and the denominational Chaplain Committee had endorsed the Rev. Mr. Hager's ministry at the CCPGM.

—Adopted

(The report of Advisory Committee 7 is continued in Article 57.)

The afternoon session is closed with prayer.

FRIDAY MORNING, JUNE 17, 1977

Seventh Session

ARTICLE 37

The session is opened with devotions.

The roll is called and all delegates are present.

The minutes of the fifth and sixth sessions, June 16, 1977, are read and approved.

The chairman recognizes the Rev. John Van Harmelen, Stated Clerk of the Canadian Council of Christian Reformed Churches.

ARTICLE 38

Advisory Committee 2, *Church Order I*, the Rev. H. Petersen reporting, presents the following: (The Advisory Committee 2 is continued from Article 17.)

USE OF WOMEN'S GIFTS IN THE CHURCH

A. *Materials*: Report 40 and Supplemental Communication from this committee.

B. *Analysis*: Synod of 1975 appointed a committee to assist the churches in carrying out the decision to make use of the talents and abilities of women in the work of the church. Synod of 1976 extended the mandate of the committee for one year.

The committee reports that they have carried out the mandate in various ways. Among other things, they developed a packet of materials describing projects carried on by women in local congregations. They arranged and held a conference in the Chicago area in March 1977 on how the church can make fuller use of the gifts of all its members. They enlarged a data bank and urged its use by classes and boards in their search for women nominees.

The committee became convinced that much more should be done to encourage the full use of women's gifts. They also became concerned about the problems arising from the changing sex roles in modern society. In view of their concern they ask synod to appoint a standing service committee to continue the work they have begun. They also recommend that synod appoint a study committee to examine how the church can deal with the problems created by the changing sex roles in society.

C. *Recommendations*:

1. That Dr. William Stob and Mrs. Karen DeVos, chairman and reporter of the committee on the Use of Women's Gifts in the Church, be given the privilege of the floor when this matter is discussed. —*Adopted*

2. That synod appoint a service committee to serve for three years as recommended in Report 40 with the following mandate:

a. to identify barriers, both organizational and attitudinal, to the church's use of the gifts of all its members and to recommend to synod and to local congregations ways consistent with Scripture in which those barriers can be removed,

b. to encourage committees, classes and boards to continue and expand the practice of nominating and electing members of groups currently not being fully used,

c. to maintain the data bank, keep it up-to-date, enlarge it to include any interested member of the church, and encourage its use by church organizations and others approved by synod or the various classes,

d. to work with the Education Department of the Board of Publications to continue developing adult educational materials that will encourage fuller use of gifts,

e. to respond to consistories and local groups when they request advice, materials, or names of resource persons to help them bring about fuller use of the gifts of all members of the local congregations.

—*Adopted*

3. That synod urge the churches to deal with the problems and changes created by changing sex roles in our society by using and improving their pastoral resources and skills; and urge our seminary, the board of publications and individuals with competence in this problem area to serve the churches with relevant instruction and written materials.

Grounds:

a. The concerns of the study committee are valid and should be dealt with by the churches.

b. The adoption of the above recommendation should do much to meet the needs of our churches.

—*Adopted*

4. That synod discharge the committee on the Use of Women's Gifts in the Church with thanks for its work.

—*Adopted*

(The report of Advisory Committee 2 is continued in Article 46.)

ARTICLE 39

Mr. Mark Vander Ark of the *Reception Committee* presents Mr. Louis Van Ess of the CRWRC, who in turn presents Paul and Ann Kok, serving in Jordan, and Ivan and Joy De Kam, serving in the Philippines.

Mr. Kok addresses synod, and Mr. Cornelius Van Valkenburg responds.

The chairman calls on Dr. E. Rubingh, Executive Secretary of the Board of World Missions. Dr. Rubingh presents to synod the following missionaries:

Nigeria

Mr. and Mrs. David Dykgraaf - Teachers, Bristow Secondary School

Mr. Robert Koops - Linguist, Lissam

Mr. Cornie Korhorn - Teacher, Hillcrest School, Jos

Mr. and Mrs. Len Zaagman - Pilot

Miss Mae Mast - Nurse, Takum Hospital

Mrs. Lynn Gezon - Teacher, Religious Knowledge

Taiwan

Mrs. Lois Vander Pol

Japan

Rev. and Mrs. Henry Bruinooge, Radio Evangelism

Mr. and Mrs. Sidney Noorman - Principal, Japan Christian Academy

Philippines

Rev. and Mrs. Barry Blankers - Evangelism, Manila
Candidate Henry Smidstra

Mexico

Mr. and Mrs. Nick Kroeze, Evangelist, Oaxaca Valley

New Appointments to Latin America

Candidate and Mrs. James Dekker - Brazil
Candidate and Mrs. Tom Klaasen - Central America
Mr. and Mrs. Raul Giminez - Argentina

Greetings from the missionaries are extended by
Rev. Henry Bruinooge for the Asia missionaries,
Mr. Robert Kooops for the Africa missionaries,
Mr. Nick Kroeze for the Latin America missionaries

The Rev. Arthur Hoogstrate responds.

The morning session is closed with prayer.

FRIDAY AFTERNOON, JUNE 17, 1977

Eighth Session

ARTICLE 40

The Rev. A. Hoogstrate of the Reception Committee presents the Rev. John Van Ryn, Executive Secretary of the Board of Home Missions. He addresses synod, introducing home missions personnel who are delegates to this synod, as well as visiting home missionaries. He introduces the Rev. Peter Borgdorff, Field Secretary of the Board of Home Missions, who addresses synod relative to the difficult but challenging work of home missions.

The Rev. Mr. Van Ryn also presents the Rev. Duane Vander Brug, Personnel Secretary of the Board of Home Missions, who addresses synod. The Rev. John De Kruyter responds.

Letters of acceptance of their appointments from the Revs. Peter Borgdorff and Duane Vander Brug are read.

Mr. Mark Vander Ark of the Reception Committee presents the Rev. T. Hofman of the Committee of Interchurch Relations who introduces Dr. B. Rietveld, Fraternal Delegate of the Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland. Dr. Rietveld addresses synod, speaking of valuable relationships, candidly speaking on matters of mutual concern, and pleading that we not forsake one another. The Rev. J. Eppinga responds.

ARTICLE 41

Advisory Committee 5, *Ethical Matters*, Dr. A. Wolters reporting, presents the following:

(The report of Advisory Committee 5 is continued from Article 20.)

ETHICAL DECISIONS ABOUT WAR

A. *Material*: Report 37.

B. Observations:

1. In response to an overture from Classis Lake Erie, Synod of 1973 decided to "appoint a study committee whose mandate shall be to provide the church's membership with guidelines for making ethical decisions about war." The terms of the mandate are stated in the first three paragraphs of Report 37.

2. It is important to stress the study committee's understanding of the term "guidelines." They serve to "mark out boundaries, point out directions and dangers, and stimulate the mind with thoughtful, honest evaluations of the issues at hand. Such guidelines can do no more than assist the church and her members in translating into practicality and in implementing the principles of Holy Scripture."

3. It may be observed that the study report by implication suggests that few wars could be called just wars.

C. Recommendations:

1. That during the discussion of this report the Rev. Raymond Opperwall and the Rev. Eugene Bradford, chairman and reporter, respectively, of the study committee be given the privilege of the floor.

—*Adopted*

2. That synod submit, with the following emendations, the study report "Ethical Decisions about War" (sections "History and Mandate" and "Basic Principles and Concepts," as well as the "important observations") to our churches as providing a background essential for the proper understanding of the proposed guidelines:

—*Adopted*

a. Replace the heading "GUIDELINES" with "INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDELINES."

—*Adopted*

b. In Section A replace the words: "These biblical principles are not negotiable and must underlie all decisions about war" with "We believe that the following statements express biblical principles and should underlie all decisions about war:"

—*Adopted*

c. In Section A, 1, 2: replace the statements under (1) and (2) with "(1) All wars are the result of sin, and though God may use wars in his judgment on nations, it is his plan and purpose to make all wars to cease."

—*Adopted*

d. In Section A, 4: replace all of point (4) with the following wording: "(3) The Christian should obey the state when it orders him to act within the framework of righteousness. Conversely, he should disobey every order of the state to perform acts contrary to the will of God, and he may not obey such demands of government as require him to sin. The Christian must obey God rather than men."

—*Adopted*

3. That synod adopt the following guidelines with the emendations indicated:

a. Christians faced with problems concerning war should respect their need of the communion of saints, remembering the affirmation of Scripture: "You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, that you may declare the wonderful deeds of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light" (I Peter 2:9). By divine grace Christians are bound to God in holy covenant,

and by faith are united to Christ in one body. Therefore they should realize that weighty moral decisions are made responsibly before the face of God only if the prayers and counsel of the covenant fellowship are sincerely sought and lovingly offered. —*Adopted*

b. If the nation has or is about to become involved in a war or in any military action against another nation, Christians, as morally responsible citizens of the nation and of God's kingdom, should evaluate their nation's involvement by diligently seeking the answers to questions like the following, drawing on the counsel of fellow-members with special qualifications as well as pastors and the assemblies of the church:

- 1) Is our nation the unjust aggressor?
- 2) Is our nation intentionally involved for economic advantage?
- 3) Is our nation intentionally involved for imperialistic ends, such as the acquisition of land, natural resources, or political power in international relations?
- 4) Has our nation in good faith observed all relevant treaties and other international agreements?
- 5) Has our nation exhausted all peaceful means to resolve the matters in dispute?
- 6) Is the evil or aggression represented by the opposing force of such overwhelming magnitude and gravity as to warrant the horrors and brutality of military opposition to it?
- 7) Has the decision to engage in war been taken legally by a legitimate government?
- 8) Are the means of warfare employed or likely to be employed by our nation in fair proportion to the evil or aggression of the opposing forces? Is our nation resolved to employ minimum necessary force?
- 9) In the course of the war has our nation been proposing and encouraging negotiations for peace or has it spurned such moves by the opposing forces or by neutral nations or international organizations?

—*Adopted*

c. If a Christian cannot conscientiously engage in a given war or in alternate service, his refusal must be within the framework of law. He must expose himself to the due process and even the penalty of the state whose laws he has knowingly, publicly, and conscientiously broken. He should not "go underground" or flee the country except under conditions of extraordinary oppression or intolerably brutal tyranny. —*Adopted*

d. If an individual must make a personal decision about involvement in war, he should seek the prayers and guidance of his parents and other members of his family group. The family, in turn, should provide such guidance and prayer support. If there are continuing disagreements within the family, the various members should exercise mutual respect, forbearance and charity. —*Adopted*

e. A Christian who believes it is sinful for him to serve in a given war, or who conscientiously objects to serving in any war, should notify his church and be open to its counsel. —*Adopted*

f. When the nation faces international crisis or war itself, those who preach the Word must seek the direction and support of the Holy Spirit so they will be able to declare prophetically from the Scriptures what Christ is saying concerning the issues at stake. Furthermore, the love of Christ must be forcefully and compassionately proclaimed in order, in the face of differing opinions in the church, to preserve the unity and fellowship of the body of Christ and to guard against sinful nationalism and hatred of people of other nations. —*Adopted*

g. Pastors should recognize their special responsibility to counsel all members and families of the church who are required to make decisions relating to war. They must take particular care with those families where differences are so sharp as to threaten that loving Christian communion which is expressive of the covenant of grace. —*Adopted*

h. Remembering that the moral decisions respecting participation in war are among the most agonizing faced by any Christian, the members and assemblies of the church should not reject fellow-Christians whose conclusions and decisions differ from the majority, but in the name of our longsuffering Savior exercise understanding and forbearance. They should also provide counseling and other necessary support to those whose conscientious stand brings them any sort of hardship. —*Adopted*

i. The members of the church, out of reverence for the righteousness and justice of God, should be willing always to test the policies and practices of all governments by the teachings of Holy Scripture, and never assume a blind and proud nationalistic spirit that regards one's own nation as always above criticism. Moreover, they should consider it their duty under God to give discreet expression to their conscientious views in whatever manner is open to them. —*Adopted*

j. Whether to prevent the outbreak of war, to hasten the cessation of hostilities, or to encourage support of or resistance to a given war, the assemblies of the church, by means of public testimony or petitions addressed to the government concerned, must give clear and courageous witness to the teachings of the Scriptures. —*Adopted*

k. In order to give informed witness in times of war and international crisis, the assemblies of the church should use the best available resources in areas such as ethics, law, history, international relations, political science, economics, and psychology. The assemblies should also urge knowledgeable Christians to offer freely their services to all in the Christian community to whom war or the threat of war presents pressing problems—both conscientious objectors and their families. —*Adopted*

l. Christians should use their rights and privileges of citizenship to secure such legislation as is calculated to prevent unjust war, correct moral wrong, and establish just policies. —*Adopted*

m. Christians who hold public office must give total allegiance to Christ the King and firmly resist every compromise of righteousness and justice in the conduct of government. Specifically, they should do all in their power to prevent the nation from becoming immorally involved in war, and should clearly disassociate themselves from poli-

cies and actions that bring about such involvement. Further, they should encourage in government a climate for open communication so that citizens can receive accurate information sufficient to make responsible decisions regarding a given war. —*Adopted*

n. Christians who have a financial interest in or are employees of companies that provide war materiel or in any way stand to profit from war must face the questions suggested in Guideline 3, b and be willing, if conscience demands, to alter their relationship with such companies. —*Adopted*

o. Christians who serve in the military should be sensitive to the countless evils that are inevitably present. They ought prayerfully to use all means available to strengthen their spiritual life and to guard against being engulfed by the tides of hate and violence that destroy the soul, or fleeing to such desperate and self-indulging escapes as gambling, prostitution, and the abuse of alcohol and drugs. They should constantly bear in mind the limited objectives of the war they have reluctantly accepted, and remember that God's command to love our neighbor applies even to the enemy. —*Adopted*

4. That synod discharge the committee and express its gratitude for their work. —*Adopted*

(The report of Advisory Committee 5 is continued in Article 76.)

ARTICLE 42

Advisory Committee 3, *Church Order II*, Dr. D. Bergsma reporting, presents the following: (The report of Advisory Committee 3 is continued from Article 19.)

JUDICIAL CODE OF RIGHTS AND PROCEDURES

A. *Materials:*

1. Report 41.

2. Letter from the Rev. Harry Arnold, dated June 8, 1977.

B. *Observation:* Your committee has carefully studied the proposed Judicial Code of Rights and Procedures and has made several editorial changes for purposes of clarity, but did not find it necessary to recommend substantive revisions.

C. *Recommendations:*

1. That Dr. Clifton J. Orlebeke and the Honorable John Feikens be permitted the privilege of the floor. —*Adopted*

2. That synod adopt the Judicial Code of Rights and procedures in the following form:

JUDICIAL CODE OF RIGHTS AND PROCEDURES

Preamble to the Judicial Code

The Judicial Code is not a document of broad applicability. It is intended to be operative in a narrow area, and therefore it contains limiting language. It states that its provisions apply *only*:

(a) in a judicial hearing;

(b) when such a judicial hearing is conducted by a consistory, classis, or synod; and

(c) when written charges requiring formal adjudication are filed.

The key provision is the last one: there must be written charges that require formal adjudication. The first determination that must be made by the consistory or other assembly before whom written charges are filed is this: Does this matter require formal adjudication?

In making this determination the consistory or other assembly would ordinarily be in a position to know that other spiritual means have or have not been fully utilized. If such means have not been exhausted the assembly should seriously consider postponing the judicial hearing while further informal efforts are employed.

The assembly thus decides whether and when it will hear the matter. The Judicial Code gives guidance: it states that matters of admonition and discipline *do not* require a judicial hearing unless there are written charges which the assembly determines requires formal adjudication.

The Judicial Code thereby gives expression to the fundamental and primary role of spiritual means in all matters of admonition and discipline, it recognizes that these matters are best handled by informal counseling and entreaty: and if sanctions are required, it leaves their determination to the church under the Church Order.

A. SCOPE

Article 1

a. These provisions apply to judicial hearings before a consistory, classis or synod occasioned by the bringing of written charges requiring formal adjudication. Such admonition and discipline of the church as does not involve the hearing of written charges requiring formal adjudication are not governed by these provisions.

b. Written charges requiring formal adjudication, whether brought by an individual against an individual or an assembly, or by an assembly against an individual or an assembly, may refer only to alleged offenses in profession or practice against the Word of God, the confessions of the church, or the Church Order.

c. The individual or assembly filing a charge against another individual or assembly shall be called a complainant and the individual or assembly against whom the charge is filed shall be called a respondent.

d. When the assemblies of the church conduct hearings, they act in a judicial capacity.

B. JUDICIAL RIGHTS

Article 2

Both the complainant and the respondent, if they are individuals, shall have the right to be represented or counseled by a member of the Christian Reformed Church in any judicial hearing.

Article 3

Both the complainant and the respondent shall have the right to be present at each original hearing and hearing on appeal provided for herein, except when the assembly withdraws to decide the issues raised by the hearing.

Article 4

The respondent and complainant shall have the right to have witnesses examined in their presence, except when the respondent fails to appear after due notice.

Article 5

A party against whom a judgment is entered shall have the right to appeal that judgment to the assembly next in order.

C. CHARGES

Article 6

A charge, in order to receive consideration for a judicial hearing, must be presented to the assembly in writing, must set forth the alleged offense and must specify the facts relied upon to sustain the charge. Such specification shall declare, as far as possible, the time, place and circumstances of the alleged offense and shall be accompanied with the names of the witnesses and the titles of the documents to be cited in its support. A copy of the charge shall be transmitted promptly to the respondent by the clerk of the assembly.

Article 7

A charge shall not allege more than one offense. Several charges, whether brought by one or more complainants against the same individual or assembly, with the specifications under each of them, may, however, be presented at the same time and may, at the discretion of the assembly, be heard together. When several charges are heard at the same time, a decision on each charge must be made separately.

Article 8

- a. No charge may be filed for an alleged offense which occurred more than five years prior to the date on which the charge was filed.
- b. A hearing for an alleged offense shall begin no later than one year from the time the charge is filed.

D. ORIGINAL HEARING PROCEDURES BEFORE A CONSISTORY ACTING IN ITS JUDICIAL CAPACITY

Article 9

All hearings shall be conducted in a consistent Christian manner. A consistory composed of the elders and deacons, while acting in its judicial capacity, shall be so constituted as to avoid conflicts of interest. The administration of oaths shall not ordinarily be required.

Article 10

The assembly shall in its judicial capacity determine whether or not the written charges are substantial, and require formal adjudication. The complainant may appear before the assembly concisely stating his¹ charge and supporting evidence, whereupon the assembly shall determine whether to constitute a formal hearing.

The hearing, if ordered, shall proceed as follows:

- a. The complainant shall repeat concisely his charge and his sup-

¹ When the pronoun "his" is used herein, it refers either to an assembly or an individual, irrespective of gender.

porting evidence. The presiding officer may permit the form of the charge to be amended, but not its content.

b. The presiding officer shall request the respondent to plead to the charge, and his plea shall be recorded.

c. If the respondent pleads guilty, the hearing need not be continued. If the respondent denies the charge, the hearing shall proceed.

d. The respondent shall state concisely his defense and his supporting evidence.

e. The complainant shall first produce his evidence and witnesses. The respondent shall then produce his evidence and witnesses. All witnesses may be questioned by both the complainant and the respondent.

f. The complainant and the respondent shall, in turn, summarize their cases either by oral or written argument.

g. If either party objects to the manner in which the proceedings are conducted, the objection must be entered in the record. The presiding officer may sustain or disallow the objection. In any case he must be sustained by a majority of the consistory.

Article 11

If in any case the respondent, after due notice has been given him, shall refuse or neglect to appear at the time and place set forth for the hearing, the investigation or hearing may proceed in his absence. In all cases sufficient time shall be allowed for the respondent to appear at the given place and time and to prepare for the hearing. The consistory shall decide what constitutes "sufficient time."

Article 12

The final decision on any case shall be by majority vote of the consistory. Members who have not attended all the sessions and have not heard the case in its entirety shall read the record before a vote is taken.

Article 13

During the hearing, the presiding officer shall not comment on the merits of the case. This restriction does not apply when the consistory enters its final deliberations. After a decision has been reached, the presiding officer shall certify and announce the findings.

Article 14

The testimony shall be recorded verbatim if requested by any party to the proceedings. The record, including all exhibits, papers, evidence, and findings in the case shall be certified by the presiding officer and shall be the basis of any appeal which may be taken. The appellant and the respondent may have reasonable access to the record.

E. HEARING AND APPEALS PROCEDURES BEFORE A CLASSIS ACTING IN ITS JUDICIAL CAPACITY

Article 15

If a consistory is the respondent, the original hearing shall be before the classis and in accordance with the hearing procedures set forth in Article 10.

Article 16

In all cases of appeal to the classis from the consistory, the appellant shall within thirty days after the decision of the consistory give written notice of appeal to the stated clerk of classis and to the consistory whose decision is appealed. Within the next thirty days, or such extension as the classis may authorize, the appellant shall furnish to the stated clerk of classis a written statement of the grounds of his appeal. The clerk of the consistory shall thereupon forward to the stated clerk the record referred to in Article 14. The hearing in the classis shall be limited to the grounds set forth in the statement and record.

Article 17

An appeal by an involved party shall not be heard in any case when the appellant has without just cause failed or refused to be present at his hearing on appeal.

Article 18

The right to appeal shall not be affected by the death of the person entitled to such right. His heirs or representative may continue to act in his behalf.

Article 19

If the appellant desires to introduce additional evidence, and shows good cause for it, the classis may receive the evidence or remand the case to the consistory for a rehearing.

Article 20

In all cases the classis shall set a time for the hearing on appeal and send a notice as to the time and date of such hearing to all parties. After the statement and record have been considered and oral arguments concluded, the classis shall withdraw and shall hereupon consider and decide the issues of the case. The final decision on any case shall be by majority vote of the classis. Delegates who have not attended all the sessions and have not heard the case in its entirety shall read the record before a vote is taken. The classis may sustain or reverse in whole or in part the decision of the consistory, or it may return the case to the consistory with instructions for a new hearing.

Article 21

Appeal of the decision of classis may be made to synod. Such an appeal must be made within thirty days after the decision of classis. When such an appeal is made a written notice together with a statement of grounds of appeal shall be sent to the stated clerk of synod and a copy thereof to the stated clerk of classis. The stated clerk of such classis shall thereupon transmit the decision of classis together with the record and papers of the case to the stated clerk of synod, who will place the appeal on the agenda of synod.

F. HEARING AND APPEAL PROCEDURES BEFORE THE SYNOD ACTING IN ITS JUDICIAL CAPACITY

Article 22

Appeal of decisions of assemblies of the church acting in their judicial capacity, and such other matters requiring formal adjudication

as synod shall undertake, shall be referred to the Synodical Advisory Committee on Protests and Appeals for consideration and advice.

Article 23

a. The Protests and Appeals Committee advising a given synod shall be appointed by the preceding synod. Approximately half the members shall be lay persons.

b. Any member of the Protests and Appeals Committee advising a given synod may be, but need not be, a delegate to that synod.

Article 24

a. Matters within the jurisdiction of the Protests and Appeals Committee shall be referred to it at any time after its members have been appointed.

b. The Protests and Appeals Committee shall meet between synods as frequently as its business requires, and normally shall convene a week before synod to prepare its recommendations.

c. As to appeals from decisions of consistories and classes, the Protests and Appeals Committee shall permit complainants and respondents to present arguments before it.

d. As to other matters requiring formal adjudication which synod shall undertake, the Protests and Appeals Committee shall follow the hearing procedures described herein.

Article 25

Recommendation of the Protests and Appeals Committee shall be presented to the synod in writing, shall be accompanied with grounds, and shall be openly discussed in plenary session of synod.

Article 26

Synod may dispose of a judicial matter in one of the following ways:

a. By deciding the matter;

b. By referring it to one of its committees for settlement or reconciliation;

c. By remanding it with advice to the appropriate classis or consistory; or

d. By conducting its own hearing.

Article 27

If synod conducts its own hearing it shall follow the hearing procedures set forth herein.

Grounds:

a. The Judicial Code will encourage greater uniformity of procedure throughout our denomination when charges must be adjudicated.

b. The Judicial Code will help to insure just treatment of those who are involved in the judgments and decisions of the church.

c. Scripture requires that provisions be made to provide impartial judgments among God's people. (cf. Deut. 1:16, 17; Deut. 16:18-20; Lev. 19: 15; I Tim. 5:19-21.)

d. Article 28 of the Church Order requires that the assemblies of the church deal with ecclesiastical matters in an ecclesiastical manner. Without effective procedural guidelines it is often difficult to deal with substantive issues in an appropriate manner.

e. The Judicial Code provides a procedural pattern within which the law of love may be fulfilled. (Cf. James 2:1, 8, 9.) "My brethren, show no partiality as you hold the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of Glory." "If you really fulfill the royal law according to the scripture, 'you shall love your neighbor as yourself,' you do well. But if you show partiality, you commit sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors." (RSV) —*Adopted*

3. That synod appoint an Advisory Committee on Protests and Appeals as required by the Judicial Code (Section F). —*Adopted*

4. That the following new section be inserted into the Rules of Synodical Procedure under heading VI "Synodical Committees."

C. Synodical Advisory Committee on Protests and Appeals

1. Mandate: Appeals from decisions of assemblies of the church acting in their judicial capacity, and such other matters requiring formal adjudication as synod shall undertake, shall be referred to the Synodical Advisory Committee on Protests and Appeals for consideration and advice.

2. Membership: The Advisory Committee on Protests and Appeals shall be composed of nine (9) members and three alternates. Approximately half of the members shall be ministers and half present or former elders. The committee which advises a given synod shall be appointed by the preceding synod. Members of this committee may be, but need not be, delegates to the synod which it advises. There need be no regional representation but a fair denominational representation is desirable.

3. Meetings: The Protests and Appeals Committee shall meet between synods as frequently as its business requires, and normally shall convene a week before synod to prepare its recommendations.

4. Organization and rules governing this committee.

a. The rules under VI, B, 2 apply with the exception of 2, g which will read:

During synodical discussions the committee shall be represented by two spokesmen who will have the privilege of the floor. These shall have precedence over every other speaker and shall not be limited as to the number and length of their speeches.

b. Recommendations of the Protests and Appeals Committee shall be presented to the synod in writing, shall be accompanied with grounds, and shall be openly discussed in plenary session of synod.

5. Synodical disposition of a judicial matter:

a. Synod may dispose of a judicial matter in one of the following ways:

(1) By deciding the matter;

(2) By referring it to one of its committees for settlement or reconciliation;

(3) By remanding it with advice to the appropriate classis or consistory; or

(4) By conducting its own hearing.

b. If synod conducts its own hearing it shall follow the hearing procedure described in the Judicial Code.

(Note: The present Section VI, C becomes VI, D.) —*Adopted*

5. That synod approve an addition to the Church Order of an Article 30(b) retaining the present article as Article 30(a), so that the entire Article 30 would read as follows:

a. Assemblies and church members may appeal to the assembly next in order if they believe that injustice has been done or that a decision conflicts with the Word of God or the Church Order. Appellants shall observe all ecclesiastical regulations regarding the matter and time of appeal.

b. When written charges requiring formal adjudication by an ecclesiastical assembly are made, the relevant provisions of the Judicial Code shall be observed. —*Adopted*

6. That with respect to the cost of implementing the recommendation for an Advisory Committee on Protests and Appeals and the responsibility of assemblies to assist complainants and respondents to meet costs of travel and counsel, synod declare that whether the costs of any recommended programs can be met, and how, and by whom, must be determined by the assemblies concerned. —*Adopted*

7. That the printing of the Judicial Code be included in the Rules for Synodical Procedure booklet and in the Handbook of the Christian Reformed Church. —*Adopted*

8. That synod dismiss the Judicial Code Study Committee and thank the members for their work. —*Adopted*

Ground: Its mandate has been fulfilled.

(The report of Advisory Committee 3 is continued in Article 68.)

The afternoon session is closed with prayer.

FRIDAY EVENING, JUNE 17, 1977

Ninth Session

ARTICLE 43

The session is opened with devotions.

Advisory Committee 8, *World Ministries*, the Rev. J. Morren reporting, presents the following: (The report of Advisory Committee 8 is continued from Article 23.)

I. CRWRC REPRESENTATION AT SYNOD

A. *Material:* Report 6.

B. *Recommendation:* That synod grant the privilege of the floor to Dr. Daniel DeVries, board president; the Rev. John Bergsma, minister board member; and Mr. Louis Van Ess, the Executive Director of CRWRC, when matters pertaining to CRWRC are being discussed.

—*Adopted*

II. CONSTITUTIONAL REVISION RE MEMBERSHIP OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

A. *Material:* Report 6, II.

B. Observations:

The constitution of CRWRC states in Art II, A,

"There shall be an Executive Committee composed of the members-at-large and the delegate members from the fourteen classes as designated by synod: Cadillac, Chatham, Chicago North, Chicago South, Grand Rapids West, Grand Rapids East, Grand Rapids South, Grandville, Holland, Illiana, Kalamazoo, Lake Erie, Muskegon, and Zeeland."

In Report 6, the CRWRC board requests the restructuring of their executive committee and makes a proposal re this. Our advisory committee, noting the precedent set by other denominational boards recommends the following:

C. Recommendation: That synod change Article II, A, of the constitution of the CRWRC so that it reads as follows:

"There shall be an executive committee elected at the annual board meeting, consisting of twenty members—six of them members-at-large, and fourteen of them delegates from classes, at least three of whom shall be from Canada."

Grounds:

1. This method of restructuring the executive committee, and its sub-committees, recognizes the need for and the benefits of adequate input in maintaining a single, unified, denominational work of mercy.

2. It recognizes the sophistication of the diaconal ministry in Canada, and the need to make that asset available to the denomination.

3. This method of choosing the members makes it possible to choose on the basis of availability and qualification, rather than geographical proximity.

—*Adopted*

III. PROGRAM APPROVAL FOR 1977 OUTREACH

A. Material: Report 6.

B. Recommendation: That synod approve the projected plans for 1977 outreach, as outlined in Report 6, Section VII, pertaining to Bangladesh, Haiti, Korea, Mexico's Yucatan Peninsula, Pennington Gap, Virginia, the Disaster Preparedness Program and the expansion of the diaconal participation of our churches.

Ground: There is a continuing need in, and commitment to, these areas.

—*Adopted*

IV. NEW FIELD

A. Material: Report 6, VIII.

B. Observations:

CRWRC entered Guatemala in February 1976, in response to a devastating earthquake. Several volunteers served during the year, and three are still serving now. The disaster recovery needs of Guatemala have not been completely met, especially in the area of housing, and, as so often happens in the aftermath of disaster, CRWRC has been able to respond to needs there that are not directly disaster related, but which are nonetheless pressing needs in communities affected by the disaster.

C. Recommendation: That synod approve Guatemala as a continued CRWRC outreach during 1977 with the understanding that continued

involvement beyond 1977 will be analyzed and a recommendation as to long-term programs brought to the Synod of 1978.

Grounds:

1. CRWRC has commitments made in 1976 that will be completed in 1977.
2. As the disaster phase is now in its final stages, the CRWRC will be able to determine whether efforts should be continued after 1977 in light of its policy guidelines.
3. The Board for World Missions is also considering Guatemala as a potential field of labor; therefore, joint efforts should be explored during 1977. —*Adopted*

V. RETIREMENT OF MR. LOUIS VAN ESS

A. *Observation:* Mr. Louis Van Ess has reached retirement age after serving faithfully for fifteen years as the executive director of CRWRC—
—from its infancy to its present state of robust health and maturity.

B. *Recommendations:*

1. That synod recognize the invaluable service rendered by Mr. Louis Van Ess at the testimonial dinner to be held Tuesday, June 21, 1977. —*Adopted*
2. That synod, with thanksgiving to God, express its gratitude to Mr. Van Ess and extend to him the opportunity to respond. —*Adopted*

VI. THE LUKE SOCIETY

A. *Material:* Report 29.

B. *Recommendations:*

1. That synod grant a Luke Society representative the privilege of the floor when the report is under consideration.
2. That synod express hearty appreciation for the good work done by many men and women throughout the denomination, who render very valuable service through the Luke Society. —*Adopted*

VII. THE EVANGELICAL LITERATURE LEAGUE

A. *Material:* Report 31.

B. *Recommendation:* That synod express hearty appreciation for the good work done by The Evangelical Literature League (TELL). —*Adopted*

VIII TASK FORCE ON WORLD HUNGER

A. *Material:* Report 39.

B. *Recommendations:*

1. That synod express appreciation for the progress report rendered, and grant the committee its request to submit its completed report to Synod in 1978. —*Adopted*
2. That synod remind the churches that the Task Force welcomes suggestions for assisting it in the execution of its mandate, and urge the churches to respond. —*Adopted*

IX. DENOMINATIONAL AMBASSADOR RE INTERNATIONAL POVERTY

A. *Material:* Overture 14.

B. Recommendations:

1. That synod do not accede to Overture 14 from the Alpine Avenue Christian Reformed Church.

Ground: The overture is premature, since the Task Force has not yet completed its work. —*Adopted*

2. That synod commend the overture to the Task Force for its information and consideration. —*Adopted*

3. That this constitute the answer to Overture 14 of the Alpine Avenue Christian Reformed Church. —*Adopted*

(The report of Advisory Committee 8 is continued in Article 45.)

The evening session is closed with prayer.

SATURDAY MORNING, JUNE 18, 1977

Tenth Session

ARTICLE 44

The session is opened with devotions.

The roll is called. Elder B. Powell is absent with notice.

The minutes of the June 17, 1977 sessions are read and are approved.

ARTICLE 45

Advisory Committee 8, *World Ministries*, the Rev. J. Morren reporting, presents the following: (The report of Advisory Committee 8 is continued from Article 43.)

APPOINTMENT OF NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR CRWRC

A. History: Because of the retirement of Mr. Louis Van Ess as executive director, the CRWRC has been seeking applicants for this position. The field of applicants was narrowed by them to one man, Mr. John De Haan, of Denver, Colorado.

He is 45 years of age, and is a graduate of Calvin College and the University of Michigan School of Social Work. He served for six years with Child and Family Services in Denver, Colorado, then took an additional year of study at the University of Southern California. After that he served on the staff at Bethesda Hospital in Denver, and became Program Director of the Mental Health Center, which serves an area of 140,000 population in S.E. Denver.

B. Recommendations:

1. That synod appoint Mr. John De Haan as Executive Director of CRWRC for an initial appointment of two years.

Grounds:

a. CRWRC considered several applicants and decided to submit only a single nomination, because of its very positive reaction to his qualifications.

b. Synod's advisory committee interviewed him in depth, and unani-
mously recommends him. —*Adopted*

2. That Mr. John De Haan be presented to synod at this time, and that he be granted an opportunity to respond. —*Adopted*

The reporter presents the Rev. J. Reiffer who introduces Mr. J. De Haan who addresses synod in connection with his appointment. The Rev. A. Vanden Ende responds.

(The report of Advisory Committee 8 is continued in Article 56.)

ARTICLE 46

Advisory Committee 2, *Church Order I*, the Rev. H. Petersen reporting, presents the following: (The report of Advisory Committee 2 is continued from Article 38.)

CHURCH ORDER ARTICLE 13a

A. *Material*: Report 44.

B. *History*: Synod of 1976 appointed a committee to study Church Order Article 13a with a view to providing specific guidance to classes and synodical deputies in the application of this article to specific tasks and situations. The committee was given specific questions to consider in conducting its study. It now comes with recommendations for revisions of several articles of the Church Order.

C. *Recommendations*:

1. That synod grant the privilege of the floor to the chairman and reporter of the study committee, the Revs. James R. Kok and Alfred E. Mulder.

2. That synod adopt the following revisions of Articles 11, 12, and 13 of the Church Order subject to final ratification by Synod of 1978 after the churches have been given opportunity to react to these revisions.

a. Article 11:

"The calling of a minister of the Word is to explain and apply Holy Scripture in order to gather in and build up the members of the church of Jesus Christ."

b. Article 12:

"a. A minister of the Word serving as pastor of a congregation shall preach the Word, administer the sacraments, conduct public worship services, catechize the youth, and train members for Christian service. He, with the elders, shall supervise the congregation and his fellow office-bearers, exercise admonition and discipline, and see to it that everything is done decently and in order. He, with the elders, shall exercise pastoral care over the congregation, and engage in and promote the work of evangelism.

"b. A minister of the Word who enters into the work of missions or is appointed directly by synod shall be called in the regular manner by a local church, which acts in cooperation with the appropriate committees of classis or synod.

"c. A minister of the Word may also serve the church in other work which relates directly to his calling."

c. Article 13:

"a. A minister of the Word shall be supervised in doctrine, life and duties by the calling church.

"b. A minister of the Word may enter into other work only after the calling church has demonstrated for the satisfaction of classis, with the

concurring advice of the synodical deputies, that said work is consistent with the calling of a minister of the Word. He shall be supervised in his duties by the calling church in cooperation with other congregations, agencies or institutions involved.

“c. A minister of the Word may be loaned temporarily by his calling church to serve as pastor of a congregation outside of the Christian Reformed Church, but only with the approval of classis, the concurring advice of the synodical deputies, and in accordance with synodical regulations. Although his duties may be regulated in cooperation with the other congregation, the supervision of his doctrine and life rests with the calling church.” —*Adopted*

3. That synod adopt the following regulations for the application of (proposed) Article 12c of the Church Order to specific tasks and situations:

a. The calling church shall secure the prior approval of classis, in consultation with the synodical deputies, for each new ministerial position as referred to in Article 12c, by providing classis with the following information:

1) The official position description (purpose, duties, qualifications, etc.) as determined by the calling church, in consultation with cooperating agencies as applicable.

2) An outline of requirements for reporting to the calling church, and supervision by the calling church, in consultation with cooperating agencies as applicable.

b. Prior to calling a minister of the Word to a military or institutional chaplaincy, the calling church also is urged to obtain the endorsement of the Chaplain Committee of the Christian Reformed Church (cf. Acts, 1973, p. 56).

c. The church visitors of classis shall inquire annually into the supervision of the calling church toward said minister(s), as well as the reporting of said minister(s) to the calling church. The church visitors shall inform classis of departure from the approved provisions for supervision and reporting. —*Adopted*

4. While the advisory committee recommends that synod leave Article 14 of the Church Order unchanged, synod refers to the recommendation of the study committee, and by motion adopts the following proposed addition to Article 14,

Article 14c - “A former minister of the Word who was released from his office temporarily can be declared eligible for call upon approval of the classis from which he obtained his release, with the concurring advice of the synodical deputies. Upon acceptance of a call, he shall be reordained.”

5. That synod continue the present study committee for one year to receive the reactions of the churches to the proposed revisions of the Church Order and to report to the Synod of 1978. —*Adopted*

6. That synod request the churches to send their reactions to the proposed revisions to the study committee by January 1, 1978. —*Adopted*
(The report of Advisory Committee 2 is continued in Article 58.)

ARTICLE 47

Advisory Committee 1, *Appeals*, the Rev. M. Greidanus reporting, presents the following: (The report of Advisory Committee 1 is continued from Article 28.)

MR. B. POSTMA APPEALS DECISIONS RE DISCIPLINARY MATTER

A. *Material*: Mr. B. Postma appeals from decisions of the First Sioux Center consistory and Classis Sioux Center with eighty-nine pages of supplementary material.

B. *History*: On August 22 and 29, 1975, Mr. B. Postma's articles on his visit with the late professor Herman Dooyeweerd were published in *The Banner*. On November 4, 1975, Dr. R. Vander Vennen, executive director of the AACS, wrote Mr. Postma to ask information on charges made about some AACS professors in these articles. He was not answered. Dr. Vander Vennen phoned on December 29, 1975 and wrote again on January 2, 1976, but received no satisfaction from Mr. Postma.

Dr. Vander Vennen then wrote the consistory of First Sioux Center. On January 12, 1976, they decided to send a committee to see Mr. Postma. The committee met with him early in February. He explained that he did not wish to offend anyone, and he agreed to write a letter of apology to Dr. Vander Vennen, and also send a copy to *The Banner* for publication and to the consistory.

Mr. Postma sent this letter to Dr. Vander Vennen on February 4, 1976, who replied with thanks on February 12. On February 17, 1976, the letter to *The Banner* was sent (published as a correction on March 26, 1976). But the committee of First Sioux Center reported to consistory on February 9 and March 15 that Mr. Postma refused to provide a copy of his apology because he first wanted to see the letter of Dr. Vander Vennen to the consistory so that he would know the charges against him. Mr. Postma did read his letter to the committee, and the committee did read the letter of Dr. Vander Vennen to Mr. Postma.

On March 15, 1976, the consistory gave this mandate to its committee:

That Mr. Postma give the promised copy of the letter of public apology to Dr. Vander Vennen to the committee at once or Mr. Postma will be placed under silent censure by the following Sunday morning on the following grounds:

Mr. Postma has refused to keep his admitted promise to deliver said letter and is acting in a manner insubordinate to the Consistory of the First Christian Reformed Church. By motion and vote so decided.

On April 4, 1976, Mr. Postma was placed under silent censure. He appealed this to Classis Sioux Center on August 9, 1976. The September classis advised action by the church visitors. The church visitors came on October 11, 1976. The visitors stated that the consistory was within its rights to enter into the matter and that the request for a copy of the apology was in order. They urged him to give the letter. But Mr. Postma continued his appeal to classis. It met on November 17, 1976, and sustained the action of the consistory.

Mr. Postma then submitted his appeal to synod.

C. *The Appeal:*

I hereby appeal to the synod of the Christian Reformed Church against the disciplinary activity of the consistory of the First Chr. Ref. Church of Sioux Center, and the decision of Classis Sioux Center sustaining said disciplinary activity, for the following three fundamental reasons:

1. Consistory did not have jurisdiction in dealing with a public matter re: a published article in *The Banner*. Besides, no proper investigation and/or hearing on behalf of appellant took place.

2. Consistory took disciplinary action without grounds for such action (see Art. 80 Church Order). The issue is: a. Whether or not appellant committed a public *sin* (!); b. whether or not the consistory dealt with this matter in the proper way; c. whether or not a member of the church is entitled to receive a literal copy of charges brought in against him, so he could properly defend himself; d. whether a consistory has the right to place a church member under discipline simply because of an error in judgment and/or a change of mind in the light of unspiritual dealings on the part of the consistory.

3. a. The original "ground" for discipline was not discussed on the floor of classis held November 17 in Sioux Falls, S.D. At this meeting of classis, however, — in executive session, where I was present — the consistory of First Chr. Ref. Church of Sioux Center brought in a series of *new* and *false* charges with respect to past events and my character, and these charges, some of which I had never heard of before, became the grounds on which classis sustained the action of the consistory! Even secular courts would frown upon such procedures!

b. Classis did not investigate to ascertain whether the new charges were true and since I had not been given a copy of these new charges, I had no opportunity to properly defend myself against them. This is a violation of the Church Order, Article 82, which states, "Disciplinary measures shall be applied only after an adequate investigation has been made and the member involved has had ample opportunity to present his case."

Based on the above mentioned facts which may all be verified (see some of the supplementary materials attached), I humbly request synod to instruct the Consistory of the First Christian Reformed Church of Sioux Center to lift the censure imposed upon me. Secondly, I request synod to overrule the wrong decision of Classis Sioux Center of November 17.

D. *Observations:*

Without commenting on every twist and turn in this matter our committee sees this history as a series of missed opportunities.

The consistory could have declared itself satisfied when apologies were mailed to Dr. Vander Vennen and *The Banner*. The consistory could have taken other steps to try to obtain Dr. Vander Vennen's permission to release his letter to Mr. Postma. Or the consistory could have been less hasty in applying censure.

Mr. Postma, for his part, could have answered Dr. Vander Vennen's first letter. He could have given the letter to the consistory as he agreed

to do. He could have put aside his conditions when the church visitors also urged him to put the matter to rest by giving the letter.

But these opportunities were missed, and the issue between Mr. Postma and the consistory began to change. Both parties wanted copies of letters that had already been read to them. Both seemed unable and unwilling to move beyond this futile point. In this way the letters became symbols in a power struggle:

(1) Mr. Postma refused to submit to the consistory's demand that he keep to the agreement.

(2) The consistory abruptly imposed discipline with more apparent concern for the letter than for the member.

We are not impressed by the quality of the pastoral care given in this matter, nor do we find the apparent haste in imposing censure helpful in working towards a solution.

At the same time, we observe that the grounds in the appeal miss the point. Mr. Postma was not disciplined for anything written in The Banner articles, but for his refusal to keep the agreement that he would give the consistory a copy of his letter to Dr. Vander Vennen. This insubordinate refusal was stated as the ground for discipline in the consistory minutes and in a letter to him.

E. Recommendations:

1. That synod do not sustain Mr. B. Postma's appeal.

Ground: The grounds of Mr. Postma's appeal do not address the actual basis for his censure, which was his refusal to keep the agreement to provide the consistory with a copy of his letter to Dr. Vander Vennen.

—*Adopted*

It is noted that Mr. G. Bierma and Dr. P. Y. De Jong did not vote on Recommendation 1.

2. That synod open a way for the requested lifting of censure by urging:

a. the consistory to seek to obtain permission from Dr. Vander Vennen to give Mr. Postma a copy of the letter discussed by the consistory on January 12, 1976;

b. Mr. Postma to keep his agreement to give the consistory a copy of his February 4, 1976 letter to Dr. Vander Vennen.

Ground: The reluctance to exchange these letters appears to have occasioned the parting of ways, and their exchange can be the means by which healing and reconciliation can begin.

—*Adopted*

3. That synod ask both the consistory and Mr. Postma to confess to each other the wrongs they have done one to each other and to seek forgiveness. The consistory, as the body which cares for this member, should begin this action.

Ground: It is time for the consistory and the member to turn this sad history around by dropping their adversary positions.

—*Adopted*

(The report of Advisory Committee 1 is continued in Article 70.)

The session is closed with prayer.

MONDAY MORNING, JUNE 20, 1977
Eleventh Session

ARTICLE 48

The session is opened with devotions.

The roll is called. Elder Hubert Wynberg is present as elder delegate from Classis Chicago North. He rises to indicate his agreement with the Forms of Unity.

The minutes of the June 18 session are read and are approved.

ARTICLE 49

Advisory Committee 11, *Synodical Services*, the Rev. D. Negen reporting, presents the following: (The report of Advisory Committee 11 continued from Article 24.)

VII. SYNODICAL INTERIM COMMITTEE

A. *Materials:*

1. Report 20.
2. Report 20-A.

B. *Privilege of the Floor*

Recommendation: That synod honor the request of the Synodical Interim Committee that its president, the Rev. Oliver Breen, along with the Spanish Literature Committee to determine whether or not efforts of sent the committee at synod when matters pertaining to SIC are discussed; and that Mr. Fred Hollebeek and Dr. Marvin DeVries, chairman and secretary of the Finance Committee, also represent the committee when matters of finance are discussed. —*Adopted*

C. *American Calvinist Fellowship*

1. *Information:* The Synod of 1976 decided to place the American Calvinist Fellowship on the list of accredited causes with the stipulation that this should be reviewed by SIC in consultation with TELL and the Spanish Literature Committee to determine whether or not efforts of the agencies are being duplicated.

2. *Recommendation:* That synod place the American Calvinist Fellowship on the list of causes recommended for support.

Grounds:

- a. The materials of the ACF are geared to the student world and as such are different from the materials of TELL and SLC.
- b. The ACF will refrain from publishing materials in the Spanish language. —*Adopted*

D. *Wycliffe Bible Translators*

1. *Information:* The request of the Wycliffe Bible Translators for recognition as a synodically accredited cause first came to the Synodical Interim Committee in 1975. No action was taken. The next year Classis Grand Rapids East made a similar request concerning this organization. Synod decided to refer this to SIC for review and report

to the Synod of 1977. The review was to evaluate the financial picture and doctrinal basis of this organization. SIC now recommends to synod that the Wycliffe Bible Translators not be placed on the list of recommended causes. Your advisory committee, however, has modified the position of SIC with the recommendation below.

2. *Recommendation:* That synod, while not placing Wycliffe Bible Translators on the list of recommended causes, does encourage our churches to support Wycliffe personnel of Reformed persuasion and/or their projects.

Grounds:

a. Support of individual workers or projects by congregations is not dependent on our denomination's accrediting the parent organization. Several congregations are supporting Wycliffe translators on an individual basis and can continue to do so.

b. Individual congregations are in the best position to decide which Wycliffe workers are deserving of their support. Supporting the entire Wycliffe organization could result in our churches supporting Wycliffe workers not distinctly Reformed, since Wycliffe's standards for acceptance of translators is broadly evangelical. —*Adopted*

E. *Special Suggestions of Synod of 1976*

1. *Information:* Synod of 1976 gave several suggestions to SIC concerning meeting schedules, nominations and lines of authority.

2. *Recommendation:* That synod take note of the fact that SIC has restructured its meetings, requested nomination suggestions from the classes and delineated the lines of authority according to the instructions of Synod of 1976. —*Noted*

F. *Yearbook*

Recommendation: That synod urge all of our congregations, classes and agencies to be prompt in meeting the deadlines to insure an early appearance of the Yearbook with complete, up-to-date statistics. —*Adopted*

G. *Handbook of the Christian Reformed Church*

Recommendation: That synod urge all consistories to make full use of the Handbook of the Christian Reformed Church and make every effort to keep all their members fully informed about the work of the Lord to which we are committed as a denomination. —*Adopted*

H. *Index of Synodical Decisions*

Recommendation: That synod take note of the publication of the Index for Synodical Decisions and urge its use as a resource document. —*Adopted*

I. *Effective Date of Ministerial Resignation*

1. *Information:* The Synod of 1976 in dealing with an appeal of a former Christian Reformed Church minister for pension benefits was confronted with the question of whether or not there are rules that have bearing on the declaration of an effective date of resignation of a minister. In the case in point, the appeal of the Rev. Gabe Rienks,

the following decision was made: "Motion is made that synod defer action on the above recommendation and refer this matter to the Synodical Interim Committee, asking that body to determine whether or not there are rules that have bearing on declaring the effective date of resignation. If there are none, SIC is asked to draft appropriate rules, taking also into consideration applicable Canadian laws, and report to the Synod of 1977." SIC has completed its mandate and comes with the recommendation which your advisory committee is presenting to synod.

2. *Recommendations:*

a. That synod declare that the ministerial status of the Rev. Gabe Rienks in the Immanuel, Simcoe, Ontario congregation and in the Christian Reformed Church terminated on November 16, 1969.

Ground: This is the date established by the consistory of the Immanuel Christian Reformed Church of Simcoe, Ontario, by the church visitors and by Classis Hamilton.

b. That synod rule that when a minister of the CRC resigns, his ministerial status in the CRC shall terminate on the date on which his consistory and/or classis determines that his resignation shall become effective.

c. That synod declare that the report and decisions above constitute its answer to the appeal of the Rev. Gabe Rienks. —*Adopted*

J. *Synodical Liaison Representatives - Report 20-A.*

1. *Information:* SIC has studied the issues involving the purpose, role and responsibilities of synodical representatives. Your advisory committee recommends to synod the proposals presented by SIC.

2. *Recommendations:*

a. That synod declare that the *purpose* of synod's liaison representatives be defined as follows: "Synodical liaison representatives to accredited agencies should represent the Christian Reformed Church (and synod) to the agencies by keeping the agencies informed of pertinent denominational information, concerns, and policies and should represent the agency to the Christian Reformed Church by keeping synod and the church informed of pertinent information, policies and needs of the agencies. The representative should further serve the denomination with an annual report appraising the agency and its ministries and should serve the agency with advice and counsel as requested and with assistance if possible."

b. That synod adopt the following procedures for *selecting and appointing* synodical liaison representatives:

1) SIC shall instigate the nomination proceedings when a request is made or a vacancy occurs.

2) Both SIC and the organization requesting a representative shall suggest and agree upon a list of nominees for the position, with a net of at least two, to be presented to synod.

3) Nominees shall be sought who have the following qualifications:

a) are able and willing to be involved and give time,

b) have an interest in the cause for which they receive appointment,

c) have a good knowledge of the CRC and are able to articulate the Reformed faith;

d) have the ability to make the appraisals which are requested of them,

e) be proximate to the central location of the organization to which they are sent,

f) are reasonably sure of being able to complete the normal period of a three-year appointment.

4) Nominees shall be contacted in advance of their appointment and agree to serve if elected.

c. That synod establish the following *reporting procedures* for all non-denominational causes recommended for financial support. Each agency shall supply:

1) A financial statement to be reviewed by the Finance Committee of the CRC.

2) A statement of policy and programs which shall include:

a) A statement of purpose of the organization.

b) Attachment of constitution, by-laws, officers, etc.

c) Evidence of their continuing basis of classification under IRS exempt status—501 (c) (3), and Canadian Federal Registration.

d) A list of areas of service and percentage of budget allocated to same.

e) An indication of changes in program during the past fiscal year and percentage of budget allotted to change.

f) Percentage of budget actually attributable to program service, and supportive services.

g) Any long range plans which might indicate change of program or direction in the future.

h) Any input to justify accreditation denomination-wide.

d. That synod adopt the following procedures for obtaining and utilizing reports from agencies and/or representatives:

1) Liaison representatives' reports to synod shall be duplicated and presented to synod. They will not be placed in the printed Agenda or Acts.

2) With organizations served by synodical liaison representatives the above mentioned reporting forms shall be completed by the representative, submitted to the SIC and summarized in the denominational handbook. For organizations not served by synodical representatives information from the agency shall be received directly by SIC and summarized in the denominational handbook.

3) Brief reports from accredited non-denominational agencies may be supplied for distribution to synodical delegates.

e. That those appointed be *notified* by the Stated Clerk and receive guidelines for synodical liaison representatives from the Stated Clerk's office. They shall also be oriented to their new position by the organization receiving them.

f. That the agencies requesting liaison representatives be expected to *reimburse* them for expenses incurred in serving them since representatives are appointed at the request of the agency. Should synod

or its interim committee request the presence of a representative at one of its meetings it will assume responsibility for expenses incurred.

g. That heads of denominational youth agencies (Calvinettes, Cadets and Young Calvinist) and heads of affiliated educational agencies (Dordt College, Trinity College and Reformed Bible College) be invited to submit brief *reports to synod* for inclusion in the Agenda and Acts on an annual basis. These reports will replace those of the liaison representatives.

h. That *synod* inform all agencies now having representatives of the above synodical decisions and also inform them that the representatives will be discontinued unless the agencies, on the basis of the decisions above, elect to have representatives. —*Adopted*

K. *Press Arrangements for Synod* - Report 20-A.

Recommendation: That synod request SIC to make arrangements for press representatives and releases for all meetings of synod.

Grounds:

a. The processing of press releases is specifically part of the Stated Clerk's job description which states—"The Stated Clerk, as agent of the Synodical Interim Committee or synod, shall prepare news or information bulletins for the news media which will inform the public of the work and witness of the church."

b. The appointment of synodical delegates to serve as a committee for press relations is an undue burden for delegates who are themselves busy with many assignments and fails to do justice to the importance of our relationship with the press.

c. Planning and the use or appointment of persons with expertise in communications and press relationships would be helpful for our public presentation of the work and witness of the Christian Reformed Church.

d. Planning for press relationships is particularly urgent in view of the prospect of the concurrent synods meeting on the Calvin College Campus in 1978. —*Adopted*

L. *Program Coordination Progress* - Report 20-A.

Recommendation: That synod take note of the progress reported by SIC in implementing the decisions of the Synod of 1976 concerning program planning, coordination and the setting of priorities in consultation with the denominational agencies. —*Noted*

NOTE: See Acts of Synod 1976, pp. 48-52.

M. *Appraisal and Cost Justification Mandate* - Report 20-A.

1. *Information:* Synod of 1976 instructed SIC and the agencies to provide the Synod of 1977 with an appraisal and cost justification of supporting staff of agencies in the denominational building and of SIC, including Coordinated Services. This work could not be completed in time for this session of synod.

2. *Recommendation:* That synod grant an additional year to complete the above mandate. —*Adopted*

(The report of Advisory Committee 11 is continued in Article 61.)

ARTICLE 50

OBITUARY COMMITTEE

The Rev. K. Rietema reports for the *Obituary Committee*, and presents the following:

Materials:

Report 17, II, a.

1976 Acts of Synod, Article 63.

Introduction:

Among the first items of business for this and every preceding synod there has been the appointment of an *obituary committee*. It is this committee's task to provide the delegates of synod with obituary information on the ministers of the Word who have passed away during the preceding year.

Materials for formulating such information comes from a variety of sources which have already recognized these deaths through proper obituary information, namely; the report of the Ministers' Pension Fund (Report 17), the CRC Yearbook 1977 (pp. 441-447) and the official church publications.

Recommendation: That synod discontinue the practice of appointing an obituary committee.

Grounds:

1. The committee with its subsequent report to synod is a duplication of work already completed by the denominational office in the form of printed obituaries in the Yearbook.

2. The list of deaths within the past year already forms a part of the agenda for Synod in the report of the Ministers' Pension Fund.

3. Obituaries of church leaders—ministers, professors and noted laypersons—normally appear in official and unofficial publications of the denomination to inform the church community. —*Adopted*

ARTICLE 51

Mr. Mark Vander Ark of the Reception Committee introduces Mr. Theodore J. Georgian, of the Covenant Orthodox Presbyterian Church in Rochester, N.Y., who addresses synod as fraternal delegate of the Orthodox Presbyterian church. The Rev. John Piersma responds.

The Rev. Mike Garvey, fraternal delegate of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church is also introduced. He addresses synod and Dr. John Bratt responds.

Dr. Charles J. Wissink, fraternal delegate of the Reformed Church in America is introduced to the delegates of synod.

The session is closed with prayer.

MONDAY AFTERNOON, JUNE 20, 1977

Twelfth Session

ARTICLE 52

The session is opened with devotions.

The Rev. A. Hoogstrate of the *Reception Committee* introduces Dr. George Fuller, representing the National Presbyterian and Reformed Fellowship, who addresses synod. The Rev. E. Heerema responds.

ARTICLE 53

Advisory Committee 9, *Educational Matters*, Elder J. VanderArk reporting, presents the following: (The report of Advisory Committee 9 is continued from Article 26.)

I. SYNODICAL DEPUTIES' REPORTS - *Releases and Depositions*

A. *Materials*: Documents, Stated Clerk's file.

B. *Recommendations*:

That synod approve the action of the synodical deputies on the following:

1. The synodical deputies R. Wildschut (Classis Atlantic Northeast), H. R. De Bolster (Classis Hamilton), and W. H. Kooienga (Classis Hudson) present at the May 17, 1977 meeting of Classis Hackensack, having heard the recommendation of the Council of the Richfield CRC of Clifton, N.J. to grant its associate pastor, the Rev. Ronald Lobbezo, his request "to be released from office to enter upon a non-ministerial vocation," (Art. 14, b, Church Order) concurred with the decision of classis to approve the recommendation. —*Adopted*

2. The synodical deputies R. Stienstra (Classis Alberta North), J. M. Moes (Classis Columbia), and D. Pierik (Classis British Columbia), having heard the discussion at Classis Alberta South with respect to the release, according to Article 17 of the Church Order, of the Rev. Edgar Holkeboer from the congregation of the Bellevue CRC, concurred with the intent of the motion passed to grant that release. —*Adopted*

3. The synodical deputies, M. Van Donselaar (Classis Northcentral Iowa), H. De Groot (Classis Orange City) and P. Y. De Jong (Classis Sioux Center), having heard at the May 13, 1976 meeting of Classis Minnesota South the request of the consistory of the Bemis, S.D., Church to release the Rev. Howard Sponholz from ministerial service in that congregation according to Church Order Article 17, concurred with the decision of Classis Minnesota South to approve the request. —*Adopted*

4. The synodical deputies J. Elenbaas (Classis Northcentral Iowa), H. Vanden Heuvel (Classis Sioux Center), and J. Fondse (Classis Orange City), concurred in the decision of Classis Minnesota North in session May 5, 1977, to approve the request of the consistory of the Bethlehem CRC, Thunder Bay, Ont., to release the Rev. Wiebo Ludwig from active ministerial service in that church, according to Article 17 of the Church Order. —*Adopted*

5. The synodical deputies L. C. Bossenbroek (Classis Grandville), T. E. Hofman (Classis G.R. East) and C. Bolt (Classis Zeeland) concurred in the motion of Classis Holland to depose the Rev. Gerald L. Kramer from the ministry of the Word and sacraments in the Christian Reformed Church. —*Adopted*

6. The synodical deputies H. R. De Bolster (Classis Hamilton), P. Breedveld (Classis Huron), and D. C. Los (Classis Quinte), concurred in the decision of Classis Toronto, having heard the request of the Consistory of the Georgetown CRC, to depose its minister, the Rev. John W. Postman, from the ministry of the Word and sacraments of the Christian Reformed Church. —*Adopted*

II. SYNODICAL DEPUTIES' REPORTS - *Resignation from the Ministry*

A. *Materials*: Letters from consistories.

B. *Information*:

1. A letter was received from the consistory of the Christian Reformed Church San Diego, Calif., informing the Stated Clerk that the Rev. Gordon D. Klouw submitted his resignation from the ministry in the Christian Reformed Church and requested dismissal from the San Diego church in order to affiliate with Christ Memorial Reformed Church of Holland, Mich. The consistory "acquiesced" to Rev. Klouw's resignation from the ministry and "acceded" to his request for dismissal. A report of the above action was made to Classis California South at its session on January 19, 1977, and was received as information without further action on his resignation in view of Rev. Klouw's dismissal from membership.

2. A letter was received from the Council of the Montello Park Christian Reformed Church, Holland, Mich., informing the Stated Clerk that, with the concurrence of the Council of the Providence CRC, Holland, the council accepted with regret the resignation of the Rev. Gilbert Haan from the office of the ministry of the Word and sacraments in the Christian Reformed Church. The advisory committee understands via verbal indication that Classis Holland received this matter as information.

C. *Recommendations*:

1. That synod inform Classis California South that acceptance of a resignation from the ministry requires the concurring advice of synodical deputies. —*Adopted*

2. That synod inform Classis Holland that acceptance of a resignation from the ministry requires action by the classis and concurring advice of synodical deputies. —*Adopted*

3. That synod call the above actions, where applicable, to the attention of the Ministers' Pension Committee for disposition as to the status of involved ministers' participation in the Ministers' Pension Plan. —*Adopted*

III. SYNODICAL DEPUTIES' REPORTS - *Ministers in Extraordinary Service*

A. *Materials*: Documents from Stated Clerk's file.

B. *Recommendations*: That synod approve the work of the synodical deputies on the following:

1. The synodical deputies, G. Vanderhill (Classis Chicago North), A. Verburg (Classis Illiana), and S. Kramer (Classis Pella) concurred with the decision of Classis Chicago South that a call be issued by the Hope CRC of Oak Forest, Ill, to Dr. Marvin P. Hoogland to the

position of Pastoral Counselor at the Chicago Christian Counseling Center, Palos Heights, Ill.—this being in harmony with Article 13 of the Church Order, namely that it is spiritual in character and in keeping with the ministerial calling. —*Adopted*

2. The synodical deputies R. Wildschut (Classis Atlantic North-east), D. C. Los (Classis Quinte), and J. B. Vos (Classis Toronto) concurred with the decision of Classis Eastern Canada to endorse the request of the Halifax, N.S. CRC, to call the Rev. Jerry Dykstra to serve as an associate minister in hospital chaplaincy on the ground that the work is spiritual in character and directly related to the ministerial calling. —*Adopted*

3. The synodical deputies L. Greenway (Classis G.R. North), J. D. Eppinga (Classis G.R. South), and L. C. Bossenbroek (Classis Grandville) concurred in the action of Classis Grand Rapids East to approve the request of the Mayfair CRC to call Dr. Paul Bremer to serve as associate minister to be instructor of Greek and New Testament at the Reformed Bible College. This is in harmony with Article 13 of the Church Order. —*Adopted*

4. The synodical deputies T. Hofman (Classis G.R. East), A. Brink (Classis G.R. South), and L. C. Bossenbroek (Classis Grandville) concurred in the motion of Classis Grand Rapids North to permit the East Leonard CRC to extend a call to the Rev. Dennis Mulder as associate minister for loan to the World Home Bible League as its Asian Director, judging this task to be spiritual in character and directly related to the ministerial calling. —*Adopted*

5. The synodical deputies L. C. Bossenbroek (Classis Grandville), J. D. Eppinga (Classis G.R. South), and T. Hofman (Classis G.R. East) concurred in the motion of Classis Grand Rapids North to approve the request of Beckwith Hills CRC to call the Rev. Timothy Monsma to serve as instructor of Missions and Anthropology at Reformed Bible College, judging his task to be spiritual in character and directly related to the ministerial calling. —*Adopted*

6. The synodical deputies J. Vugteveen (Classis Chatham), H. R. De Bolster (Classis Hamilton), and J. B. Vos (Classis Toronto), concurred in the decision of Classis Huron to declare that the service of the Rev. Peter Van Katwyk in the Kitchener and Cambridge Inter-faith Pastoral Counselling Centre is spiritual in character and related to the ministerial calling. —*Adopted*

7. The synodical deputies W. D. Buursma (Classis Kalamazoo), J. C. Medendorp (Classis G.R. East), and J. D. Eppinga (Classis G.R. South) gave approval to Classis Lake Erie re the request of the Jackson CRC to extend a call to the Rev. Henry Post to serve as Hospital Chaplain at Foote Hospital, Jackson, Mich., judging the task to be spiritual in character and related to the ministerial calling. —*Adopted*

IV. SYNODICAL DEPUTIES' REPORTS - *Leaves of Absence*

A. *Materials*: Documents from Stated Clerk's file.

B. *Information*: The synodical deputies L. Greenway (Classis G.R. North), J. D. Eppinga (Classis G.R. South) and L. C. Bossenbroek

(Classis Grandville) approved the action of Classis Grand Rapids East in extending the leave of absence of the Rev. Lawrence Veltkamp. The deputies noted that this action is contrary to a position adopted by synod, but that they gave their approval because this would bring Rev. Veltkamp to retirement age. Subsequent to the above action, Rev. Veltkamp accepted a call to a Christian Reformed Church.

C. Recommendation: That synod withhold action on this matter.

Ground: Synod's action is not necessary when there is no concrete case affecting a minister's standing in the church. —*Adopted*

V. SYNODICAL DEPUTIES' REPORTS - *Ministers from Other Denominations*

A. Materials: Documents from Stated Clerk's file.

B. Recommendation: That synod approve the action of the synodical deputies on the following:

1. The synodical deputies J. R. Kok (Classis Rocky Mountain), N. Vander Zee (Classis Central California), and D. Tinklenberg (Classis Pacific Northwest), having heard the Colloquium Doctum of Dr. John Lee, pastor of the Orange Korean CRC, and the Rev. John Tong called to be pastor of the Chinatown CRC, concurred in the motion of Classis California South to receive these brothers into the ministry of the Word and sacraments in the Christian Reformed Church. (Dr. Lee was ordained in the Korean Presbyterian Church of HapDong; Rev. Tong in the New Zealand Reformed Church for service in Taiwan) —*Adopted*

2. The synodical deputies L. Greenway (Classis G.R. North), J. D. Eppinga (Classis G.R. South), and L. C. Bossenbroek (Classis Grandville), present at the Colloquium Doctum conducted by Classis Grand Rapids East with the Rev. Domingo Romero, concurred with the motion of Classis Grand Rapids East that the brother be admitted to the ministry of the Word and the sacraments in the Christian Reformed Church under Article 8 of the Church Order. —*Adopted*

3. The synodical deputies J. Fondse (Classis Orange City), J. Engbers (Classis Sioux Center) and T. Medema (Classis Wisconsin) having heard the Colloquium Doctum of the Rev. Aubrey Van Hoff conducted by Classis Minnesota North and agreeing that the requirements of Article 8 of the Church Order have been met, advised that he be received into the Christian Reformed Church as a minister of the Word and the sacraments. —*Adopted*

VI. SYNODICAL DEPUTIES' REPORTS - *Classical Examinations of Candidates*

A. Material: Synodical Deputies' Reports as follows:

Classis	Candidate	Synodical Deputies
Alberta North.....	Wolter Smit.....	L. Mulder, Alberta South P. M. Jonker, British Columbia J. M. Moes, Columbia
British Columbia.....	Evert Busink..... Jacob Ypma.....	D. Tinklenberg, Pacific Northwest L. Mulder, Alberta South N. B. Knoppers, Alberta North

Classis	Candidate	Synodical Deputies
Cadillac.....	Warren Lammers.....	A. W. Hoogstrate, Muskegon W. VanderHoven, Grand Rapids North T. E. Hofman, Grand Rapids East
California South.....	Bert Block.....	J. R. Kok, Rocky Mountain N. Vanderzee, Central California D. Tinklenberg, Pacific Northwest
Chatham.....	Gerrit Bomhof.....	H. R. DeBolster, Hamilton R. Kooistra, Huron J. T. Malestein, Lake Erie
Florida.....	Ronald Goudzwaard.....	A. Verburg, Illiana D. Wisse, Hudson J. T. Malestein, Lake Erie
Grand Rapids East.....	Paul L. Bremer..... Peter Brink.....	L. Greenway, Grand Rapids North J. D. Eppinga, Grand Rapids South L. C. Bossenbroek, Grandville
Grand Rapids East.....	Philip R. Touw.....	O. De Groot, Zeeland H. Erffmeyer, Grandville M. Goote, Grand Rapids South
Hamilton.....	Martin J. Contant.....	G. J. Heersink, Chatham R. Kooistra, Huron J. B. Vos, Toronto
Holland.....	Phillip DeJonge.....	J. C. Medendorp, Grand Rapids East L. C. Bossenbroek, Grandville C. Bolt, Zeeland
Hudson.....	Timothy B. Toeset..... Bart VanEyck.....	J. C. VanderArk, Hackensack H. R. DeBolster, Hamilton J. B. Vos, Toronto
Huron.....	B. Bernie Bakker.....	J. Vugteveen, Chatham H. R. DeBolster, Hamilton J. B. Vos, Toronto
Kalamazoo.....	Charles DeRidder.....	J. D. Eppinga, Grand Rapids South L. C. Bossenbroek, Grandville B. Den Ouden, Holland
Lake Erie.....	Robert Meyering.....	G. J. Heersink, Chatham T. E. Hofman, Grand Rapids East W. D. Buursma, Kalamazoo
Minnesota North.....	James Petersen.....	J. Fondse, Orange City J. H. Engbers, Sioux Center T. Medema, Wisconsin
Minnesota South.....	Bernard Tol.....	T. Wevers, Minnesota North J. Fondse, Orange City J. H. Engbers, Sioux Center
Northcentral Iowa.....	Arie Poot..... John S. Ritsema..... Karl Wiersum.....	J. Fondse, Orange City J. H. Engbers, Sioux Center S. Kramer, Pella
Northcentral Iowa.....	Bernard J. Van Ee..... Norman B. Steen.....	R. Kok, Minnesota North S. Kramer, Pella J. D. Hellinga, Orange City

Classis	Candidate	Synodical Deputies
Pella.....	Donald Draayer.....	J. H. Elenbaas, Northcentral Iowa J. Fondse, Orange City J. H. Engbers, Sioux Center
Sioux Center.....	Daniel DeGroot.....	P. W. Brouwer, Minnesota South J. H. Elenbaas, Northcentral Iowa J. Fondse, Orange City
Sioux Center.....	James Hoogveen.....	J. Fondse, Orange City T. Heyboer, Minnesota South T. Wevers, Minnesota North
Wisconsin.....	John R. Jackson.....	G. Vanderhill, Chicago North J. VanderLugt, Chicago South A. J. Verburg, Illiana
Zeeland.....	David Stravers.....	L. C. Bossenbroek, Grandville B. Den Ouden, Holland E. H. Oostendorp, Muskegon
Zeeland.....	Ronald Meyer.....	L. Greenway, Grand Rapids North L. C. Bossenbroek, Grandville W. VanderHaak, Holland

B. The Synodical Deputies' Report re Classical Examination of Candidates was inadvertently omitted in the Advisory Committee report presented to synod. The list is here inserted and will be submitted for approval to the Synodical Interim Committee for approval in behalf of synod. It is noted that all the above classical decisions to admit candidates to the ministry were with the full concurrence of the synodical deputies in attendance.

Wm. P. Brink, Stated Clerk

VII. NOTICE OF EMERITATION

A. *Material*: Letters from Classical Stated Clerks.

- B. *Recommendation*: That synod approve the following emeritations:
- Rev. Cornelius Abbas - Classis Chicago North; reason: retirement age; effective December 31, 1976
- Rev. C. Oliver Buus - Classis Rocky Mountain; reason: retirement age; effective June 30, 1977
- Rev. Hubert DeWolf - Classis Grandville; reason: retirement age; effective August 1, 1977
- Rev. Lambert Doezema - Classis Kalamazoo; reason: retirement age; effective December 8, 1977
- Rev. Allen Dykstra - Classis Orange City; reason: continued disability
- Rev. Leonard Greenway - Classis Grand Rapids North; reason: retirement age; effective July 1, 1977
- Rev. Titus Heyboer - Classis Minnesota South; reason: retirement age; effective September 1, 1977
- Rev. Arthur W. Schaafsma - Classis Hamilton; reason: retirement age; effective February 15, 1977
- Rev. Nelson Veltman - Classis Central California; reason: retirement age; effective September 1977
- Rev. Bud Vermeer - Classis Grand Rapids North; reason: disability (health); effective May 18, 1976
- Adopted
- (The report of Advisory Committee 9 is continued in Article 64.)

ARTICLE 54

Advisory Committee 10, *Interdenominational Outreach*, the Rev. H. VandenEinde reporting, presents the following: (The report of Advisory Committee 10 is continued from Article 32.)

IX. INTERCHURCH RELATIONS COMMITTEE

A. *Communication on Race Relations to the Interpretive Commission of the RES*

1. *Material*: Communication 1.

2. *Analysis*: As stated in Section I, 1 of Report 14, the Interchurch Relations Committee has been concerned about the tense South African race relations, and in cooperation with SCORR has sought to facilitate some action. The Potchefstroom Conference on Race, scheduled for April 1977 was postponed, and has been rescheduled for March 1978. In view of this development, the Interim Committee of the RES, acting as the Interpretive Commission of the RES, did not go to South Africa in April, but is still planning to attend the 1978 conference. With this added time factor the IRC was able to give fuller study to the matter of the experience and insights of the CRC in matters of race relations with a view to communicating their conclusions to the Interpretive Commission of RES. The communication drawn up by the IRC is found below.

3. *Recommendation*: That synod take note of this communication, endorse it in principle, and invite the churches to send reactions, if any, to the IRC by November 1st, 1977. —*Adopted*

THE COMMUNICATION

To the Interpretive Commission of the RES
Communication on Race Relations

Taking note of the fact that the Cape Town Assembly of the Reformed Ecumenical Synod has instituted a special commission to interpret to the South African churches the experiences and insights of the member churches in regards to race relations and to interpret the attitudes and actions of the South African churches to their fellow members in the RES throughout the world, the Interchurch Relations Committee of the Christian Reformed Church (United States and Canada) presents the following synopsis on behalf of the CRC.

Section I: Acknowledgments

A. We acknowledge that there is a magnitude and complexity to the problem of race relations in the South African situation that far exceeds our own experience.

B. We acknowledge that we cannot speak out of a triumphal attitude as though we had resolved all of our problems in race relations.

C. We recognize that there are cultural, political, economic and legal factors that cannot be overlooked, but our immediate focus is on Christian attitudes and ecclesiastical concerns.

Section II: Our Experience and Insights

A. We have gone through a learning experience, admittedly not shared equally by all of us, but one which has resulted in a growing

consciousness of racial problems and an awakening of Christian conscience in regard to the sin of racial prejudice.

B. We have learned something about the interwovenness of racial, economic, cultural, political and other factors in shaping our racial attitudes.

C. The context of our experience, differing from that of our South African brothers, has been one of some positive governmental actions in safe-guarding human rights and effecting more equitable race relations.

D. This positive action by the government came about in part as a result of confrontations, but it was supported by actions of churches and individual Christians, although members of our own communion have played only a relatively minor role.

E. We have learned that listening to other racial groups (in our case racial minorities), while having some short-term painful consequences, is demanded by Christian principles and is in the long run conducive to much good for all concerned.

F. We have learned that it sometimes required stern actions by our broadest ecclesiastical assemblies to gain acceptance of racial minorities in kingdom enterprises when external threats to the Christian community discouraged such acceptance.

G. We have sought to profit from our experience, not by operating in a confrontational way, but more quietly and constructively through a special synodical committee. We regret to note that this kind of progress is difficult and that willingness to change tends to diminish as crises disappear.

H. We observe that racial concern, whether supportive or antagonistic to other races, is in direct proportion to the direct contact members of one race have with those of other races.

I. We have learned that the best way to avert violence (whether or not it is inspired by non-Christian ideologies, such as Communist) is to remove the conditions which breed violence. The use of action, force or even of resident power (whether social, economic or political) in an oppressive manner can itself generate violent responses.

Section III: Application of our Experience and Insights to the Situation in South Africa

In the light of our experience and insights noted above, and concerned to grant to every man the full dignity of his humanity, as an image-bearer of God, in the spirit of Christ who died that men of every race and people might enter into the full liberty of the children of God, we respectfully ask and urge our South African brothers in the name of Christ to do the following:

A. Encourage the representatives of the non-white churches to speak up freely as fellow Christians who have their own indispensable perspectives on your situation.

B. Grant a full hearing to those white church members and leaders whose consciences have been sensitized to the multi-faceted plight of non-whites in South Africa.

C. Take immediate and positive steps to terminate racial discrimination in your churches in practice as well as in theory.

D. Seek as Christians to put yourselves in the position of others in keeping with the law of love to the neighbor.

E. Seek to take in the ecclesiastical realm, and to encourage in the social, economic and political realms, action to ameliorate oppressive conditions.

F. Raise a clear and bold prophetic voice against all injustices and oppression, in the name of Him who defends the weak and powerless and who avenges all wrongs committed by man against his fellow-man.

G. Give us by your fearless example a new reason to press on in our own struggle against racial prejudice and discrimination within our mixed society and in our national use of economic and political power in the world community, until all men everywhere share equally in the freedoms and opportunities we seek for ourselves.

B. *Further Communications*

1. *Analysis:* Two communications have recently been received by the IRC, which they have not yet had opportunity to review. One is from Dr. F. E. O'Brian Geldenhuys, Director of Ecumenical Affairs of Die Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk of South Africa, and the other from Die Gereformeerde Kerk in Suid Afrika, over the signature of J. L. Helberg, Clerk for Correspondence with Foreign Churches. These communications have come in response to the action of the Synod of 1976 in sending a letter to the South African churches re the South African Terrorism Act (cf. Acts of Synod 1976, Article 56, II, pp. 58f.)

2. *Recommendation:* That synod receive these communications as information and refer them to the IRC for study and possible response.

—*Adopted*

ARTICLE 55

The chairman acknowledges the presence of Dr. Morton Smith, fraternal delegate of the Presbyterian Church in America.

ARTICLE 56

Advisory Committee 8, *World Ministries*, the Rev. J. Morren reporting, presents the following: (The report of Advisory Committee 8 is continued from Article 45.)

I. CRWRC CONSTITUTION AND RELATION TO MISSION BOARDS

A. *Materials:*

1. Report 3, Section 2, B.
2. Report 3-A, 2.
3. Report 6, IX.
4. Communication from Board of Home Missions.

B. *Analysis of Materials:*

CRWRC carries on a well-known and much appreciated work of emergency and disaster relief both in areas where the CRC is represented and in areas where there is no other CRC presence. The administration of relief in these areas is governed by sections in the Constitution of CRWRC.

During its fifteen year history CRWRC has also become involved in

various kinds of "permanent benevolent causes," again, both in areas where the CRC is represented, and in areas where there is no other CRC presence. The first type is covered by the following section of their constitution:

Article V, A, 2

The CRWRC shall work in cooperation with the Mission Boards in regard to the management of such permanent benevolent causes which are requested by the Mission Boards and endorsed by synod (e.g. medical, educational, sociological programs, etc.)

- a. The CRWRC shall specify and define each permanent benevolent cause and shall seek approval of such from synod.
- b. The CRWRC shall determine the yearly appropriations for each permanent benevolent cause.
- c. The CRWRC shall, whenever possible, designate local diaconates and/or Deacons Conferences, and missionaries and Missionary Conferences, to administer these permanent benevolent activities.
- d. Those who are authorized to administer these permanent benevolent activities shall render monthly reports to the CRWRC.

There are no specific constitution articles addressed to the administration of "permanent benevolent causes" or other such long-term involvement in areas where there is no other CRC presence. Nevertheless, synod has from time to time, upon recommendation of CRWRC, also approved involvements of this type, or at least of such a nature as to strain the ordinary meanings of "emergency" and "disaster" in the articles that do cover projects in areas where there is no other CRC presence.

CRWRC asks synod to regularize that procedure by means of the deletion of the word "emergency" and "disaster" from the guidelines for the administration of relief in areas where the CRC is not represented. The guidelines in question currently read as follows:

Article V, B

- 1) "The CRWRC shall determine whether or not emergency relief shall be given in disaster areas where the CRC is not officially represented. Priority shall be given to those areas which meet the following conditions:
 - a. Where CRWRC is able to send its own personnel to the field.
 - b. Where follow-up missionary activity can be anticipated.
 - c. Where a Christian witness can be achieved by this ministry.
- 2) The administration of emergency relief shall be conducted along the following line of procedure:
 - a. Cooperation with other relief agencies will be sought whenever this does not endanger the identity of CRWRC.
 - b. The Committee shall at all times attempt to assure the proper use of the funds and materials.

Both the Board of Home Missions and the Board for Christian Reformed World Missions have addressed synod regarding this proposed change. They call attention to questions of mission theology and strategy, especially as these relate to the unity of word and deed in all the ministries of the church. Both boards oppose the change on the grounds that it allows CRWRC to make long-term commitments to areas which

may not necessarily also become "fields" of the relevant mission board.

In addition the CRWM asks that synod "reaffirm the correlation of the word and deed ministry and administration thereof . . ." It is that board's contention that even currently approved "permanent benevolent causes" tend to violate CRWRC's constitution and sometimes lead to compromise of the word/deed unity and to administrative problems.

C. *Assessment*

It is the judgment of our committee that the matter of "permanent benevolent causes" in areas where there is no other CRC presence certainly needs further study, either toward creating guidelines for the administration of such projects or toward eliminating such a category from the work of CRWRC. We believe that such a matter should not be settled simply by the deletion of a few words from current guidelines. What is needed is further study of previously approved projects, and of the mission questions surrounding such projects.

Regarding existing projects we are of the opinion that fields already occupied by CRWRC should be dealt with on an individual basis according to need and the history surrounding each. We note, for example, that the work in Bangladesh has led to the adoption of the same field by CRWM, and that the work in Jordan has created opportunity for some exploration of CRWM involvements.

Similarly, where existing projects are located in areas also served by one of the mission boards, every effort should be made to administer and carry out the work, in ways appropriate to our understanding of mission theology and strategy, as covered in the CRWRC constitution (Article V, A, 2).

D. *Recommendations:*

1. That synod commend the CRWRC for its work both in emergency and disaster relief, and in the permanent benevolent causes currently being conducted. —*Adopted*

2. That synod withhold action at this time on the proposed change of the constitution of the CRWRC (Article V, B, 1 and 2).

Grounds:

a. Such a proposed amendment has long range implications regarding mission strategy, as pointed out by the HMB and the CRWM board.

b. Such long range strategy matters should be covered by appropriate constitutional guidelines and not mere deletion of some words. —*Adopted*

3. That synod instruct CRWRC to study further the matter of permanent benevolent causes, taking into account the responses of the two mission boards, and reporting to the Synod of 1978.

Grounds:

a. Previous synods have given approval for permanent benevolent causes in areas where the CRC is not otherwise involved, and CRWRC itself recognizes that certain existing projects strain the categories of the current constitutional guidelines.

b. The new executive director appointed this year will need time to become oriented to the current projects and to the interagency relationships involved in each. —*Adopted*

4. That synod withhold action at this time on the CRWM request "to

reaffirm the correlation of the word and deed ministry and the administration thereof”

Grounds:

- a. This recommendation is premature in light of the proposals above.
- b. It is clear from the presentations of all three agencies in question that the on-field operations are not in any immediate problem which calls for quick action. The questions relate far more to long-range issues and to inter-agency relationships at the staff level. —*Adopted*

II. REQUEST FOR OPENING NEW FIELD IN NEW GUINEA

A. *Material:* Report 6-A.

B. *Observations:*

A request has come which describes a need for workers (or teachers) with construction and mechanical skills to supervise training programs in community development among the inhabitants of the Sepik Basin in Papua, New Guinea. Mr. Orneal Kooyers, who is a member of the First Christian Reformed Church of Seattle, Washington, has served with the Wycliffe Translators in New Guinea for sixteen years. He is director of the Ambunti Akademi, which is requesting such workers (or teachers).

This project is supported by Classis Pacific Northwest.

C. *Recommendation:* That synod withhold action on the proposal of CRWRC to place one community development worker in the Ambunti Akademi.

Grounds:

1. This is not an “emergency” or “disaster” type of need.
2. Within the next year the CRWRC is to study the matter of permanent benevolent causes and report to the Synod of 1978 their recommendations re guidelines for doing non-emergency work on a more permanent basis. It seems wise not to make a long-range, non-emergency commitment just one year prior to this.
3. There seems to be a very minimal amount of knowledge available at present re the details of this project. —*Adopted*

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

ARTICLE 57

Advisory Committee 7, *Domestic Ministries*, the Rev. S. VanderKlay reporting, presents the following: (The report of Advisory Committee 7 is continued from Article 36.)

I. HOME MISSION CRC-RCA CHURCH DIRECTORY

A. *Material:* Overture 12.

B. *Analysis:* We appreciate the desire to foster closer relations between our two denominations which this overture seeks to concretize by calling for these means for more effective mutual serving of our members. We question, however, the practicality of point 1, and the scope of point 2. For instance, might not point 2 be broadened to include all North American churches with whom we have ecclesiastical fellowship?

C. *Recommendations:*

1. In re point 1: That synod do not accede to the request.

Grounds:

a. It is not reasonable to expect that the use of such a directory would justify the expense involved in compiling and distributing it.

b. In such instances where it is useful to know of the existence of a Reformed or Christian Reformed church in a given locality there are other means available. —*Adopted*

2. In re point 2: That we refer the matter to the Interchurch Relations Committee.

Ground: This matter falls within their purview. —*Adopted*

3. That synod declare this to be our answer to Overture 12.

—*Adopted*

II. PERSONAL APPEAL OF FIVE MEMBERS OF THE CLINTON, ONTARIO CONGREGATION RE A DECISION OF CLASSIS HURON RE A COMMON-LAW MARRIAGE

A. *Materials:*

1. Personal appeal to synod of the five members of Clinton (dated March 10, 1977)

2. Report of Church Visitors to Classis Huron convening January 12, 1977

3. Overture from Clinton consistory to Classis Huron convening January 12, 1977

4. Report from "Committee Appointed to Deal with Vanastra Matter" to Classis Huron convening February 28, 1977

5. Letter from Stated Clerk of Classis Huron to Stated Clerk of Synod (dated March 21, 1977)

6. Letter from Stated Clerk of Synod to Stated Clerk of Classis Huron (dated March 21, 1977)

7. Letter from Stated Clerk of Synod to Clinton appellants (dated March 21, 1977)

8. Minutes of Classis Huron dated:

a. September 15, 1976

b. January 12, 1977

c. February 28, 1977

B. *History:* Classis Huron, in its September 15, 1976 session, sustained an appeal of the Rev. K. Boersma, pastor of the Vanastra Christian Reformed Church (unorganized) against the Consistory of the Clinton Christian Reformed Church, Vanastra's sponsor. The appeal protested the fact that the Clinton consistory had refused to permit the Vanastra Steering Committee to interview a party for profession of faith because she was living in a common-law relationship. This relationship had been in effect for 13 years, and there were five children in the home. Since her association with the Vanastra church this applicant had tried to become legally married to her mate, but he would not.

Analyzing that "by its decision classis has stated that a common-law relationship does not necessarily exclude communicant membership in the Christian Reformed Church," Clinton overtured classis to reconsider its decision on the basis that it "does not uphold the sanctity of marriage according to the demands of the Gospel," nor the standards of the Christian Reformed Church, nor the demands of sound pastoral practice.

Clinton expressed the fear that by permitting the applicant to join the church, license could be assumed by others who might be contemplating living together outside of legal marriage, in fact by a baptized member of the Clinton church who already was. Because classis, meeting in January did not reverse its position, Clinton requested classis at its February session "to assume immediate responsibility of the Vanastra Christian Church mission project." Classis responded affirmatively, and declared this to be an answer "to all matters of business presently on the floor . . . which deal with the Clinton/ Vanastra membership dispute." Between September and February classis had spent much time and energy through the church visitors and a special committee trying to foster understanding between the two churches. That committee brought an extensive report to the meeting of classis on February 28, interpreting and clarifying the decision of the September session and answering all the points on Clinton's overture. Classis accepted the report and placed it on file.

Five members of the Clinton Christian Reformed Church now appeal the decision of classis made at its September 15, 1976 session. They state: "We believe that a common-law relationship and communicant membership do not belong together, but are incompatible in the Christian Reformed Church." The appellants also state that their "overture has never been adequately answered" by classis.

Two of these five members met with your advisory committee. These brothers expressed as their greatest concern the precedent this might set for members of their own congregation, "a stone's throw away" from Vanastra, and for the entire Christian Reformed Church.

C. *Analysis*: The matter before synod is to determine whether or not Classis Huron was wrong in her position that this applicant for profession of faith should be interviewed.

D. *Recommendations*:

1. That synod do not sustain the appeal of the five members of the Clinton Christian Reformed Church.

Ground: Sustaining this appeal would leave the applicant for membership no acceptable alternative. Either to disrupt her family or to forego membership in the church would be disobedience to the Lord. —*Adopted*

2. That synod declare that classis did adequately answer the Clinton overture requesting reconsideration of their September, 1976 decision.

Ground: An extensive report by a special committee answering Clinton's overture point-by-point was accepted at the February 28 meeting of Classis Huron. —*Adopted*

3. That synod concur with Classis Huron which said in its special committee report: "This decision should not be interpreted as applying to all similar cases nor as an approval or endorsement of common-law relationships in general. In other words, the consistory of Clinton be advised to remind itself that in pastoral practice each case has to be considered on its own merits."

Ground: An action of pastoral concern in a particular situation does not constitute a rule which fits all situations. —*Adopted*

4. That synod:

a. Express its deep concern for the consistory in its struggle, and offer, therefore, to provide pastoral assistance to the consistory in the hope of fostering understanding and bringing this matter to ultimate blessing, by God's grace, to his church.

b. Appoint a pastoral committee of three to serve the purpose of (a) above, in the hope that the Clinton consistory will receive this offered help.

c. Offer this pastoral help with the assurance that the consistory's right to accept or decline it will be respected. —*Adopted*

The session is closed with prayer.

MONDAY EVENING, JUNE 20, 1977

Thirteenth Session

ARTICLE 58

The session is opened with devotions.

Advisory Committee 2, *Church Order I*, the Rev. H. Petersen reporting, presents the following: (The report of Advisory Committee 2 is continued from Article 46.)

TENTMAKING MINISTRY

A. *Materials:*

1. Overture 11.
2. Supplement to Overture 11.
3. Communication 4 from Classis Northcentral Iowa.
4. Memorandum from Board of Home Missions.

B. *Analysis:* Classis Northcentral Iowa overtures synod to interpret Church Order Article 13 and church visitors' questions regarding the minister in such a way as to allow for a tentmaker ministry. In brief, a tentmaker ministry would be one in which an ordained minister would engage in part-time ministry in order to establish churches while he also works part-time in a secular occupation. Such a ministry is designed to serve for the interim period between the survey of a field and the final recommendation and adoption of that field as a home mission field. Such a ministry is a new concept in the CRC and is worthy of consideration. For that reason the Board of Home Missions has considered it and is still studying its advisability.

C. *Recommendations:*

1. That synod not accede to Overture 11 of Classis Northcentral Iowa which asks that synod "interpret Church Order Article 13 and Church Visitors Questions regarding the minister (question 8) in such a way as to allow for a tentmaker ministry such as is described in 'A Policy for a Tentmaker Ministry.'"

Grounds:

a. To interpret Article 13 of the Church Order in this way is to strain the wording beyond its limit.

b. Question 8 of the Guide for Church Visiting "Does he (the min-

ister) devote himself exclusively to the discharge of his official duties?" presupposes a full-time ministry. —*Adopted*

2. That synod request the staff of the Board of Home Missions to continue its present study of tentmaker ministry. —*Adopted*

3. That synod declare this to be its answer to Overture 11. —*Adopted*
(The report of Advisory Committee 2 is continued in Article 77.)

ARTICLE 59

Advisory Committee 4, *Confessional Matters*, Dr. S. Greidanus reporting, presents the following:

I. LITURGICAL COMMITTEE—REPRESENTATION AT SYNOD

A. *Material*: Report 15.

B. *Recommendation*: That synod grant the privilege of the floor to the Revs. John Vriend and Dirk Hart when the report of the Liturgical Committee is discussed. —*Adopted*

II. JOINT PROPOSAL OF THE LITURGICAL AND PSALTER HYMNAL SUPPLEMENT COMMITTEES

A. *Material*: Report 15.

B. *History*: The Liturgical Committee is concerned that the members of our Christian Reformed Churches may not be as familiar with the basic aims of Reformed liturgy as is desirable. Since part of its mandate is "to advise synod as to the guidance and supervision it ought to provide local congregations in all liturgical matters" (Acts of Synod 1964, p. 60), the committee met with representatives of the Psalter Hymnal Supplement Committee to obtain its reaction. This discussion resulted in a joint proposal to devise ways to fill this need.

C. *Recommendation*: That synod mandate the Liturgical Committee and the Psalter Hymnal Supplement Committee together with representatives of the Education Committee to present to the Synod of 1978 recommendations (1) for motivating the membership of the Christian Reformed Church to study the history, theology, and practice of Reformed liturgy and music, and (2) for assisting in liturgical and musical matters those who desire such assistance.

Grounds:

1. Our Reformed heritage in worship cannot be taken for granted. Without stimulating the general awareness of our people as to the crucial nature of song and liturgy in congregational worship, there is a possibility that our Reformed faith will be undermined by non-Reformed hymnody and liturgy.

2. In our day of pressures toward congregational authority, there is a need to foster a common Reformed mind on liturgy and music for worship. Consequently, a way must be found to give sustained educational leadership to keep liturgical and musical order in the churches.

3. The modest attempts at education in hymnody and liturgy by denominational committees and agencies suffer from being too fragmented. For more effective service, these attempts ought to be better coordinated.

—*Adopted*

III. FORM FOR THE BAPTISM OF ADULTS (New Translation)

A. *Material*: Report 15.

B. *Observations*: This new translation of the Form for the Baptism of Adults is before synod for final adoption. Your Advisory Committee judges that synod should not adopt this form as submitted because the newly translated parts show weaknesses in style and wording. To illustrate this and to suggest some possible improvements, we list our suggested changes opposite certain parts of the new translation.

New Translation

Similarly, our Lord Jesus Christ commissioned his apostles to teach all peoples, baptizing them in . . .

As appears from the book of Acts, the apostles also followed

Today also, therefore, only those adults are to be baptized who have come to understand the mysteries of baptism through the preaching of the gospel. Thus, they ought to be able to give an account both of baptism and of their own faith.

. . . , since you want to be baptized as a seal of your incorporation into God's church, you are asked to respond without reservations to the following questions, here in the presence of God and his people. Your response will show that you accept the Christian religion, as taught to you and professed by you. Your answers will also confirm your intention, by God's grace, to confirm your life to that faith.

FIRST

. . . do you declare that you have often broken the Lord's commands in your thoughts, your words, and your actions; and that from the bottom of your heart you are sorry for these sins?

Suggested Changes

Similarly, our Lord Jesus Christ commissioned his apostles to make disciples of all nations, baptizing them into

Accordingly, as appears from the book of Acts, the apostles followed

Today also, therefore, only those adults are to be baptized who have come to understand the meaning of baptism through the preaching of the gospel, and who are able to give an account both of baptism and of their own faith.

. . . , since you want to be baptized as a seal of your incorporation into God's church, you are asked, here in the presence of God and his people, to respond without reservation to the following questions, so that it may be evident that you not only accept the Christian faith, as taught to you and professed by you, but also intend, by God's grace, to live accordingly.

FIRST

. . . do you declare that you have often broken the Lord's commands in your thoughts, your words, and your actions, and that you sincerely repent of these sins?

New Translation

FOURTH: Do you agree with all the articles of the Christian religion as they are taught from God's Word in this Christian church? Is it your intention steadfastly to persevere in this teaching; at the same time do you reject all heresies and errors conflicting with the doctrine; and do you promise to persevere in the fellowship of this Christian church, both in the hearing of the preached Word and by celebrating the Lord's Supper?

FIFTH: Is it the intent of your heart . . . ?

ANSWER: Yes

. . . will live a Christian and godly life

Suggested Changes

FOURTH: Do you agree with all the articles of the Christian faith as they are taught from God's Word in this Christian church? Is it your intention steadfastly to persevere in this teaching; do you reject all heresies and errors conflicting with this doctrine; and do you promise to persevere in the fellowship of this Christian church, not only by listening to the preached Word but also by partaking of the Lord's Supper?

FIFTH: Do you sincerely promise . . . ?

ANSWER: I do

. . . will live a devout Christian life

The many differences point to the use of differing criteria for a contemporary translation. The spokesmen for the Liturgical Committee indicated that the committee would be willing to review its translation in the light of our critique and waived the committee's right of precedence over our recommendation to recommit this form to the Liturgical Committee.

C. Recommendation: That synod recommit to the Liturgical Committee the new translation of the form for adult baptism.

Ground: The form can be substantially improved both in style and in language. —*Adopted*

IV. NEW FORM FOR MARRIAGE

A. Material: Report 15.

B. Observations: The new form for marriage and its preface is submitted for a two-year trial period. In our opinion this trial form could be improved by strengthening especially the section on the "Institution and Meaning of Marriage." We note also that the style of the "Intercessory Prayer" is quite different from the other parts of the form and that its poetic exuberance calls attention to itself and, thus, detracts, in our opinion, from the prayer as a prayer to God. Nevertheless, since this is a trial form and the Liturgical Committee asks for the reaction of the churches, we are prepared, with a few minor revisions, to recommend that synod refer it to the churches for trial use.

C. Recommendations:

1. That synod approve for the churches' use for a two-year trial period the new form for marriage and its preface, provided the following words are added to the form:

a. The word "optional" in parentheses after the headings described as optional in the preface, namely: Parting from Parents, Exchange of Rings, Promise of Support, and Pastoral Comments.

b. The word "optional" in parentheses after the heading "Benediction," since the form "has a non-ecclesiastical service in mind."

c. The phrase "another prayer may be substituted" in parentheses after the heading "Intercessory Prayer," since not everyone is able to use this prayer with ease.

Ground: The Liturgical Committee requests the reaction of the churches to this form. —*Adopted*

2. That synod urge the churches to submit their reactions to the Liturgical Committee by September 1, 1978. —*Adopted*

3. That synod instruct the Stated Clerk to have the new form for marriage published, with the adopted changes incorporated, either as part of the Acts of Synod 1977, or as a separate insert. —*Adopted*

Note: The changes endorsed by synod have been incorporated into the Form for Marriage as it now appears in Report 15. —W.P.B.

V. NEW CONFESSION REPORT

A. *Representation at Synod*

1. *Material:* Report 45.

2. *Recommendation:* That synod give the privilege of the floor to the Revs. L. Oostendorp and M. Greidanus when this report is discussed. —*Adopted*

B. *Translation of Belgic Confession*

1. *Material:* Report 45, II, B, 2.

2. *Recommendation:* That synod appoint a committee with the mandate to prepare a new translation of the Belgic Confession, incorporating the textual references.

Grounds:

a. A new translation of the Belgic Confession would increase its usefulness for church education.

b. It would benefit the churches and pastors who use the Belgic Confession for preaching purposes, as recommended by Synod of 1973 (Acts 1973, Art. 67, B, 4).

c. It would match the contemporary language of the Heidelberg Catechism and the Canons of Dort (translation of the latter in progress). —*Adopted*

C. *Answer 80 of the Heidelberg Catechism*

1. *Material:* Report 45, II, C.

2. *Recommendation:* That synod make no changes in Answer 80 of the Heidelberg Catechism.

Grounds:

a. The small number of responses from the churches indicates that this is not a troublesome issue for the churches.

b. A historical creed must not be altered without weighty reasons.

c. Answer 80 appears to be historically accurate. The statements of Trent which answer 80 rejects have not been repudiated by the Roman Catholic church.

d. Although the language in answer 80 appears sharp, such indignation at the withholding of assurance of salvation from believers is not inappropriate to a confessional statement. Trent speaks rather sharply too. And the acts of teaching and refuting are frequently coupled in the New Testament.

e. Answer 80 must be understood in terms of its main emphasis: our assurance of salvation through the "full pardon of our sins by Christ's only sacrifice."
—*Adopted*

D. *Contemporary Testimony*

1. *Material*: Report 45.

2. *History*: Synod of 1971 originally appointed the "New Confession Committee" in response to two overtures requesting the church "to re-express the faith of the church in a new confession." Synod of 1973 continued the New Confession Committee in order to "assist the churches in further study of our confessional task." At this time, the New Confession Committee recommends that synod move in the direction of formulating a contemporary testimony which will deal with the church's antithetical place in a secularized culture, and its prophetic task to such a society.

3. *Observations*: The three great Reformed creeds have served the church well during the centuries since their adoption and will continue to do so. Yet life and culture, the world and the church have changed drastically. The Reformed creeds do not adequately address themselves to certain facets of the church's life today, such as "the mission of the church, the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, and Christian address to human need" (Acts 1972, Report New Confession Committee, Conclusion 4, p. 408). In addition, contemporary culture is becoming increasingly secular, and the church finds itself accommodating to such secularization. Consequently, the New Confession Committee judges that the time has come to appoint a committee to do the preliminary work.

4. *Recommendations*:

a. That synod declare that there is a need to move in the direction of formulating a contemporary testimony in view of the secularization of modern life and culture.

Grounds:

1) Current society, becoming pervasively secular, presents both dangers and challenges to the church—dangers and challenges not focused on in the Reformed creeds.

2) A contemporary testimony can guide and direct the church in remaining truly Reformed, and in speaking to the current world situation.

—*Adopted*

b. That synod implement its declaration by appointing a preliminary committee of five members to make recommendations to the Synod of 1979 on pertinent matters relating to a contemporary testimony. These matters are to include:

1) the specific areas to be covered by the testimony

2) the relationship between the testimony and the creeds

3) the procedure to be followed in producing the testimony

4) the desirability of seeking to involve other Reformed churches

5) the qualifications of the personnel for a testimony committee.

Grounds:

a) The appointment of a preliminary committee will serve to examine the concrete factors involved in the preparation of a contemporary testimony.

b) This will enable the church to reflect on the subject prior to the actual preparation of the testimony. —*Adopted*

c. That the New Confession Committee be continued for the sole purpose of completing its work of translating the Canons of Dort. —*Adopted*

(The report of Advisory Committee 4 is continued in Article 65.)

The evening session is closed with prayer.

TUESDAY MORNING, JUNE 21, 1977

Fourteenth Session

ARTICLE 60

The session is opened with prayer.

The roll is called and all delegates are present.

The minutes of the June 20, 1977 sessions are read and are approved.

ARTICLE 61

Advisory Committee 11, *Synodical Services*, the Rev. D. Negen reporting, presents the following: (The report of Advisory Committee 11 is continued from Article 49.)

MISSION PRINCIPLES

A. *Materials:*

1. Report 42.
2. Report 4-A.
3. Report 20-A.
4. Communication 10.
5. Report 1-A.

B. *Information and Analysis:*

Your advisory committee invited members of the study committee and representatives of the following agencies to our meetings to express themselves concerning the report: CRBHM, CRWRC, BGRWM, The Back to God Hour, SIC, the Chaplain Committee.

None of the agencies expressed significant disagreement with the statements of mission principles in view of the fact that they were complementary to the fourteen statements approved by synod in 1952-53.

On the other hand, all of the agencies expressed opposition to the recommendations of the study committee concerning the application and implementation of those principles. (It should be noted by interjection that the recommendations listed in Section III, Part Three are not intended as recommendations to synod. As stated by the reporter, the study committee intended them to be suggestions to the proposed Inter-agency Council for Coordination and Planning.) Not one of the agencies

favored the proposed Interagency Council for Coordination and Planning as recommended by the study committee in Section IV.

The preceding two paragraphs make it obvious that given principles, though carefully formulated, can be variously applied and implemented.

That which gave rise to the appointment of the mission principles study committee in 1975 was the expanding program of mission outreach. Not only were the BCRWM and CRBHM expanding, but also The Back to God Hour was increasing its broadcasting to many nations in the world in several languages. What is more, the CRWRC came into its own in the expanding work of mercy. Consequently the strategies as well as the interagency relationships needed more attention. The study committee was mandated to study the theological principles and the resulting strategy (with particular application to the programs and interrelationships) of all our synodically appointed mission agencies. The grounds included a current duplication of efforts, the danger of unwholesome competition and the need of alleviating problems encountered in administration and programming.

In the middle of the work of the study committee the Synod of 1976 made another far reaching decision which compounded—and perhaps confused—the issue. Part of that decision reads: “The Synodical Interim Committee shall be responsible for promoting the planning, coordinating and the setting of priorities of programs by each of the synodical agencies and by all of them together, in keeping with synodical guidelines and shall serve synod with periodic analysis and overall review of programs and resources of the denomination after consultation with the agencies.” (See Acts of Synod 1976, pp. 50-51.)

SIC did begin to implement the above decision by calling together the thirteen heads of the denominational agencies into an “Interagency Advisory Council.” While this gathering did promote concrete interaction between the agencies, the study committee concluded that it was still quite ineffective in promoting, planning, coordinating and setting of priorities of mission programs. The study committee judged that more had to be done for good interagency relationship. Therefore, the study committee recommended that the Interagency Advisory Committee should have adjudicatory power rather than a mere advisory power. In the eyes of your advisory committee this takes on the appearance of a super board in which the staff members become the controllers over the boards under which they are working as executive directors.

In contrast to the study committee’s recommendation to appoint a committee with more teeth, there appears to be some fear—founded or unfounded—that SIC is at present more powerful than it ought to be.

To complicate matters more your advisory committee observed that there appears to be a struggle within the financial arena. On the one hand there is the fear of becoming subject to a kind of hierarchical supremacy of the denomination which ultimately determines how much each agency may receive. On the other hand there is the danger of individually pursuing dollars without due regard to the total mission of the church. The increasing number of independent mailings soliciting above quota funds is a symptom of the difficulty.

Your advisory committee is of the opinion that it is important to maintain the proper balance so as to avoid the potential of either extreme.

Your advisory committee is also of the opinion that the statement of mission principles is of value for basic guidelines. However, the recommendation of the advisory committee concerning the application and implementation differs from that of the study committee. We believe the recommendations listed below will help to maintain balance in structures and finances, and will also be of value for interagency coordination and planning. These recommendations, when implemented, will achieve objectives and goals which will give our agencies individuality while maintaining the oneness of the mission of the church.

C. Recommendations:

1. That synod grant the privilege of the floor to the Revs. Robert Recker and Richard De Ridder (chairman and secretary, respectively, of the study committee); and to representatives of these synodical agencies: CRBHM, CRWRC, BCRWM, Back to God Hour, Chaplain Committee, and SIC. —*Adopted*

2. That synod approve the following Statement of Mission Principles as guidelines for the church and its agencies in carrying out the mandate the church has received from its Lord.

Grounds:

a. This Statement of Principles complements the fourteen principles adopted by the Synod of 1953. (See Acts of Synod 1953, pp. 85, 86.)

b. This Statement of Principles reflects the application of scriptural data to the contemporary situation of Christ's church.

c. This Statement of Principles assists the church in its continuing reflection upon its mission responsibility and strategy.

—*Adopted*

A STATEMENT OF MISSION PRINCIPLES

1. *Norm*—The Bible is the self-revelation of the one, true, living God which expresses God's good news to sinful man and is the norm of the missionary activity of the people of God.

2. *Author*—The triune God is the author of missions.

3. *Goal*—The goal of God's mission is the glory of God in the establishment and acknowledgment of his rule over all creation in our present age and for eternity.

4. *Message*—The Bible is God's missionary message to man and expresses his claim upon mankind and all creation.

5. *Agent*—God, whose election by grace takes up his people into his redemptive plan for mankind, sends and equips his church as his covenantal agent in his mission.

6. *Response*—God's royal claim calls mankind to a total response expressed in repentance and the obedience of faith.

7. *Approach*—The church in its mission must minister to the whole person and approach man in the context of his culture.

8. *Strategies/Methodologies*—The church, tutored by the Word and Spirit, must order its missionary expression as it orders its internal

life and this must always be in accord with the nature of the gospel.

9. *Interchurch Relationships*—The church which emerges as the result of missions must be recognized as a complete, fully responsible church of Christ.

10. *Structure*—The planted church must be assisted to be equipped, organized and trained to be a viable, ongoing, Christian community, capable of fulfilling its stewardship as God's missionary agent in its environment.

11. *Allocation of Resources*—The church must allocate its resources according to the situation, time and opportunities given it.

12. *Administration*—The church must be true to biblical principles in faithful administration of its mission.

13. *Non-Ecclesiastical*—The church in its mission ought to cooperate with and make use of all means and organizations which enable it to fulfill its mission and which do not compromise the true and clear announcement and expression of God's good news.

3. That synod acknowledge, with praise to God, the tremendous expansion of the mission of the church, the diligence of our mission agencies and their staffs, and the evidence of the Holy Spirit's blessings.

Grounds:

a. God has truly done great things for us and through us.

b. Dedicated boards and staffs have done much in individual and cooperative programming to expand the mission endeavors. —*Adopted*

4. That synod instruct the SIC to continue to work within the framework of its mandate of the Synod of 1976 and in cooperation with the Interagency Advisory Council, meeting at least once a year, with the thirteen heads of staffs of our agencies.

Ground: This structure enables SIC to present the comprehensive program of the church to each session of synod. —*Adopted*

5. That synod instruct SIC, through the Stated Clerk, to convene the heads of staff and board chairmen of the CRBHM, BCRWM, BTGH, and CRWRC at least twice a year. Representatives of these agencies shall, in rotation, serve as host-chairmen of each session. The agenda shall include such items as: sharing pertinent board actions, projected plans and goals, and discussing the resolution of difficulties which may arise between the agencies.

Grounds:

a. This arrangement promotes unity in the mission of the church while avoiding the creation of yet another administrative level in agency decision making.

b. This arrangement provides a meaningful forum for four of our closely related agencies to work cooperatively in an advisory capacity while retaining both their own authority and their own responsibility to synod in their respective areas of endeavor. —*Adopted*

6. That synod urge our pastors and councils to make our congregations more aware of the oneness of the mission of the church and the important work of our agencies representing the church.

Grounds:

a. This will emphasize the communal acceptance of and commitment to God's mission.

b. This will enhance greater prayerful and financial support from the home as well as from the congregation gathered in worship.

—*Adopted*

7. That synod thank the study committee for its work and declare that the committee has completed its assignment.

—*Adopted*

ARTICLE 62

The Rev. A. Hoogstrate of the Reception Committee presents Chaplain H. Bode who introduces the Rev. Dirk Evans. The Rev. Mr. Evans, an institutional chaplain, speaks to synod on the work of the chaplains.

Mr. Mark Vander Ark of the Reception Committee presents Dr. W. van 't Spijker and the Rev. G. Bilkes, fraternal delegates of the Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland. The Rev. Mr. Bilkes addresses synod. Dr. S. De Waal responds.

Mr. M. Vander Ark introduces Dr. C. Wissink of the New Brunswick Theological Seminary, a fraternal delegate of the Reformed Church of America. Dr. Wissink addresses synod, relating some of the actions of the recent synod of the Reformed Church in America.

The session is closed with prayer.

TUESDAY AFTERNOON, JUNE 21, 1977

Fifteenth Session

ARTICLE 63

The session is opened with devotions.

Advisory Committee 6, *Radio and Publication Ministries*, the Rev. J. M. Hofman reporting, presents the following: (The report of Advisory Committee 6 is continued from Article 30.)

I. Following an introduction by Dr. J. Nederhood, the Back to God Hour staff presents a video-tape by which the facilities of our new communications center are described, as well as the production of a telecast.

After an introduction by the reporter, the BTGH staff also presents a one-half hour telecast which is a prototype of many others of similar nature which could be coming in the future as people become more familiar with CRC-TV.

II. THE BACK TO GOD HOUR

A. *Material*: Report 1-A. The CRC-TV Mission Report.

B. *Recommendations*:

1. That synod accept the CRC-TV Mission Report as a response to Article 59, Acts of Synod 1976 which states - "that synod instruct the Back to God Hour Committee to continue its study of the television ministry in order to provide more specific guidelines regarding objectives, costs, program formats, and program emphasis to the Synod of 1977."

—*Adopted*

2. That synod accept the above report as a description of our church's present evaluation of the use of television in responding to our mission/communication calling, and urge the Back to God Hour to continue to provide synod with in-depth, critical reports of its television ministry from time to time over the next several years.

Grounds:

a. It is presently unclear precisely how the use of television should be integrated into our total broadcast mission and into other elements of our mission as well.

b. A determination of the precise value of television for us and its impact can be achieved only after sufficient market penetration has occurred.

c. The use of television by our church will benefit from continuous examination to insure that detrimental results do not accompany the use of this tool. —*Adopted*

3. That synod urge other agencies, organizations and individuals within the church who feel they have significant observations and judgments regarding the use of television to supply the Back to God Hour with their insights.

Grounds:

a. Proper use of television will depend on the mobilization of all available resources that have bearing on the use of this medium.

b. Appropriate critique of the development of this medium can be achieved only if there is widespread denominational participation. —*Adopted*

4. That synod allow the Back to God Hour to inform viewers that the television ministry also depends upon viewer support.

Grounds:

a. A simple declaration of program funding can be expressed without moving in the direction of solicitation of funds.

b. Continuation of this ministry will require more funds than can be provided by the Christian Reformed Church alone.

c. It is reasonable to expect that there will be many viewers who will support the type of television we will be producing if they are aware that their support is needed. —*Adopted*

III. FRENCH LANGUAGE MINISTRY

A. *Material:* Report 1.

B. *Observations:* The ministry of the Back to God Hour has expanded significantly in 1976 in French language broadcasting. This has occurred since the appointment of a full-time administrator and speaker, the Rev. Aaron Kayayan. He prepares the broadcasts and carries on an in-depth correspondence with listeners and supplies them with helpful literature.

C. *Recommendation:* That synod approve the French Language Ministry for a period of four years through June of 1981. —*Adopted*

IV. BACK TO GOD TRACT COMMITTEE

A. *Material:* Report 7.

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

V. FAITH, PRAYER AND TRACT LEAGUE

A. *Material*: Report 26.

B. *Recommendation*: That synod take grateful note of the work of the Faith, Prayer and Tract League. —*Adopted*

VI. THE CLASSIS CHATHAM APPEAL

A. *Material*: Report 5, Section 5.

B. *Analysis*: In June 1976 Classis Chatham appealed to synod to retract the decision of the Board of Publications re the increase of the subscription price for the Banner for Canadian subscribers. The Board of Publications at its annual meeting decided to abide by the decision.

C. *Recommendation*: That synod approve the response of the Board of Publications to Classis Chatham. —*Adopted*

VII. THE CHRISTIAN REFORMED BOARD OF PUBLICATIONS

A. *Material*: Report 5, Section 2.

B. *Recommendations*:

1. That synod approve the recommendation of the Board of Publications that the appointment of editors will normally begin with a two-year term and may be renewed for additional terms of two years. After one or more two-year terms, appointees may be considered for four-year terms, but no longer than four years in length.

Ground: This policy is consistent with the procedure followed by most synodical appointments. —*Adopted*

2. That synod reappoint Mr. Robert Rozema to a four-year term as Pedagogical Editor. —*Adopted*

3. That synod reappoint Mrs. Ruth Vander Hart to a two-year term as Journalistic Editor. —*Adopted*

4. That synod approve the Board of Publications' recommendation to change the title "Artist" to Art Editor.

Ground: The title "Art Editor" more accurately reflects the work done by the "Artist." —*Adopted*

5. That synod appoint Mr. Paul Stoub to a two-year term as Art Editor. —*Adopted*

6. That synod appoint Dr. Harvey Smit to a two-year term as Theological Editor.

Grounds:

a. This is the recommendation of the Board of Publications.

b. The Advisory Committee listened to a taped interview between Dr. Smit and the Board of Publications and to a telephone interview with Dr. Smit and can concur in the recommendation of the Board of Publications. —*Adopted*

7. That synod appoint Mr. A. James Heynen to a two-year term as Director of Education.

Grounds:

- a. This is the recommendation of the Board of Publications.
 - b. The Advisory Committee conducted a favorable interview with Mr. Heynen. —*Adopted*
8. That synod approve the work of the Board of Publications. —*Adopted*
(The report of Advisory Committee 6 is continued in Article 79.)

ARTICLE 64

Advisory Committee 9, *Educational Matters*, Elder J. VanderArk reporting, presents the following: (The report of Advisory Committee 9 is continued from Article 53.)

I. FUNDING OF STUDENT INTERNSHIPS

A. *Material*: Overture 1.

B. *Recommendation*: That synod respond to Overture 1 by requesting the board of trustees to submit to the Synod of 1978 regulations under which an appropriate share of the stipend paid to a student intern serving a church or its agency may be funded through the seminary budget. —*Adopted*

II. SOCIAL DANCING

A. *Material*: Supplementary Report 2-A, I, C, 4, a and Appendix A.B. *Recommendations*:

- 1. That synod receive for information the position of the board of trustees relative to the matter of dancing as outlined in Report 2-A, I, C, 4, a and the materials in Appendix A of the above report. —*Adopted*
- 2. That synod ask the churches and assemblies to express themselves on this position directly to the board of trustees prior to its meeting in February 1978. —*Adopted*
- 3. That the board of trustees report its findings and resulting recommendations to the Synod of 1978. —*Adopted*

Note: Assemblies are reminded that responses submitted in accord with B 2, above, are to be sent to the board of trustees of Calvin College and are not to be addressed to the Synod of 1978.

(The report of Advisory Committee 9 is continued in Article 74.)

The session is closed with prayer.

WEDNESDAY MORNING, JUNE 22, 1977

Sixteenth Session

ARTICLE 65

The session is opened with devotions.

The roll is called and all delegates are present.

The minutes of the June 21, 1977 sessions are read and are approved.

Advisory Committee 4, *Confessional Matters*, Dr. S. Greidanus reporting, presents the following: (The report of Advisory Committee 4 is continued from Article 59.)

I. POPULAR, SIMPLER STATEMENT ON BIBLICAL AUTHORITY

A. *Material*: Overture 6.

B. *Information*: Classis Zeeland "overtures synod to appoint a committee with the mandate to provide the denomination with a more popular and simpler form of the contents of the 1972 report on the Nature and Extent of Biblical Authority."

C. *Recommendation*: That synod do not accede to Overture 6 requesting a more popular and simpler form of the report on "The Nature and Extent of Biblical Authority."

Grounds:

1. The Synod of 1972 already arranged for: "a. . . . the Board of Publications to make available to the denomination, in a popular form, the contents of Report 44, for the purpose of reaching also the general membership of the churches; b. Specifically, that the board accomplish this in a series of articles in The Banner, expanding each of the points of pastoral advice; c. Further, that following publication in The Banner, the board . . . make them available to the churches in booklet form" (Acts 1972, Art. 52, C, 8, p. 69). The Banner articles were duly published from January 5 to February 2, 1973.

2. There appears to be very little demand for a more popular and simple form of Report 44. The Board of Publications reported to Synod of 1976 that "there has been no demand for this material in this format" (Acts 1976, Report 5, III, I, p. 256). Consequently synod decided to "relieve the board of the mandate given by the Synod of 1972 regarding the publication in booklet form of articles about Report 44" (Acts 1976, Art. 41, I, B, 2, p. 39).

3. The allegation made in ground 4 of Overture 6 to the effect that the 1972 Report on Biblical Authority contains internal conflicts is based on a faulty reading of this report. —*Adopted*

The negative votes of Elder H. Minderhoud and Rev. H. Van Dyken are recorded.

II. INFERENCES OF THE 1972 REPORT ON BIBLICAL AUTHORITY

A. *Materials*:

1. Overture 7

2. Informative Communication 26, Noordeloos Consistory

B. *Information*: Classis Zeeland requests synod "to "formulate brief statements of specific positions which the 1972 report on The Nature and Extent of Biblical Authority will not allow (or rejection of specific positions which may be thought to be taught or allowed in 1972 synod's Report 44) by giving answer to such questions as:

1. Does the report allow a position which places biblical authority based upon divine authorship and biblical authority based upon redemptive content in opposition to one another?

2. Does the report allow a position which holds that general revelation can be rightly understood apart from the light given in Scripture?

3. Does the report allow a position which allows any interpretation of general revelation to diminish the unique authority of Scripture or

control the interpretations of Scripture?" And so on, for a total of ten questions.

The consistory of Noordeloos requests synod either to "give answers to the questions asked in the Zeeland Overture or else to recommend a study committee to give appropriate specific answers in a specific report to a later synod."

C. *Recommendations:*

1. That synod do not accede to Overture 7 that synod formulate brief statements of rejection of errors.

Ground: The 1972 Report on Biblical Authority already answers the questions raised by Classis Zeeland. For example:

a. Question 1 is answered in a concluding statement on page 508: "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 the two sides of one coin."

b. Question 2 is answered on page 506f.: "Of course, as a result of the fall, man is not a faithful respondent to the creation revelation; the sinner now needs the Scripture as the 'spectacles' by which he, through faith in Jesus Christ, is again enabled to read God's revelation in creation faithfully."

c. Question 3 is answered in Section IV, A, of the Report, specifically in a statement such as: "Although scientific evidence may become the occasion for a reexamination of a traditional interpretation, any reinterpretation must be based on principles germane to and garnered from Scripture itself." Questions 4 through 10 are similarly answered in this Report.

—*Adopted*

2. That synod declare this to be its answer also to the communication received from the Noordeloos consistory.

—*Adopted*

The negative votes of Elder H. Minderhoud and Rev. H. Van Dyken are recorded.

III. APPEAL TO REJECT THE 1972 REPORT ON BIBLICAL AUTHORITY

A. *Material:* Personal Appeal 4.

B. *Information:* Mr. Thomas Spriensma sends an appeal which was not adopted by Classis Zeeland. He writes: "Having studied the 1972 Synod decision to adopt Report 44 on 'The Nature and Extent of Biblical Authority' I respectfully overture synod to reverse that decision and reject this report. *Ground:* Report 44 violates the holiness of our sovereign God by infringing upon the authority of his Word and thereby undermines the foundation of the church." This is followed by two and a half pages of comments to support the "ground."

C. *Recommendation:* That synod do not accede to the request of Mr. Spriensma to reject the 1972 report on "The Nature and Extent of Biblical Authority."

Grounds:

1. Synod of 1972 did not adopt Report 44, as Mr. Spriensma seems to assume. Rather, synod *submitted* "this study report to our churches as providing guidelines for our understanding and further discussion of

the nature and extent of biblical authority," while synod *adopted* seven points "as pastoral advice to the churches" (Acts 1972, Art. 52, C, 2 and 3, p. 68). Synod of 1973 underscored this point when it went on record "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" (Acts 1973, Art. 32, II, B, 3, p. 34; reiterated in Acts 1974, Article 82, III, C, 3, p. 105).

2. Mr. Spriensma (in A, B, C, D of his appeal) misunderstands the report and draws conclusions which the report itself does not make and which are unwarranted.

3. The appeal presents no new material which would compel synod to review its decisions of 1972 regarding biblical authority. —*Adopted*

The negative votes of Elder H. Minderhoud and Rev. H. Van Dyken are recorded.

IV. CLARIFICATION ON BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION

A. *Material*: Overture 28.

B. *Information*: Classis Grand Rapids South overtures synod "to clarify the position of the church on the matter of biblical interpretation especially in the light of 1972 Report 44 and the 'New Hermeneutic.'

Grounds:

1. There is extensive unrest and confusion in the churches of our denomination.

2. There is unrest and confusion in the Reformed community at large to whom we have an obligation to present a consistent witness.

3. This issue is clearly a matter which merits synod's involvement since it obviously falls within the purview of Article 28 of the Church Order as that which 'concerns the churches in common.'

C. *Recommendations*:

1. That synod do not accede to the request of Classis Grand Rapids South for clarification on biblical interpretation.

Grounds:

a. Synod of 1972 already clarified the position of the church on the matter of biblical interpretation. (See Acts 1972, Articles 51 and 52, pp. 65-69; and Report 44, pp. 493-546.)

b. Classis has not demonstrated the need for further clarification.

—*Adopted*

2. That synod remind the churches again that the 1972 Report on Biblical Authority was submitted to the churches "as providing guidelines for our understanding and further discussion of the nature and extent of biblical authority" (Acts 1972, Art. 52, C, 2, p. 69; see also Acts 1973, Art. 32, II, B, 3, p. 34, and Acts 1974, Art. 82, C, 3, p. 105).

—*Adopted*

3. That synod remind the churches of the "seven interrelated points concerning the nature and extent of biblical authority," adopted by the Synod of 1972 "as pastoral advice to the churches":

"a. Synod calls the churches to a wholehearted recognition that Scripture, which is the saving revelation of God in Jesus Christ, addresses

us with full divine authority and that this authority applies to Scripture in its total extent and in all its parts.

b. Synod calls the churches to maintain the clear witness of the creeds to the authority of Scripture as inseparably bound up with the historical reality of the events recorded in Scripture.

c. Synod urges the churches to remember that while they confess that the authority of the biblical message is inseparably bound up with the historical reality of the events therein recorded, they should recognize that these events are presented and interpreted in terms of their revelational meaning.

d. Synod, acknowledging that Scripture is self-authenticating, reminds the churches that the authority of Scripture is not dependent upon the findings of science. While scientific findings can serve as occasions for a better understanding of Scripture, nevertheless the church must appeal only to the authority of Scripture as the basis for its faith and life, and accordingly must seek to develop a Christian community within which all scholarly work is carried on in faithfulness to the authoritative Scriptures.

e. Synod instructs 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.

f. Synod reminds the churches of our brotherly obligation to respect such freedom of biblical interpretation as falls clearly within the bounds of our creedal forms of unity, while recognizing of course, that in all things we are bound by the Scriptures.

g. Synod reminds the churches that the authority of Scripture lays its comprehensive claim upon the total life of the church so that biblical authority is not only to be believed and confessed as an article of faith, but also to be consistently applied and practiced in the life and ministry of the church." (Acts 1972, Art. 52, C, 3, pp. 68, 69.) —*Adopted*

The negative vote of Rev. H. Van Dyken is recorded.

(The report of Advisory Committee 4 is continued in Article 75.)

ARTICLE 66

Mr. M. Vander Ark of the Reception Committee presents the Rev. James Lont of the YCF, who addresses synod. The Rev. E. Den Haan responds.

Mr. Vander Ark introduces the Rev. Marion L. McFarland, fraternal delegate from the Reformed Presbyterian Church in North America. The delegate addresses synod and the Rev. T. Hofman responds.

The Rev. A. Hoogstrate presents Dr. Morton H. Smith. Dr. Smith addresses synod as the fraternal delegate from the Presbyterian Church in America. The Rev. W. P. Brink responds.

ARTICLE 67

The following letters pertaining to fraternal delegates are received from:

1. The Reformed Churches of New Zealand, signed by D. G. Vanderpyl, Stated Clerk, expressing regret at not being able to send a fraternal delegate to our synod, and expressing happiness at the prospect of greeting Dr. J. Kromminga at their forthcoming synod in August of this year.
2. The Reformed Church in Japan, signed by Junji Yamazaki, Stated Clerk, expressing regret that it will be impossible to send a fraternal delegate to our synod this year, and conveying its greetings.
3. Die Gereformeerde Kerk in Suid Afrika, signed by J. L. Helberg, Scriba, expressing regret that it cannot send a fraternal delegate to our synod this year, and extending its hearty greetings.
4. The Reformed Church of Argentina, signed by German Zijlstra, Secretario, expressing regret that it cannot send a fraternal delegate to our synod this year, and extending its wishes for the Lord's blessing on us.

The session is closed with prayer.

WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON, JUNE 22, 1977

Seventeenth Session

ARTICLE 68

The session is opened with devotions.

Advisory Committee 3, *Church Order II*, presents the following: (The report of Advisory Committee 3 is continued from Article 42.)

THE LODGE OATH AND CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

Dr. D. Bergsma presents the following for the advisory committee majority:

A. *Materials*:

1. Report 38.
2. Overtures 15, 19, 21.
3. Communication 13—Dearborn consistory response to Report 38.
4. Interviews with Revs. J. Petersen, G. Vander Weit, and J. Alferink.

B. *Observations* (Majority):

The study committee has provided us with an excellent analysis of the belief systems which various lodges represent and the doctrinal positions held. It has also provided a functional definition of an objectionable oath bound society as well as an explanation of what oath taking implies in the context of lodge membership. To this extent it has fulfilled its mandate well. However, your advisory committee believes that there is one dimension of the study committee's mandate which it should have pursued more adequately. This requires some elaboration.

The study committee was appointed pursuant to the adoption by Synod of 1975 of the following recommendation:

"That synod accede to the request of Classis Lake Erie and appoint a new study committee to research the content, confessional character, and function of the oath in the relationship of lodge members to their oath bound societies" (Acts of Synod 1975, p. 101).

Classis Lake Erie requested a committee to study whether the lodge "requires commitment to its teachings from its members" (Acts of Synod 1975, p. 635), and whether "by necessity all lodge members are committed confessionally to the teachings of the lodge by the mere fact of membership in the lodge . . . and precisely how that commitment takes place" (Acts of Synod 1975, p. 636). In our opinion, this overture requested an inductive study of the perception of lodge members themselves as to what, religiously, their oaths involved. Were they or were they not aware of the specific confessional position implied by their oaths? Were they or were they not conscious of a commitment to the religious position which the lodge represented?

The study committee, as a matter of fact, did do a rather extensive amount of investigation by way of questionnaires sent to present and former lodge members. The responses to these questionnaires are very significant in revealing the attitudes to and awareness of the religious nature of the lodge on the part of its members. The results of this survey are reflected in study committee recommendation B which is virtually identical with advisory committee recommendation 4. It would have been very helpful to have had a summary of the results of the questionnaires included in the study committee's report. We as an advisory committee have taken this survey material into account.

Mr. A. Kersten, reporter for the minority, reads the observations of the minority report, along with a list of differences between the majority and minority positions. The observations of the minority of the advisory committee follow:

C. Observations (Minority):

We must begin by stating that our committee has worked together very harmoniously, and while we have not always agreed with each other, there has been a good spirit and a high degree of mutual respect. Our chairman, Rev. D. Hart, has served very ably as has Dr. D. Bergsma, our reporter.

In spite of this, we find it frustrating that the traditional, tested and constantly reaffirmed position of the church must be defended by a minority comprised exclusively of elders.

However, in the minds of those whose signatures are attached, we could not in good conscience agree with the majority committee report.

On most items we are in complete agreement, but on one major item, we must differ. While on the surface the differences may not appear very significant, a closer in-depth study will show substantial disagreement.

We too are disappointed in the study committee report in the sense that it took its mandate in a very narrow sense—and it did not address itself to some of the questions that Classis Lake Erie presented.

Synod returns to the Majority Report.

D. *Recommendations:*

1. That the chairman of the study committee, the Rev. J. Petersen, be given the privilege of the floor. —*Adopted*

2. That synod maintain its position that there is an irreconcilable conflict between the teaching and practices of the lodge and biblical Christianity (Acts of Synod 1974, Art. 65). —*Adopted*

3. That synod declare as anti-christian all oath bound secret societies which hold to the universalist-unitarian concept of God, the meritorious character of good works, and the denial of Scripture and of Jesus Christ

Grounds:

a. An organization or brotherhood may not call itself a lodge and yet because of its religious position belong to the same category.

b. The possibility exists that an organization which calls itself a lodge may simply offer insurance benefits or social benefits without adhering to these religious positions and without in any other way being objectionable to a Christian. —*Adopted*

4. That synod recognize the fact that some who take an oath or pledge in order to become members of a lodge do so without any conscious commitment to the religious positions which are basic to the lodge (as defined above).

Grounds:

a. Some present and former lodge members declare that this is the case with respect to their own position.

b. The church must accept this declaration and may not question the statement of lodge members unless there is clear evidence that their assertion is false. —*Adopted*

5. That synod declare that any member of the lodge, by virtue of the oath he has taken, has at least tacitly identified himself with the false religion of the lodge and that therefore he cannot become a member of the CRC unless he repudiates the religion of the lodge and repents of having taken the oath.

Grounds:

a. Whenever in the context of the lodge rituals the name of God is used with the oath, it is a violation of the third commandment and as such requires repentance.

b. The content of the oath:

1) Calls for recognition and practice of a brotherly relationship that contradicts the unique relationship established by becoming a member of the body of Christ.

2) Enforces a commitment to secrecy regarding matters undisclosed to the candidates and therefore may forbid a Christian to reveal matters the Word of God may require him to reveal.

3) Calls the members to practice a benevolence based upon a concept of good works that is in conflict with the teaching of Scripture.

c. The function of the oath is to identify the candidate with the official teaching of the lodge. That the candidate at the time of making the oath was ignorant of its sinful implications does not exclude him from

the call to repentance after having been enlightened by the Word and Spirit (cf. Acts 3:17-19; 17:30; Eph. 4:17, 18; I Peter 1:14, 15).

—*Adopted*

Synod returns to the Minority Report:

6. That synod maintain that if there should be a case of extreme hardship which makes it difficult for the lodge member to terminate formal membership in the lodge, the church has a duty to deal with this person compassionately and pastorally, and do everything possible to remove the obstacle, thus allowing the lodge member to formally terminate his lodge membership and take the necessary steps to becoming a communicant member in the CRC.

Grounds:

a. This policy upholds the historic position of the church that the religion of the Bible and that of the lodge are incompatible.

b. This policy upholds the historic and recently reiterated (Acts of Synod 1974, Art. 65), position of the church that membership in the lodge and membership in the CRC simultaneously are incompatible.

c. It recognizes unusual circumstances and the need for a pastoral ministry demonstrating compassion and love.

d. Hardship is a communal burden and should be carried and resolved by the community of Christ as a whole.

—*Adopted*

Notes:

Rev. Morris Greidanus registers his negative vote on the following ground:

“We show extreme rigor to lodge members, but ignore the much more relevant problem of secular union members and public school supporters.”

Dr. A. Wolters registers his negative vote.

Synod returns to the Majority Report:

7. That synod maintain its position that a member of the Christian Reformed Church who becomes a member of a lodge will be subject to admonition and discipline (Acts of Synod 1974, Art. 65). —*Adopted*

8. That synod approve for publication the summary statement submitted in the study committee's report as the witness of the Christian Reformed Church's position on the lodge and church membership.

Grounds:

a. The basic thrust of the report submitted to the Synod of 1975 has been retained.

b. Emphasis has been placed upon the content, confessional character, and function of the oath as requested by the Synod of 1975.

c. The statement has been revised so that it speaks to the teachings and practices of many lodges. —*Adopted*

9. That synod refer the Summary Statement to the Board of Publications to be edited for simplicity and clarity. —*Adopted*

10. That synod approve the deletion of the cartoons from the summary statement.

Ground: Cartoons are not appropriate when addressing the inquirer on this matter. —*Adopted*

11. That synod declare that the above recommendations constitute its answer to Overtures 15, 19, 21, and Communication 13. —*Adopted*

12. That synod discharge the study committee and thank them for their work. —*Adopted*

The afternoon session is closed with prayer.

WEDNESDAY EVENING, JUNE 22, 1977

Eighteenth Session

ARTICLE 69

The session is opened with devotions.

A letter is received in which the following persons indicate their acceptance of their appointments or reappointments to positions in the Education Department of the Board of Publications:

Mr. A. James Heynen, Executive Director

Mr. Robert Rozema, Pedagogical Editor

Dr. Harvey Smit, Theological Editor

Mr. Paul Stoub, Art Editor

Mrs. Ruth Vander Hart, Journalistic Editor

ARTICLE 70

Advisory Committee 1, *Appeals*, the Rev. M. Greidanus reporting, presents the following: (The Report of Advisory Committee 1 is continued from Article 47.)

THE DUTTON APPEAL AND RELATED MATTERS

A. *Materials*:

1. Overture 4.
2. Overture 23.
3. Printed Appeal 2.
4. Printed Appeal 3.
5. Printed Appeal 4.
6. Communication 7.
7. Communication 8.
8. Communication 11.
9. Communication 15.
10. Informative Communications.

B. *History*: An appeal from the Dutton CRC came to synod in 1976. This consistory appealed the decision of Classis Grand Rapids East to approve the ordination of candidate Allen Verhey (Acts, 1976, p. 685).

Synod did not sustain this appeal, but it did "remind the appellants that if they remain convinced that the position of Dr. Verhey brings him into conflict with the confessions they must follow the procedures outlined in the Form of Subscription and the Church Order" (Acts, 1976, Art. 84, I, E, 2, p. 95).

The Dutton consistory then studied Dr. Verhey's thesis and articles, summed up their findings in a letter to him, and met with him in December 1976 for a discussion. On March 1, 1977, the Dutton consistory

lodged a protest against Dr. Verhey with the Neland Avenue CRC which holds Dr. Verhey's ministerial credentials. This protest concerns:

1. Dr. Verhey's method of interpreting the Bible, and especially his views declared in his classical examination about the speech of the serpent in Genesis 3 and about the earthquake in Matthew 28:2.
2. His understanding of the "except for fornication" clause in Matthew 19:9 (Reformed Journal, May-June, 1976).
3. His use of the Bible in moral questions, as shown in his thesis, *The Use of Scripture in Moral Discourse*, 1975.
4. His apparent conflict with Scripture, our confessions, the Form of Subscription and such statements of the church as Report 44 which warn that a method of biblical interpretation must not exclude or call into question the event-character of Scripture.

Neland Avenue CRC informed the Stated Clerk of Synod that "the consistory is dealing with this protest as expeditiously as possible." The consistory has appointed a committee consisting of Dr. A. Bandstra, pastor T. Hofman, Dr. C. Kromminga, and Dr. W. Spoelhof. The committee has the mandate:

- to determine the validity of Dr. Verhey's method of interpretation.
- if his views are outside our confessions, to persuade him to conform to what the consistory considers to be an acceptable view.
- to attempt to reconcile the parties in a pastoral way.

So far three meetings have been held, one with Dr. Verhey present.

On May 2, 1977, the consistory of Dutton CRC approached synod again with the following appeal:

"We ask the synod to reconsider our appeal together with its grounds as presented last year (Acts of Synod 1976, pp. 685, 686), to sustain that appeal against the ordination of a minister who interprets the Bible as Dr. Verhey did in the examination, and to advise our classis and the church involved that these views may not be tolerated among our ministers or ministerial candidates.

Grounds:

1. Our appeal was properly before the synod under the provisions of Article 30 of the Church Order and the synod had the duty according to that Article to determine whether the classis decision against which we appealed was right or wrong. To refuse to make that decision because the man was already ordained, as the synod did, was to overlook the fact that the appeal was directed not against the man but against the decision of the classis. The status of the man was irrelevant. It was not a valid reason for the synod's failure to do its duty under the Church Order.
2. Our further study and efforts to carry out last year's synod's instructions have confirmed our conviction that the method of interpreting the Bible employed by Dr. Verhey and already plainly revealed in his examination cannot be harmonized with the Scriptures, our creeds or the decisions of our synods.
3. The synod's decision to in fact approve that ordination despite the appeal and the synod's knowledge of those views is bringing our loyalty as a denomination to the Scriptures and the confessions under suspicion both within and outside of our churches.

4. Further delay in making a decision on this matter threatens to harm the churches and their members as well as Dr. Verhey."

C. Related Matters:

Several related appeals address the same matter. Classis Pacific Northwest asks for reconsideration of Dutton's appeal and of the decision to approve the work of the synodical deputies (Appeal 2). Classis Grandville asks synod to declare that Classis Grand Rapids East and the synodical deputies were wrong in approving Mr. Verhey's ordination. Many communications repeat the same concerns. One letter from a colleague speaks highly of Dr. Verhey's teaching at Hope College. And one consistory writes: "Within that oneness as the church we wish to encourage creative thought about Scripture as long as it continually struggles to be a more Reformed understanding of the Word."

The related overtures (4 & 23) wish to proceed to an examination of Dr. Verhey's views without spending more time discussing last year's procedures. Classis Alberta North asks synod "to initiate an examination." Classis Minnesota South wants to have Dr. Verhey examined by this synod.

D. Interviews:

We have studied all the submitted material, and we have met with the Rev. P. DeJong of Dutton, Dr. Verhey, and the Rev. T. Hofman of Neland Avenue CRC.

Mr. DeJong explained the appeal, reported on Dutton's research, their contact with Dr. Verhey, and the timing of the protest lodged with Neland Avenue CRC against Dr. Verhey.

Dr. Verhey candidly discussed his approach to Scripture with us. He affirmed his commitment to the Scriptures and the Reformed creeds, and his desire to serve the church in his work as teacher and theologian. He looks eagerly for the preaching-intent of every passage in Scripture, but also states that "the Bible stakes its kerygmatic* case on history" (*proclamatory/preaching). He holds that there would be no gospel if it were not for the historical fact of Jesus' resurrection.

About Genesis he confesses that our first parents were made good, that they sinned through the temptation of the evil one, and that there was a historical fall. He is "tentative" about the historical character of the serpent: the speaking serpent may or may not have been historical. He concludes that the primary intent of the mentioning of the serpent in Genesis is not to give a report but a message.

Mr. T. Hofman informed the committee of the way in which the protest from the Dutton consistory was received by the Neland Avenue consistory, and on the way in which they are handling it.

E. Analysis:

It is not surprising that there are questions about Dr. Verhey's method of interpreting Scripture. This committee has questions too. It does seem that the historical development of the Scriptures plays a large role in his explanation of the Bible.

At the same time Dr. Verhey does not see Scripture as a merely human word about God. He confesses that the Bible is "both the Word of God and the words of men." (See Reformed Journal, May 1977, p. 10.)

Theology is a special study, with its own language and expertise. We must give our theologians trust and room to do their work obediently before God. But the church that gets worried about certain results of doing theology may properly ask how a theological method functions within a Reformed understanding of the nature of Scripture.

The submitted appeals would have us go back to the classical examination. We find that route inappropriate. The appeals are really requests for revision of a decision under Church Order Article 31. ("Such a request shall be honored only if sufficient and new grounds for reconsideration are presented.") Since new grounds are not offered but last year's grounds are repeated, we conclude that synod has already decided these appeals, and that this route is closed. However, the appeals do witness to the concern and unrest in the churches. This cannot be ignored.

As the Synod of 1976 noted, the church may ask any office-bearer to explain his views.

This route has been taken by the Dutton consistory when it came to Neland Avenue CRC with a protest against Dr. Verhey. So the investigation that some churches seek is under way by means of a competent committee.

Since "a major assembly shall deal only with those matters which concern its churches in common or which could not be finished in the minor assemblies" (C.O. Art. 28, b), we are convinced that synod should let the process begun by Dutton under the Form of Subscription proceed.

Synod can address the concerns raised in the appeals and overtures to this Neland Avenue committee. The Neland Avenue consistory is willing to report its findings and actions to synod.

F. Recommendations:

1. That synod consider the adjudication of the Dutton protest concerning Dr. Verhey's views presently engaged in by the Neland Avenue consistory an adequate way of dealing with the matter.*

Ground: The requested examination of Dr. Verhey's views is provided in this way. Neland Avenue plans to determine the validity of his views, to persuade him to conform to an acceptable view, if his views should be outside of our confessions, and to attempt to reconcile the parties in this protest in a pastoral way.

—*Adopted*

2. That synod communicate the concerns about Dr. Verhey's views raised in the appeals and overtures to Neland Avenue's committee for discussion with Dr. Verhey, namely:

—the nature of his hermeneutics, whether the event-character of the Scriptures is excluded or called into question.

—his understanding of the serpent in Genesis 3.

—his understanding of the earthquake in Matthew 28. —*Adopted*

3. That synod ask the consistory of Neland Avenue CRC to report the result of its investigation to the 1978 Synod.

Ground: Since the appeals, overtures and communications have been addressed to synod, synod should receive a report on this investigation.

—*Adopted*

*Committee members Cal Nieuwenhuis, Ray Klyn, Albert Wisselink, and J. Schaap do not concur in this recommendation but see as the wiser course in handling this matter the appointment of a denominational committee.

4. That synod declare these actions to be its answer to the appeals, overtures and communications listed under A. —*Adopted*

Note: "The undersigned protests the action of synod in regard to E. Analysis, in which synod disposed of several appeals and overtures from consistories and classes, by a simple declaration under "E. Analysis," saying that they were, in effect, out of order. At very least the committee should have brought this declaration of order as a recommendation to synod with its grounds. Synod has not spoken to this issue.

We are grieved the broadest assembly has responded in this way to various consistories and classes. We are convinced that this has influenced the following debate and action of synod on this matter."

(Signed) Harry Van Dyken

The evening session is closed with prayer.

THURSDAY MORNING, JUNE 23, 1977

Nineteenth Session

ARTICLE 71

The session is opened with devotions.

The roll is called. The Rev. A. Besteman, alternate representing Classis Zeeland, is present. He rises to indicate his agreement with the Forms of Unity.

The minutes of the Wednesday, June 22, 1977 sessions are read and are approved.

Mr. Mark Vander Ark of the Reception Committee introduces Mr. Earl Whitmer. Mr. Whitmer, fraternal delegate of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod addresses synod. The Rev. Wm. Vander Hoven responds.

The chairman expresses thanks to Mr. Peter Meeuwssen, business manager of the Board of Publications, for the gift of a new Psalter Hymnal Supplement to each of the delegates.

ARTICLE 72

Advisory Committee 13, *Financial Matters*, Elder K. Marcus reporting, presents the following:

I. GENERAL ORIENTATION

In order to provide synod with a better understanding regarding the procedures used by our committee to make our recommendations, we respectfully submit the following information:

A. The latest available folders of every agency were assigned to the advisory committee members for analysis. Each member was responsible for the study of from two to eight agencies depending on the size and complexity of the particular fund. Four members chose to operate as two man teams.

B. The financial statement of each agency together with the standard SIC analysis form were examined as carefully as possible in the available

time frame. Analysts used the guidelines established for this procedure by the Acts of Synod 1950, 1973, and 1974. Synod should be aware that such a process is not a financial audit but rather a systematic overview by which it can concur with or challenge the professional analyses of the Denominational Financial Coordinator and/or the Finance Committee of the SIC.

C. The advisory committee frequently sought clarification or explanation for the rationale used by the DFC or SIC in making its decisions regarding accreditation or quota.

D. The advisory committee interviewed all agency representatives who had questions concerning our recommendation for their specific cause.

E. The advisory committee requested interviews with all agency representatives as required to obtain clarification on pertinent matters.

F. Each decision was made by simple majority vote. There was unanimity on most decisions with few exceptions.

The advisory committee would like to inform synod of its great satisfaction and very positive impressions of the work being done through the combined efforts of the agencies, the DFC and the SIC Finance Committee. Without the benefit of this very competent team effort it would have been impossible to complete our assignment on time. We believe that the report which follows represents the most practicable balance and effective use of denominational funds that we can recommend for the promotion of the Kingdom.

Recommendation: That synod honor the request of the SIC that its president, the Rev. Oliver Breen, together with the Stated Clerk, Denominational Financial Coordinator and members of the SIC Finance Committee be given the privilege of the floor when matters pertaining to finance are discussed. —Adopted

II. REPORTS

A. Church Help Fund

1. *Material:* Report 10.

2. *Recommendations:*

a. That synod approve the report of the Church Help Fund as presented.

Ground: This fund continues to serve the denomination very effectively. —Adopted

b. That synod urge the congregations to maintain their assigned payment schedule.

Ground: The continued effectiveness of such a revolving fund requires prompt and full payment to insure proper cash flow. —Adopted

B. Fund for Needy Churches

1. *Material:* Report 12.

2. *Recommendations:*

a. That when matters pertaining to the FNC are considered by synod, the secretary and treasurer be given the privilege of the floor, or in their absence, the same privilege be given to any member of the FNC.

—Adopted

b. That the minimum salary for ministers serving churches which receive assistance from the FNC be set at \$12,000 for 1978. This involves an increase of \$1,000 or about 9%.

Ground: This amount of increase is necessary in order to comply with the GUIDELINES FOR MINISTERS' SALARIES as adopted by the Synod of 1970 and in order to allow for continuing inflation in the economies of the United States and Canada. —*Adopted*

c. That a child allowance of \$500 be granted for every child up to twenty-two (22) years of age, excluding those who have reached the age of nineteen (19) years, and who are no longer enrolled in an educational institution. —*Adopted*

d. That a car allowance of \$800 be given each minister out of FNC funds and that each church receiving aid from the FNC be required to pay an equivalent amount of \$800 from its own funds.

NOTE: While the cost of maintaining an automobile will undoubtedly continue to rise, it is the judgment of the FNC Committee that our present arrangement is still quite equitable for 1978. Where total circumstances warrant additional reimbursement, that particular congregation should assume the responsibility for the added expense. —*Adopted*

e. That the per family contribution toward the minister's salary in congregations receiving aid from the FNC in 1978 be not less (and if possible more) than \$160 in both the United States and Canada.

Ground: This increase is required in order to raise the percentage of the congregation's support toward a pastor's base salary so as to more nearly approximate synod's support. —*Adopted*

f. That the allowance for a stated supply be set at \$160 per week for 1978. —*Adopted*

g. That synod declare that a subsidized church which, upon becoming vacant, calls a pastor or engages a stated supply without receiving prior assurance of continued support from the FNC Committee shall be responsible for the full support of any such pastor or stated supply. —*Adopted*

C. *Ministers' Pension Fund*

1. *Materials:*

a. Report 17.

b. Report 17-A.

c. Report 20-A.

d. Overture 22 (Classis British Columbia).

e. Acts of Synod 1975 (Article 84, II, B).

f. Acts of Synod 1976, p. 55.

2. *Recommendations:*

a. That synod grant the privilege of the floor to members of the Pension Fund Committee when pension matters are discussed as well as to Mr. Garrett C. Van de Riet (recently appointed Assistant to the Committee). —*Adopted*

b. That synod authorize an increase in the maximum pension benefits payable to retired ministers, their widows and their orphans, from

\$4,400 to \$4,840 (widows 80%), effective January 1, 1978, such authorization subject to approval of MPF quota request.

Ground: Such increase is warranted on the basis of the increase in cost of living.

NOTE: The committee calls the attention of synod to the fact that approval of the above recommendation will necessitate, based on actuarial calculations, an increase to \$28.50 in the MPF quota and an increase to \$1,200 in the contributions of ministers not covered by quota payments. —*Adopted*

c. That synod advise the Ministers' Pension Fund Committee of the desirability of increasing the Ministers' Pension benefits annually in accordance with the increase of the actuarial cost of living, and that synod declare this to be its answer to Overture 22 re increased Ministers' Pension Benefits. —*Adopted*

d. That synod approve an annual participant assessment of \$1,200 for 1978, an increase of \$200. —*Adopted*

e. That synod approve the continuation of the \$2,500 housing allowance for ministerial pension benefits for United States income tax purposes (Section 107(2) U.S. Internal Revenue Code). —*Adopted*

f. That synod urge the churches to increase their offerings to the Supplemental Assistance Fund.

Ground: This fund is in dire need of funds for supplemental assistance to some of our retired ministers and their dependents. —*Adopted*

g. That synod urge the Ministers' Pension Fund and the Chaplain Committee to continue to work on the problem of consolidating the Ministers' Pension Fund and the Chaplains' Deposit Fund and report to synod in 1978. (See Acts of Synod 1975, Article 84, II B, p. 80; 1976, pp. 366, 367.) —*Adopted*

h. The Synod of 1976 referred "the whole matter of future policy regarding the contribution to be made to the Pension Fund by ministers serving outside of the Christian Reformed denomination" to the Pension Fund Committee in consultation with the Synodical Interim Committee. The Pension Committee requests a year's extension for the completion of this study.

Recommendation: That synod grant the request for a year's extension. —*Adopted*

i. During the latter part of 1976, fiscal irregularities were uncovered in the administration of the Ministers' Pension Fund. In a letter dated December 17, 1976, the churches and ministers were informed of this situation.

The Ministers' Pension Fund Committee in conjunction with the Finance Committee of the SIC has instituted a variety of changes to avoid any recurrence of such a situation.

Your advisory committee has carefully reviewed this entire matter and is pleased to report that the former administrator of the Ministers' Pension Fund is cooperating with the Pension Committee to effect a full correction of the subject irregularities.

As a result, your advisory committee is encouraged to report that the continuing administration of the Ministers' Pension Fund will not be influenced adversely by this incident.

Recommendation: That synod take note that the Ministers' Pension Fund Committee with the assistance of the Finance Committee of the SIC has reorganized the operation of the Ministers' Pension Fund to provide an improved administrative structure. —*Adopted*

j. That synod approve a change in Part 3, Definitions, in the definition of synod so that it would read:

Synod—The term synod shall refer to the Christian Reformed Church in North America, a Michigan ecclesiastical corporation, tax exempt under 501 (c) (3) of the U.S. Internal Revenue Code.

—*Adopted*

D. *Unordained Employees' Pension Fund*

1. *Material:* Report 21.

2. *Recommendations:*

a. That any member of the committee be accorded the privilege of the floor during discussion of this report. —*Adopted*

b. That synod approve the following plan amendments:

1) Paragraph 3.2 to read as follows:

"With the consent of the Pension Committee, a Participant may elect an Early Retirement Date which shall be the first day of any month subsequent to the date of election but not before January 1, 1968 nor before the attainment of age 55. In the event of such an election, the Participant's retirement annuity shall commence at his Early Retirement Date." —*Adopted*

2) Paragraph 8.6 to read as follows:

"A Participant who is entitled to receive a monthly annuity under Articles 8.2, 8.3 or 8.4 and who has attained age 55 may elect an Early Retirement Date which shall be the first day of any month subsequent to the date of election but not before January 1, 1968. In the event of such an election the Participants' retirement annuity shall commence at his Early Retirement Date." —*Adopted*

3) Paragraph 22 which is a list of participating employers will be brought up to date. —*Noted*

III. OVERTURES

Propriety of Matters Before Synod

A. *Material:* Overture 9.

B. *Analysis:*

The advisory committee has studied this overture and nearly endorses the principle of discretion to be used in the control of items which appear at synod without prior appearance in the published agenda.

C. *Recommendation:*

That synod accede to Overture 9 "to exercise more caution in allowing unnecessary items of business to appear before synod without its prior appearance in the Agenda for Synod."

Ground: This insures the churches of the necessary opportunity to remain informed before decisions are reached. —*Adopted*

IV. CLASSIS HAMILTON PROTESTS QUOTA PROCEDURES AT SYNOD

A. *Materials:*

1. Printed Appeal 1.
2. Church Order Article 28-A.

B. *Recommendation:* That synod do not sustain this protest.

Ground: Some denominational agencies have been given the privilege to submit supplementary information which cannot meet the deadline for the printed agenda. —*Adopted*

V. CLASSIS HUDSON RE QUOTA SHARES

1. *Material:* Communication 14.

2. *Recommendation:* That synod advise Classis Hudson of its concurrence with ongoing concern for the prudent exercise of control of quotas. Confirmation of this position is demonstrated in the proposed budget for 1978. —*Adopted*

VI. AUSTRALIAN MINISTRIES

1. *Material:* Report 8, A, VII, c, 3.

2. *Recommendation:* That synod approve the request of the Board of World Missions to recruit three pastors for Christian ministry at a cost of thirty cents per family.

Ground: Synod approved the concept of this assistance in its session on June 15, 1977. —*Adopted*

VII. PROPOSED BUDGETS OF CRC BOARDS AND AGENCIES

A. *Presentation of Consolidated Budgets of Boards and Agencies for 1977 and 1978.*

1. *Material:* Proposed Budget (Exhibit 1—p. 116).

2. *Recommendation:* That synod receive this budget proposal as information. —*Adopted*

B. *Presentation of Consolidated Statement of Assets and Liabilities of Board and Agencies for the year ending 1976.*

1. *Material:* Consolidated Statement (Exhibit 2—p. 117).

2. *Recommendation:* That synod receive this consolidated statement as information. —*Adopted*

EXHIBIT 1

CONSOLIDATING
CSC DENOMINATIONAL BOARDS AND AGENCIES
BUDGETS FOR 1977 AND 1978
WITH SOURCES OF ESTIMATED INCOME TO FUND SUCH BUDGETS

BOARDS AND AGENCIES	BUDGETS			1977 QUOTA AMOUNTS			1978 QUOTA AMOUNTS			CONTRIBUTIONS, GIFTS, OTHER INCOME			PER FAMILY QUOTA		
	1977	1978	% OF BUDGET	Amount	% OF BUDGET	Amount	1977	% OF BUDGET	Amount	1978	% OF BUDGET	Amount	1977	% OF BUDGET	Amount
Back to God Hour - Radio and TV	3,344,000	3,778,000	58%	1,929,000	58%	2,086,000	55%	1,415,000	42%	1,692,000	45%	33,000	33,000	35,000	
Board of Home Missions	4,146,000	4,660,000	65%	2,700,000	70%	3,200,000	70%	1,446,000	38%	1,370,000	30%	46,000	46,000	55,000	
Board of Publications	1,672,300	1,790,500	20%	323,500	20%	233,000	14%	1,346,800	80%	1,537,500	86%	6,000	6,000	4,000	
Board of World Missions & Spanish Lit.	4,953,000	5,590,664	48%	2,760,000	49%	2,760,000	49%	2,650,000	54%	2,800,664	51%	41,75	41,75	48,75	
Calvin College and Seminary	8,748,400	9,765,000	23%	2,208,000	23%	2,208,000	23%	6,685,400	71%	7,577,000	78%	36,000	36,000	38,400	
Calvin Seminary Building Addition	53,000	53,000	100%	53,000	100%	53,000	100%	0	0	0	0	1,000	1,000	1,000	
Chaplain Committee	86,800	107,400	100%	86,800	100%	107,400	100%	0	0	0	0	1,65	1,65	1,95	
Chaplain's Deposit Fund	31,000	31,000	100%	31,000	100%	31,000	100%	0	0	0	0	.50	.50	.50	
CSC in NM - Denominational Services	370,200	401,100	100%	370,200	100%	401,100	100%	0	0	0	0	7.15	7.15	7.75	
CSC in NA - Denominational Building	222,000	227,500	100%	222,000	100%	227,500	100%	0	0	0	0	2.00	2.00	2.00	
CNRAC	2,173,000	2,447,900	0	0	0	0	0	2,173,000	100%	2,447,900	100%	0	0	0	
Church Help Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Fund for Needy Churches	999,000	1,045,000	78%	782,300	78%	796,826	76%	216,700	22%	248,174	24%	13.50	13.50	12.50	
Ministers' Pension Fund	1,793,000	2,381,000	87%	1,568,000	87%	1,746,000	73%	225,000	13%	635,000	27%	24.50	24.50	28.50	
SDOR	87,500	107,950	74,000	85%	93,000	88%	13,500	15%	14,950	15%	14,950	15%	1,000	1,000	1,600
Unordained Employees Pension Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
TOTAL	28,679,200	32,376,014	12,393,600	44%	13,935,656	44%	13,935,656	44%	16,285,400	56%	18,440,338	56%	214.65	214.65	234.95
Changes + (-)	3,696,814	1,941,855													20.90

8.5%

10%

Notes 1 - QUOTA BASE FAMILIES - Number of - - - - - 64,400 - - - - - 64,500
 Note 2 - 1978 Budget figure of \$1,790,500 includes provisions for machinery replacement to extent of \$98,500.
 Note 3 - Calvin's principal source of income is from tuition and fees.
 Note 4 - CNRAC 1977 revised budget figures are used for 1978 until revised in 1978 depending on emergency and other needs as they arise.
 Note 5 - Church Help Fund is self-auxiliating trust fund of \$2,390,222 of which \$2,206,313 is aggregate of loans outstanding to churches.
 Note 6 - Fund for Needy Churches - Amount shown in contributions & gifts column are amount taken from surplus and applied to operating costs.
 Note 7 - SDOR's budget is subject to Synod of 1977 approval of program.
 Note 8 - Unordained Employees Pension Fund units are included in the board and agency quotas.

AVERAGE QUOTA EMBODION

CRC DENOMINATIONAL BOARDS, AGENCIES AND COMMITTEES
 CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT
 OF
 ASSETS AND LIABILITIES
 YEAR END 1976

EXHIBIT 2

<u>CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH BOARD, AGENCY OR COMMITTEE</u>	<u>ASSETS (Book Value)</u>	<u>LIABILITIES</u>	<u>EQUITY AND RESERVES</u>
BACK TO GOD HOUR	\$ 2,509,349	\$ 947,764	\$ 1,561,585
BOARD OF HOME MISSIONS	8,198,803	45,126	8,153,677
BOARD OF PUBLICATIONS	988,044	220,746	767,298
BOARD OF WORLD MISSIONS	5,884,589	200,332	5,684,257
CALVIN COLLEGE AND SEMINARY	38,890,027	14,528,383	24,361,644
CHAPLAIN COMMITTEE	29,118	- 0 -	29,118
CHAPLAINS' DEPOSIT FUND	146,589	- 0 -	146,589
CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH IN NORTH AMERICA	2,062,549	662,778	1,399,771
CHRISTIAN REFORMED WORLD RELIEF COMMITTEE	554,102	63,881	490,221
CHURCH HELP FUND	2,390,222	- 0 -	2,390,222
FUND FOR NEEEDY CHURCHES	579,684	- 0 -	579,684
*MINISTERS' PENSION FUND	5,154,758	147,282	5,007,476
SYNODICAL COMMITTEE ON RACE RELATIONS	11,050	- 0 -	11,050
**UNORDAINED EMPLOYEES PENSION COMMITTEE	1,716,873	1,875	1,714,998
TOTAL	\$69,115,757	\$16,818,167	\$52,297,590

*Includes cash assets of Supplemental Fund - \$6,772; Group Insurance - \$28,547

**Includes assets held by Occidental Life Insurance Company of California under Group Annuity Contract No. 50013-2 as follows: Annuity Fund \$1,473,061; Supplemental Fund \$146,749.

VIII. DENOMINATIONAL QUOTAS FOR 1978

A. *Materials:*

Reports of the respective boards and SIC as published in the Agenda for Synod 1977 and Supplemental Reports.

B. *Analysis:* See Report 20-A, Section IX for comparison of requested, recommended and actual quotas and for listing of denominational quotas, 1975-1977, with agency requests and SIC recommendations for 1978.

C. *Recommendations:*

1. That synod consider all denominational quota requests before acting on any of them by itself. —*Adopted*

2. That synod adopt the denominational quota requests for 1978 recommended by the advisory committee. (See p. 119.)

3. That synod adopt the following regional or area quotas for Calvin College and Seminary in agreement with the decisions of 1962:

Area Designation	Description of Geographic Area	Actual 1977	Recom. 1978	\$ In-crease	% In-crease
Area 1 - comprises Classes	Grand Rapids East, G.R. South, G.R. North and Grandville	\$55.00	\$57.25	\$2.25	4.09
Area 2 - comprises Classes	Cadillac, Holland, Kalamazoo, Lake Erie, Muskegon and Zeeland	43.25	48.00	4.75	10.98
Area 3 - comprises Classes	Chicago North, Chicago South, Florida, Illiana and Wisconsin	40.50	42.00	1.50	3.7
Area 4 - comprises Classes	Minnesota North, Minnesota South, Northcentral Iowa, Orange City, Pella and Sioux Center	18.50	20.00	1.50	8.1
Area 5 - comprises Classes	Atlantic Northeast, Hackensack and Hudson	55.00	57.25	2.25	4.09
Area 6 - comprises Classes	Columbia, Pacific Northwest, California South, Central Cal. & Rocky Mountain	36.25	37.25	1.00	2.75
Area 7 - comprises Classes	Alberta North, Alberta South, British Columbia, Chatham, Eastern Canada, Hamilton, Huron, Quinte and Toronto	20.50	23.00	2.50	12.2

Areas which benefit from a quota reduction should employ the monies saved to finance their present area colleges (Acts of Synod, 1962, pp. 54, 104, XXV). —*Adopted*

	1977 Quota	Agencies' Requests for 1978	Recommended for 1978**	Recommended Percent Change**	Adopted by Synod
Back to God Hour	\$ 23.00	\$ 25.00	\$ 25.00	+ 8.7	\$ 25.00
Television	10.00	10.00	10.00	0.0	10.00 -35.00
Board of Publications					
The Banner	1.50	.75	.75	-50.0	.75
De Wachter	.50	.25	.25	-50.0	.25
Unified Church-School Curriculum	4.00	3.00	3.00	-25.0	3.00
Calvin College and Seminary *	36.00	38.40	38.40	+ 6.7	38.40
Calvin Seminary Building Addition (until 1979)	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.0	1.00
Chaplain Committee	1.65	1.95	1.95	+18.2	1.95
Chaplains' Deposit Fund	.50	.50	.50	0.0	.50
Denominational Services					
Synodical Assembly and Committees	5.50	6.10	6.10	+10.9	6.10
Synodical Offices					
Estate Planing for Deferred Giving *** (At request of all denominational agencies)	1.65	1.65	1.65/0.00	0.0	1.65
Denominational Building	2.00	2.00	2.00	0.0	2.00
World Missions	41.25	45.75	45.75/46.00	+10.9	45.70
Australian Ministry ***					.30 -46.00
Fund for Needy Churches	13.50	12.50	12.50	- 7.4	12.50
Home Missions	46.00	55.00	51.00	+10.9	53.00
Ministers' Pension Fund	24.50	28.50	28.50	+16.3	28.50
SCORR	1.00	1.60	1.60	+60.0	1.60
Spanish Literature	.50	1.00	.75	+50.0	.75
TOTAL	\$214.05	\$234.95	\$230.70/\$229.30	+ 7.8	\$232.95

*Allocated on an area basis

**Recommendation approved by both SIC and Advisory Committee 13.

***Two amounts recommended by SIC and Advisory Committee 13 respectively.

-Adopted (Seriatim)

IX. CAUSES RECOMMENDED FOR FINANCIAL SUPPORT

A. *Material*: Report 20-A.

B. *Recommendations*:

1. That synod recommend to the churches the following *DENOMINATIONAL CAUSES* for one or more offerings.

a. **Denominational Agencies**

- 1) Armed Forces Fund of Home Mission Board (U.S. Churches only)
- 2) Back to God Hour 1) above-quota needs, 2) CRC-TV
- 3) Back to God Tract Committee
- 4) Committee for Educational Assistance to Churches Abroad
- 5) Home Missions for above-quota needs
- 6) Minority Student Scholarship Fund
- 7) Supplemental Assistance Fund of Ministers' Pension Fund
- 8) World Missions for above-quota needs

b. **Denominational Benevolence Agency**

Christian Reformed World Relief Committee

c. **Denominational Youth Agencies**

- 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

—Adopted

2. That synod recommend the following *NON-DENOMINATIONAL AGENCIES* to the churches for financial support, but *not necessarily for one or more offerings*. The number of offerings and amount given *should be determined by each church*.

a. **Benevolent Causes**

- 1) Bethany Christian Services
- 2) Bethesda Hospital
- 3) Calvary Rehabilitation Center
- 4) Christian Health Care Center (formerly Chr. Sanatorium)
- 5) Christian School Employees Relief Fund (only when requested)
- 6) Elim Christian School
- 7) Luke Society
- 8) Pine Rest Christian Hospital Association (includes Children's Retreat)

b. **Educational Causes**

- 1) Association for the Advancement of Christian Scholarship
- 2) Canadian Christian Educational Foundation (NUCS)
- 3) Christian Schools Educational Foundation (NUCS)
- 4) Dordt College
- 5) National Union of Christian Schools
- 6) Reformed Bible College
- 7) Roseland Christian School
- 8) Trinity Christian College
- 9) Westminster Seminary

c. Miscellaneous Causes

- 1) American Bible Society (U.S. churches only)
- 2) American Calvinist Fellowship
- 3) Canadian Bible Society (Canadian churches only)
- 4) Canadian Home Bible League (Canadian churches only)
- 5) Christian Labour Association of Canada (Canadian churches only)
- 6) Christian Laymen's League
- 7) Faith, Prayer and Tract League
- 8) Gideons, International (Bible distribution only)
- 9) InterVarsity Christian Fellowship
- 10) Lord's Day Alliance of Canada (Canadian churches only)
- 11) Lord's Day Alliance of the U.S. (U.S. churches only)
- 12) New York International Bible Society (NIV translation only)
- 13) TELL (The Evangelical Literature League)
- 14) World Home Bible League (U.S. churches only) —*Adopted*

(The report of Advisory Committee 13 is continued in Article 73.)

The morning session is closed with prayer.

THURSDAY AFTERNOON, JUNE 23, 1977

Twentieth Session

ARTICLE 73

The session is opened with devotions.

Mr. M. Styf, alternate delegate from Classis Zeeland, is present and rises to indicate his agreement with the Forms of Unity.

Advisory Committee 13, *Financial Matters*, Elder K. Marcus reporting presents the following: (The report of Advisory Committee 13 is continued from Article 72.)

I. PROGRESS REPORT ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF IMPROVED FINANCIAL CONTROL SYSTEMS

A. *Materials*:

1. Report 20-A, VIII.
2. Report 1-A - Back to God Hour.

B. *Observations*:

1. The advisory committee has reviewed the efforts of the SIC Finance Committee to improve the internal financial control procedures of our denominational boards and agencies and believe that good progress is being made. The CPA firm of Seidman and Seidman, working with the cooperation of the pertinent boards and agencies, has come forward with certain preliminary suggestions for changes although much more work remains to be done before specific recommendations can be made to synod.

2. The advisory committee endorses the efforts being made by SIC Finance Committee and encourages their continued diligent efforts to achieve the goal of improved internal systems and controls which will better serve the denomination's financial operations.

C. Recommendations:

1. That synod accept this progress report from the SIC and instruct SIC to submit a final report with its evaluations and recommendations to the Synod of 1978. —*Adopted*
2. That synod acknowledge the importance of providing maximum assurance concerning the safeguarding of denominational funds and other assets and requests all boards, agencies and committees to work together with the SIC in implementing new procedures where needed to improve internal controls subject to the approval of the Synod of 1978. —*Adopted*
3. That synod consider these recommendations to be an appropriate answer to Report 1-A of the Back to God Hour. —*Adopted*

II. HONESTY BOND COVERAGE

A. Materials:

1. Report 20-A, VIII.
2. Memorandum dated March 1976 addressed to boards and agencies regarding Honesty Bond Coverage and presented as follows:

TO: BOARDS, AGENCIES, ACCREDITED CAUSES, CLASSES
AND OTHERS

FROM: Finance Committee of SIC, Christian Reformed Church in N.A.

DATE: March 1976

RE: Honesty Bond Coverage

The following procedure for determining amount of honesty or fidelity bond coverage is recommended for your use. Executives and managers who have the greatest exposure to funds of the organization should be covered at close or equal to the highest amount of bond whereas clerks and others who are exposed in a lesser degree should be covered at minimum or better as determined by management.

PROTECTION — ESTIMATOR

Adequate honesty insurance is vital.

Studies of losses have shown that many are not fully covered by insurance. The problem of how to overcome this deficiency is a difficult one. While it is impossible to measure in actuarial terms exactly how much honesty insurance will be needed, through the use of this Protection — Estimator a range of suggested bond amounts is made available for commercial firms. Current assets and income represent the exposure to embezzlement, hence this formula is based upon those items, and should reduce the ever present threat of underinsurance.

It should be noted that the use of this device permits a selection of an amount of bond within rather broad brackets. This is necessary to provide for flexibility in selecting an amount which obviously will fluctuate on the basis of an analysis of each risk. Many factors, such as internal audit control, disposability of inventory, negotiability of securities, and others must be studied in respect to the nature of the business under consideration.

The amount of suggested coverage begins with \$2500, as there are innumerable small businesses where a \$2500 bond could suffice under given conditions. It should be understood, however, that there is no limit to

the possibilities of employee dishonesty, so these suggested amounts must not be accepted as the maximum amounts which may be needed. The Insured should be warily mindful of the possible "catastrophe" loss when considering the purchase of a blanket fidelity bond.

The formula of this Protection — Estimator is simple. Merely

- Take (a) 20% of the total current assets, and
(b) 10% of annual gross sales or income.

The resultant total is the Dishonesty Exposure Factor.

Find this amount in the chart and the suggested range of bond amounts will appear opposite the Exposure Factor.

Where a firm performs services for others, including disbursing and collecting funds, include all items under custody in the respective categories stated in the formula.

SUGGESTED MINIMUM AMOUNT OF HONESTY INSURANCE

Exposure Factor			Amount of Bond	
Up to	\$25,000	—	\$2,500 to	\$25,000
	\$25,000 to	125,000	—	25,000 to 50,000
	125,000 to	400,000	—	50,000 to 100,000
	400,000 to	1,000,000	—	100,000 to 150,000
	1,000,000 to	2,000,000	—	150,000 to 200,000
	2,000,000 to	4,000,000	—	200,000 to 300,000
	4,000,000 to	6,000,000	—	300,000 to 400,000
	6,000,000 to	10,000,000	—	400,000 to 600,000
	10,000,000 to	15,000,000	—	600,000 to 800,000
	15,000,000 to	25,000,000	—	800,000 to 1,000,000
	25,000,000 to	75,000,000	—	1,000,000 to 1,500,000
	75,000,000 to	175,000,000	—	1,500,000 to 2,000,000
	175,000,000 to	500,000,000	—	2,000,000 to 3,000,000
	500,000,000 to	1,000,000,000	—	3,000,000 to 4,000,000
	1,000,000,000 to	1,500,000,000	—	4,000,000 to 5,000,000

The selection of a bond amount cannot be reduced to an exact science, and the gaps between one bracket and another must be bridged by intelligent analysis of each risk.

For example:

Suppose the exposure factor is determined at \$150,000. It would be almost ridiculous to interpolate and recommend a bond of \$55,000. The rate structure for Commercial Blanket Bonds is not designed for such hair-splitting. When a buyer passes the \$50,000 range, minimum multiples of \$25,000 are recommended, as a practical approach to adequate coverage.

B. Recommendation: That synod adopt as policy that all denominational boards, agencies and committees which receive denominational funds and all accredited causes must give clear evidence that they are bonded in accordance with the guidelines of the memorandum above.

Ground: "Honesty Bond Coverage" commensurate with each fund's potential for loss is simply good business practice and in keeping with principles of good stewardship.

—Adopted

III. AMENDMENT TO THE ARTICLES OF ASSOCIATION OF THE CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH IN NORTH AMERICA

A. *Material*: The following resolution as proposed by the Trustees of the Christian Reformed Church in North America:

AMENDMENT TO ARTICLE 5 OF THE ARTICLES OF ASSOCIATION OF THE CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH IN NORTH AMERICA

Fifth, The Corporation is a non-profit ecclesiastical corporation organized and operated exclusively for religious and charitable purposes within the meaning of Section 501 (c) (3) of the United States Internal Revenue Code of 1954, as amended.

The purposes of the corporation are the following:

A. To proclaim the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ through the churches of the denomination, its agencies and boards.

B. To promote the principles and teachings of the Holy Bible, as interpreted by the Reformed Creeds, namely, The Belgic Confession, The Heidelberg Catechism, and The Canons of Dort, in the churches of the denomination.

C. To fulfill the scriptural mandate enunciated by Jesus Christ in Mark 16:15 to "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature," by actively supporting and promoting Christian missions through the churches of the denomination, classical home mission programs, and synodical agencies and boards for home missions and world missions.

D. To extend mercy and help to those in distress by reason of natural catastrophe and disaster, illness, old age, poverty, unemployment and war, through synodical and classical agencies and the churches of the denomination.

E. To train members of the denomination to be ministers of the gospel, missionaries, and lay workers in the service of the church and society; to provide for the financial support and security of ordained and unordained personnel of the churches of the denomination, synodical and classical agencies and boards.

F. To receive funds directly and/or through offerings in the churches for the support of the activities, agencies, functions and programs of the denomination and/or for the purpose of supporting and contributing to religious, charitable and educational organizations exempt from taxation under Section 501 (c) (3) of the United States Internal Revenue Code of 1954, as amended.

G. To conduct a literature ministry for the production and distribution of Christian periodicals and writings, Sunday school materials, and other publications needed to carry out the religious and charitable objectives and purposes of the corporation.

H. To do all other lawful acts and things necessary to fulfill the mandate and mission of the Christian Reformed Church in North America, as determined by synod.

Oliver Breen, president
Wm. P. Brink, secretary

B. *Recommendation*: That synod adopt the resolution as proposed to include the designation "and charitable" in the Articles of Association of the Christian Reformed Church in North America.

Grounds:

- a. This amendment accurately defines the total ministry of the church.
- b. This action will strengthen our position in connection with real estate tax exemption requirements. —*Adopted*

IV. AMENDMENT TO THE BY-LAWS OF THE CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH IN NORTH AMERICA

A. *Material*: The following resolution as proposed and presented by the Trustees of the Christian Reformed Church in North America:

AMENDMENT TO BY-LAWS OF THE CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH IN NORTH AMERICA

Article I.

Objectives and Purposes of Corporation

The Corporation is organized and operated exclusively for religious and charitable objectives and purposes within the meaning of Section 501 (c) (3) of the United States Internal Revenue Code of 1954, as amended. The general religious and charitable objectives and purposes of the Corporation shall be those stated in the Fifth Paragraph of the Articles of Association of the Christian Reformed Church in North America.

Oliver Breen, president
Wm. P. Brink, secretary

B. *Recommendation*: That synod adopt the resolution as proposed to include the designation "and charitable" in Article I of the By-Laws of the Christian Reformed Church in North America.

Ground: The previous change in the Articles demands this corresponding change in the By-Laws. —*Adopted*

V. CALVIN COLLEGE AND SEMINARY HOUSING LOAN APPLICATION

A. *Material*: Interoffice Memo from Mr. Henry DeWit to President Diekema dated June 20, 1977.

B. *Recommendation*: That synod approve the decision of the board of trustees of Calvin College and Seminary to construct a 180-bed housing unit and authorizes the board to negotiate long-term financing for this project through HUD or by note issue or bank loan.

Grounds:

- a. This has been our previous practice for all such facilities constructed on the Calvin Campus.
- b. This action will expedite the loan application which must be dated not later than June 24, 1977. —*Adopted*

VI. 1977 COMPENSATION GUIDE FOR MINISTERS OF THE WORD

A. *Materials*: Report 20-A, X.

B. *Recommendation*: That synod urge all of our churches to follow the Compensation Guide for Ministers of the Word when it is mailed to

our consistories for insertion in the Handbook for the Christian Reformed Church entitled "Your Church in Action."

Ground: More universal use of these guidelines will do much to ensure that our ministers are receiving equitable compensation with appropriate allowances for the variables introduced by such things as cost of living, geographic location and family size. —*Adopted*

ARTICLE 74

Advisory Committee 9, *Educational Matters*, Elder J. VanderArk reporting, presents the following: (The report of Advisory Committee 9 is continued from Article 64.)

SYNODICAL INVOLVEMENT IN CANDIDACY EXAMINATION

A. *Material:* Report 2.

B. *Overview:*

1. A condensed history of synod's dealings with the problem (Exhibit A at the conclusion of this article).

2. Background of the board of trustees recommendation:

Between 1975 and the present, a subcommittee of the board of trustees submitted various versions of a plan which would combine the services of the board and of synod in the examination of candidates.

The final version of this plan provided that the board should do sermon criticism and conduct a thirty-minute interview covering the *loci* of theology, knowledge of Scripture, and aspects of personal, professional, and spiritual fitness for the ministry.

Synod, under this plan, was to interview the candidates for twenty minutes each, particularly in the areas of fitness for ministry, compliance with the church's positions, and willingness to sign the formula of subscription. Synod would divide into interviewing sections of not less than twenty persons for these examinations.

The board considered this plan unsatisfactory. It would involve two examinations for every candidate. In these examinations there would have to be some overlapping. Only one-fourth of synod's delegates would be meaningfully involved in the examination of any candidate. Even under these restrictions, the process would require at least five or six hours of synod's time annually. A summary of the difficulties visualized and the text of the board's recommendation are found in Report 2 (Section I, B, 2, i).

3. The Qualifications of the Board:

In considering the competence of the board to carry out this task, the following facts are to be remembered. The declaration of candidacy is a certification of a person's fitness to receive and entertain a call. The definitive judgment as to entering the ministry is made in the classical examination, which is strictly a matter of an ecclesiastical assembly. The board as a committee directly answerable to synod is in a favored position to advise synod on that preliminary judgment. The board has contact with the prospective candidates from the point of their admission to the seminary to the point of declaration of candidacy. This contact includes examination for licensure to exhort, action on problems regarding stu-

dents' status or performance, a personal visit of a board member with each candidate, and a knowledge of the details of the academic and professional program of preparation in which the candidates are engaged.

4. Reflections:

a. The frequency with which synod has dealt with this matter and the amount of energy expended on it by study committees both of synod and of the board of trustees hardly warrants the charge that synod has taken its task lightly or "rubber stamped" the diligent work of the board of trustees. It would seem to indicate rather, the utmost seriousness with which synod takes this responsibility and its own frustration in finding the best possible way to do its job most responsibly.

b. It would seem to reflect further our understanding of (or lack of it) of both the expressions "meaningful involvement" and "representative delegation." If synod is to declare men candidates, as we all seem to believe and as synod has consistently maintained, then the question is, may she do that by responsible delegation or must she do so by following the process of examination *in toto* by which she arrives at responsible declaration? (By delegating, synod does not relinquish responsibility.) Synod of 1961 opted for the first method of "representative delegation" of the work. However, this was not an entirely new phenomenon. Previous synods also followed this procedure by dividing synod into various examining groups. Not since its very early days has the whole synod been involved in the complete examination of every candidate. Consequently, it would appear that if we accept the principle of "representative delegation" it makes little difference whether synod chooses to delegate work to the board of trustees as an "advisory committee" or to various segments of its own body who then serve as "advisory committees."

c. A case has been made by previous study committees that the board of trustees is the more competent of such committees for various reasons, including continued contact with the students and familiarity with the procedure. The case then hinges on synod's confidence in its delegated representative. Thus one can be "meaningfully involved" by competent representation.

C. *Advisory Committee Considerations:*

Upon having this matter recommitted, your advisory committee considered various options for their new advice to synod. These can be summarized as follows:

Option 1: Recommit this matter to the board of trustees.

This was not considered advisable, because synod already has the product of two years' consideration of this matter by the board. In any case, such recommitment would require refinement of the mandate by synod.

Option 2: Commit the matter to a study committee.

Although this will involve at least one year's delay in implementing any changes, it is what the advisory committee will recommend below.

Option 3: Adopt the board of trustees' recommendation.

The fact that the previous recommendation was recommitted militates

against this option. It must be remembered, however, that the recommendation was made after a speech against the proposal and without any further debate on the merits of the recommendation. If synod wishes, it may still adopt this option, giving priority to the board's proposal over that of the Advisory Committee, which now differs substantially from that of the board.

Option 4: Present a new plan for adoption by this synod.

Synods have consistently refused to follow such a procedure, deeming it unwise to adopt plans hastily thrown together under the pressure of synodical business. In a matter as complex as this, such caution is especially advisable. Any new plan devised here would, furthermore, come to the churches without any kind of prior notification to them. Some fruits of the advisory committee's consideration of this option are however, found in the recommendations below.

The advisory committee's recommendation attaches itself to Option 2 above, although we respectfully suggest that synod might well choose to give serious attention to Option 3.

D. *Recommendations:*

Synod by motion returns to the original recommendations (presented at an earlier session, W.P.B.) of the Advisory Committee on Educational Matters:

1. That synod continue to conduct the examination for candidacy by way of its committee, the board of trustees.

Grounds:

a. The board of trustees is a duly constituted committee of synod which is broadly representative of the Christian Reformed Church.

b. The reasons for which synod referred this task to the board of trustees in the past are still valid.

—*Adopted*

2. That synod instruct the board of trustees to continue to seek ways to make synod's involvement in candidacy decisions more meaningful; e.g. by

a. providing each delegate to synod with a photograph and improved profile of each prospective candidate at the opening of synod's sessions; and

b. inviting and encouraging the candidates, as far as possible, to be present at the session of synod at which the declaration of candidacy is made.

—*Adopted*

3. That synod refer the following suggestions to the board of trustees:

a. That, immediately after the May board meeting, each delegate to synod be provided with a document on each candidate, to include: biographical and service data and photograph, as at present; a statement of personal faith and/or a statement of reasons for seeking the ministry, written by the candidate; a statement of faculty and board endorsement.

b. That any candidate may be called before synod for follow-up examination if necessary.

c. That a preliminary review of candidacy materials and preliminary consideration of the need for additional examination be assigned to an advisory committee of synod for early action.

d. That the plenary decision on candidacy matters be scheduled for Friday, rather than Tuesday, of the first week of synod.

e. That all candidates be required to be present for an appropriately formal declaration of candidacy by the president of synod. —*Adopted*

Synod appends the following summary of the history of this matter:

HISTORY OF EXAMINATIONS FOR CANDIDACY

The seriousness with which synod wrestled with this problem is demonstrated in the Acts of Synod by at least three things:

A. The frequency with which the issue was discussed.

B. The frequency with which synod appointed a study committee to improve or change the procedure.

C. The reasons given for these studies and actions.

A. The frequency

1939—Presentation of a study committee report (com. appointed in 1937) re relation of classical and synodical examinations of candidate (p. 73 ff, Art. 91).

Summary conclusions adopted—

1. Classical examination is necessary.
2. Classical examination is more thorough.
3. Establishment of relationship between classical and synodical exams along with guidelines for each:

Synodical designated *preparatory*.

Classical designated *decisive*.

1940—(p. 45, Art. 53).

Instruct executive committee of board of trustees to arrange preparatory examination on Friday so delegates *have sufficient time* to consider material entrusted to them.

1941—Observe—Candidates examined by various classes in different areas—division of work or delegation (p. 13, Art. 27).

Also—page 105—three overtures dealing with requested changes in prep. examination. *Study Committee Appointed*

Issue—Preparatory examination by synod or classis?

1942—Committee reports and asks to broaden its mandate by comparing with other seminaries and committee continued.

1946—Committee appointed in 1941, after request for several extensions finally reports. The committee identifies four examinations:

1. By board of trustees for admission as regular student to seminary (minor).
2. By board of trustees for licensure to exhort in CRC (minor).
3. (Praeparatoir) by synod for eligibility for call.
4. (Peremptoir) by a classis for ordination.

Synod delayed action until 1947, (p. 116-118).

—Also a report from board of trustees requesting “Curatorium Contractum” to examine candidates—synod responded by assigning the work to seven classes (p. 66).

1947—The 1946 study committee report was carried over to this synod. No changes in procedure adopted. Retained “synod-

ical examination . . . stress the scholarly aspect and the classical emphasize the practical."

1951—Future routine suggested by officers of synod—probably because of the "endurance record" set at this synod (meeting to 2:00 a.m.) (Art. 170, p. 96), executive committee of board of trustees requested to arrange examination as follows:

1. The sermons to be sent three weeks in advance to a committee to be designated from among the prospective delegates of synod, that there may be sufficient time to examine them.
2. Synod divide into four groups for exam in Dogmatics and Introduction.
3. Examination in practica conducted in seven groups.

1953—Overture 37 of Alberta expressing dissatisfaction with examination as conducted previous year and suggested two days for exam (Art. 13, p. 9-10).

Program committee judges just reason for complaint and suggests four points of improvement. (Pages 14-16 reveal entire schedule)
—Classis Hamilton requested synod to transfer work of exam for candidacy to ministerial members of board of trustees (Overture 11).

Grounds:

1. Board of trustees has known students for several years and better qualified.
2. Synod's program too heavy to do justice to exam.
3. Board of trustees has done it before and done it well.

Classis Alberta (Overture 38) requests transfer of exam to classes.

Grounds:

1. Classes able to devote more time.
2. Spread over whole denomination—not just those within 200 miles of Grand Rapids.

Both overtures rejected by synod (p. 148).

Grounds:

1. Present method affords wider acquaintance with Canadians (vs. Hamilton).
2. More participation by elders.
3. Wider acquaintance with candidates (vs. Alberta).
4. Impracticable due to distance and time of meetings.

1955—(Art. 136, p. 93)—Stated Clerk instructed to arrange exam in practica before full assembly.

1956—Four overtures—6 and 24 suggests improvement (p. 61) 28 and 36 suggest discontinuance by synod.

Recommendation—appoint study committee to work improvement and/or changes—because of widespread dissatisfaction with present system.

1957—Study committee of 1956 reports—recommends preliminary exam to be conducted by board of trustees for 2 year trial (see p. 100 for guidelines).

Synod's advisory committee recommended retention of prelim by synod in view of considerations re particular synods.

Matter and report referred to committee on particular synods.

1959—Study committee on particular synods reports re exam of candidates—(Report No. 3).

Recommend:

1. Discontinue prelim exam by synod.
2. Withhold action on rest of report.
3. Postpone implementation of 1.
4. Recommit report to study committee and confer with Calvin Seminary faculty and board of trustees re plan.
5. Refer matter to churches for study.

(Art. 171, p. 88-92).

1960—Study continued.

1961—Synod implements proposal of 1959 (p. 54-55).

1962—Synodical procedure for declaring candidacy spelled out (p. 31 Art. 66, III, B).

1970—Change of date from 4 to 2 weeks (eligible for call after declaration of candidacy).

1972—Overture from Classis Sioux Center that synod revert back to its former practice. —*Defeated*

1973—Four overtures relating to various aspects of the examination of candidates and ordination—Study Committee appointed (p. 48).

1975—A report by committee appointed in 1973 (Report 35).

Synod withheld action on the report, continuing the present procedure with the request to the board of trustees to find ways to make synod more meaningfully involved.

B. Frequency of Appointing Study Committees.

1. 1937—Report in 1939.

2. 1941—Continued in 1942—reports in 1946, delayed action until 1947.

3. 1956—Study committee—reports in 1957—withholds action and refers matter to committee on particular synods.

4. 1957—Committee on particular synods to study examination of candidates—reports in 1959—study continued.

—Reports in 1961.

5. 1973—Committee to study returning examination to synod—Reports in 1975.

C. Summary of Reasons.

1. To delegate examination to the board.

a. Synodical examination duplicates classical examinations.

b. Synodical examinations are more perfunctory and less thorough.

c. There is more continuity in following progress of candidates.

d. The increasing size of synod's agenda makes examining candidates impractical.

2. To conduct by synod.

a. Declaration of candidacy by synod requires involvement in examination.

b. Broader exposure of candidates.

c. More participation by elders.

ARTICLE 75

Advisory Committee 4, *Confessional Matters*, Dr. S. Greidanus reporting, presents the following for the majority Advisory Committee 4: (The report of Advisory Committee 4 is continued from Article 65.)

CONFESSONAL-REVISION GRAVAMEN

A. *Materials:*

1. Report 47.
2. Gravamen of Dr. Harry Boer.
3. Communication 9 - Classis Hamilton.

B. *History*

The Synod of 1975 received a communication from Dr. Harry Boer, missionary teacher of theology in Nigeria, in which he asked synod to inform him what "the express testimony of Scripture" is for the teachings on reprobation as found in Chapter I, Articles 6 and 15 of the Canons of Dort. Synod stated "that Dr. Boer has raised a legitimate concern to which the church should address herself." Synod appointed a committee to advise the Synod of 1976 on "the status of such communications like that of Dr. Harry Boer" and "the proper method for synod to deal with them."

The Synod of 1976 declared that "gravamina fall into at least two basic types: a. a confessional-difficulty gravamen — a gravamen in which a subscriber expresses his personal 'difficulties and different sentiments' with the confession but does not call for revision of the confessions. b. a confessional-revision gravamen — a gravamen in which a subscriber makes a specific recommendation for revision of the confessions." Synod further declared "that Dr. Boer's communication to the Synod of 1975 which does not specifically request or recommend a revision of the confessions is a confessional-difficulty gravamen." To provide Dr. Boer with a forum for discussion, Synod of 1976 appointed a committee to "deal pastorally with Dr. Boer's confessional-difficulty gravamen." In addition, synod adopted the following resolution: "Should Dr. Boer, in consultation with the committee, come to the conclusion that he desires to submit a confessional-revision gravamen, he be permitted to present his gravamen directly to synod. *Ground:* The long and intricate history of the matter." (See Acts of Synod 1976, p. 75.)

The committee appointed by the Synod of 1976 reports to the Synod of 1977 (Report 47) that "Dr. Boer informed the committee that in his judgment his difficulty could not be satisfactorily dealt with by means of a confessional-difficulty gravamen, but called for a confessional-revision gravamen as the best and most efficacious way of serving the church." The committee acquiesced in his decision "because in Dr. Boer's judgment the matter cannot be dealt with as a confessional-difficulty gravamen and because, as was indicated by the Synod of 1976, Dr. Boer has the right to submit a confessional-revision gravamen."

Consequently, this synod has before it a fifteen page confessional-revision gravamen "against the Reformed doctrine of reprobation as taught notably in the Canons of Dort Chapter 1, Articles 6 and 15" (Gravamen, p. 1).

In addition, "Classis Hamilton respectfully overtures synod to send the gravamen of Dr. H. Boer to all the churches of the denomination.

Grounds:

a. Though grievances are to be expressed to the consistory, the classis or the synod, it nevertheless remains true that the creeds *are* the confessions of the church. Therefore, gravamina, which by their very nature deal with the confessions of the church ought to be made known to the church.

b. If a gravamen is placed before the church, the church can:

- 1) communally reflect on the matter under discussion, and
- 2) engage in meaningful intercessory prayer, asking that the Spirit may lead the church to the knowledge of the Truth."

The Rev. H. Hoekstra, reporter for the minority of Advisory Committee 4, reads the observations of the minority report, after which synod returns to the recommendations of the majority of the committee.

C. Recommendations:

1. That synod dismiss with thanks the committee appointed to deal pastorally and personally with Dr. Boer's confessional-difficulty gravamen.

Ground: The committee's mandate is concluded since Dr. Boer decided to present to synod a confessional-revision gravamen. —*Adopted*

2. That synod accept the confessional-revision gravamen of Dr. Boer as legally before synod.

Ground: Dr. Boer has submitted his confessional-revision gravamen in accordance with the decision of the Synod of 1976: "Should Dr. Boer, in consultation with the committee, come to the conclusion that he desires to submit a confessional-revision gravamen, he be permitted to present his gravamen directly to synod." (See Acts of Synod 1976, Article 68, C, 6.) —*Adopted*

3. That synod publish Dr. Boer's gravamen in the Acts of Synod 1977 and declare that it is before the churches for their consideration.

Ground: The "regulations concerning the procedure to be followed in the submission of a *confessional-revision gravamen*" contains the following pertinent stipulation: "... when the constituted synod declares the matter to be legally before it for action, all the signers of the Form of Subscription shall be free to discuss it together with the whole church until adjudicated by synod" (Acts 1976, Article 64, I, C, 3, c, 4). —*Adopted*

4. That synod appoint a committee to receive the reactions of individuals, consistories, and classes, to study the gravamen in the light of Scripture, and to advise the Synod of 1980 as to the cogency of the gravamen and how it should further be dealt with by synod. —*Adopted*

5. That the Gravamen Committee be composed of nine members: 3 elders, 3 pastors, and 3 members of the theological faculty. —*Adopted*

6. That synod advise the churches that all communications concerning the gravamen be sent to the Gravamen Committee by June 1, 1979. —*Adopted*

7. That synod declare this to be its answer to the overture of Classis Hamilton, Communication 9. —*Adopted*

The session is closed with prayer.

THURSDAY EVENING, JUNE 23, 1977

Twenty-first Session

ARTICLE 76

The session is opened with devotions.

Advisory Committee 5, *Ethical Matters*, Dr. A. Wolters reporting, presents the following: (The report of Advisory Committee 5 is continued from Article 41.)

MARRIAGE GUIDELINES

A. *Materials*:

1. Report 35, Marriage Guidelines.
2. Overture 5.
3. Overture 17.
4. Overture 18.
5. Overture 24.
6. Overture 25.
7. Overture 26.
8. Informative Communication 27.
9. Informative Communication 28.
10. Sixteen letters addressed to the study committee.

B. *Observations*:

1. The advisory committee acknowledges with respect and appreciation the conscientious work done by the study committee on marriage guidelines. It also notes with sadness the passing of the committee member the Rev. Adam Persenaire, whose contribution was significant and widely appreciated, and whose long life serves as an example of dedicated service to the people of God.

2. The advisory committee notes with grateful surprise that its report is unanimous. It sees in this an unexpected mark of God's favor.

C. *Analysis*: Through a careful and earnest reassessment of the biblical givens on divorce and remarriage, the advisory committee has been forced to conclude that the traditional Christian Reformed stance, even that of before 1956, is not as strict and unqualified as that of the Bible itself. Some of the expressions which we are accustomed to use in this connection ("biblical grounds for divorce," "innocent and guilty parties," "remarriage sanctioned by Scripture") are either unwarranted altogether or are derived by debatable logical inference from a single phrase in Matthew. On the other hand, the proliferation of marriage breakdown in our churches and all around us evoke an acute sense of crisis and pastoral concern. We have all become familiar with examples of apparently intolerable marital conflict, with all its genuinely destructive consequences for spouses and children. We tend to shrink back from applying today, directly and without allowance for the hardness of men's hearts, the uncompromising words of Jesus on divorce and remarriage.

Exegetical honesty prevents us from accepting the traditional solution in which the exceptive clauses in Matthew are taken to provide a loophole (the only one) for escaping the force of Jesus' insistence on the indissolubility of marriage. We are also mindful of the foothold which this

approach provides for the kind of legalism which conceives of a spouse's adultery as an exemption to God's law for marriage. This exemption is then used to provide "a way out," an excuse which "gets me off the hook" or "gives me my freedom."

If we are convinced that the traditional approach does not do justice to Scripture and tends toward a legalistic interpretation of the exceptive clauses, it seems that we have only two options left to resolve the tension between the demands of Scripture and the hardheartedness of men. One option is to apply Jesus' words with uncompromising rigor to the desperate marital situations we face today, insisting that the hardness of men's hearts can never, in the New Testament era, create such circumstances as would allow for divorce or remarriage. The other option is to give full weight to both the clear and unconditional imperative of Scripture and to the sometimes demonic proportions of man's unrepentant perversity in its manifold effects, recognizing that God in his mercy may sometimes, in extraordinary circumstances which Scripture does not spell out, allow what seems to be disobedience in order to prevent an apparently intolerable situation. The first approach insists exclusively on the God-ordained principle of marriage, regardless of circumstances or consequences; the second stresses that this universally valid principle must be applied, as Scripture illustrates, to varying broken situations.

It is clear from the foregoing what the advisory committee's response to the report on marriage guidelines must be. Both the report itself and the postscript by the late Rev. Adam Persenaire are variations of the traditional approach which we cannot square with Scripture. Both speak of a legitimate "ground" for divorce, both speak of innocent and guilty parties in terms of it, both attempt to find scriptural reasons to justify remarriage after divorce. We recognize that the study committee was limited under the mandate it was given, and we freely acknowledge that the report contains much genuine biblical insight and sound pastoral advice. However, its restrictive mandate simply could not be an adequate basis for coming to the pastoral guidelines which the study committee members felt were needed. The results, inevitably, were unsatisfactory exegesis and argumentation.

C. Recommendations:

1. That synod recognize the Revs. George Gritter, William Vander Haak and Dr. Andrew Bandstra as representatives of the study committee at synod, and that they be given the privilege of the floor. —*Adopted*

2. That synod refer the report of the study committee (Report 35) and that of the advisory committee (inserted below) to a new study committee, with the following mandate:

a. to reexamine and set forth the biblical teachings on divorce and remarriage, evaluating critically the traditional exegesis of the relevant passages.

b. to formulate pastoral guidelines with respect to the problem of divorce and remarriage as they appear in our society, specifically taking into account the tension which appears to exist between Christ's teaching and situations of clearly destructive marital disruption. —*Adopted*

Recommendations of the Advisory Committee Report (inserted here by synodical decision):

(1) That synod submit to the churches Report 35, Section I, "Biblical Teachings Regarding Marriage," to help them in their understanding and continuing discussion of the biblical view of marriage.

Ground: This section is a helpful presentation of the basic biblical teaching on marriage.

(2) That synod declare that Report 35, Section II, "Biblical Teaching Regarding Divorce," is unsatisfactory in its treatment of the phrase "except for *porneia*" (Matt. 5:32; 19:9).

Grounds:

a. Jesus' sayings on divorce and marriage serve to emphasize the basic teaching that marriage as an ordinance of God is indissoluble, and should be read in that light.

b. The so-called exceptive clauses serve only as a qualification of Jesus' emphatic and well-attested teaching that remarriage after divorce constitutes adultery (Mt. 5:32 and 19:9; Mk. 10:11-12; Lk. 16:18).

c. It is only by a debatable inference that the exceptive clauses can be taken to indicate a "ground" for divorce. Jesus does not address himself to the question of a possible legitimate reason for divorce.

d. The exceptive clauses speak only to the situation of a divorce initiated by the husband, i.e., where it is the *wife's* unchastity that is involved.

e. There is no evidence that *porneia* in these passages "would seem to connote a kind of persistent and unrepentant adultery or unchastity."

f. We do not know *why* Jesus in Matthew mentions *porneia* as the exceptive circumstance. A possible reason may indeed be that "physical infidelity symbolizes the epitome of unfaithfulness and strikes at the very heart and center of the marriage relationship." However, there are other plausible explanations, including the possibility that the husband may have been under legal compulsion to divorce his wife in the case of her infidelity.

(3) That synod declare that Report 35, Section II, is unpersuasive in its treatment of I Corinthians 7:8-16 as evidence for the concept "equivalent of unrepentant unchastity."

Grounds:

a. It would seem that separation as discussed in the passages has its roots in "deeply-seated *religious* reasons" (cf. Acts of Synod 1957, p. 347) rather than in *porneia* in the sense of the Matthean exceptive clauses.

b. It appears that I Corinthians 7:8-16, rather than supporting the equivalency concept, reinforces the teaching of Jesus on the general inadmissibility of divorce and remarriage:

1) Believers who are separated are instructed to be reconciled or remain single. (I Cor. 7:10-11).

2) A believer may be separated from an unbelieving partner, if such separation is initiated by the latter. The believing partner

is no longer subjected (vs. 15 *dedoulotai*, "is under bondage") to the marriage. Yet the believing partner is said to be bound (*dedetai*) and not free to remarry as long as her husband lives (I Cor. 7:39).

(4) That synod declare that Report 35, Section III, "Biblical Teaching Regarding Remarriage," is unsatisfactory in its treatment of the biblical teaching on remarriage after divorce.

Grounds:

a. Remarriage after divorce is not clearly sanctioned in Scripture. Rather, the explicit and clear teaching in all relevant passages is that God ordained marriage to be indissoluble and that post-divorce remarriage therefore as a rule constitutes adultery.

b. The exceptive clauses in Matthew constitute an inconclusive qualification of the above point. For example, it is not clear whether *all* of those men who divorce their wives in the case of *porneia* and then remarry are free from adultery, or only some. Nor is it clear whether those who are free from adultery are entirely innocent or are guilty of some other sin.

(5) That synod receive as information the following reflections of the advisory committee:

a. The Bible provides guidelines for marriage, not provisions for divorce and remarriage after divorce.

b. Divorce, or remarriage after divorce, cannot be given general sanction, since the Bible gives no such sanction.

c. Forgiveness and restoration are operative in instances of divorce and remarriage only when such actions are recognized as failure to live up to God's desire for marriage.

d. Forgiveness is operative only *after* instances of sin and confession, not when promised in advance of anticipated sinful activity.

3. That synod declare this to be its response to Overtures 5, 17, 18, 24, 25 and 26. —*Adopted*

4. That synod discharge the study committee with thanks for its labors. —*Adopted*

ARTICLE 77

Advisory Committee 2, *Church Order I*, the Rev. H. Petersen reporting, presents the following: (The report of Advisory Committee 2 is continued from Article 58.)

1976 DECISION RE OFFICE OF EVANGELIST

A. *Materials:*

1. Overtures 8, 10, 20.

2. Communication 5 from the Christian Reformed Council of Indian Churches.

B. *Analysis:* After defeating the recommendations of both Majority and Minority Report 37, Synod of 1976 encouraged the churches to "continue to study and evaluate the use of layworkers in evangelism in the light of the 1973 Guidelines for Understanding the Nature of Ecclesiastical Office and Ordination" (Acts, 1976, Article 78, B, 1, p. 96).

In Overture 8 Classis Chicago North asks synod to reconsider the action of Synod of 1976. In Overture 10 Classis Hamilton asks synod to implement the decision of Synod of 1976 appointing a committee to receive the reaction of the churches to Report 37. In Overture 20 Classis Cadillac asks synod to authorize evangelists to administer the sacraments in certain limited circumstances. Communication 5 supports Overture 20.

C. Recommendations:

1. That synod appoint a committee to solicit and evaluate the reactions of the churches to Report 37, "Implications of the Guidelines for Office and Ordination of Layworkers in Evangelism" (Acts of Synod 1976, pp. 518-549), including Overture 20 of Classis Cadillac, and to present recommendations to Synod of 1978, which will resolve the issue of the office of "layworker in evangelism" and his right to administer the sacraments.

Grounds:

a. The status of layworkers in evangelism has been studied for many years and should not be left unsettled. After defeating the recommendations of both Majority and Minority Report 37, the synod referred this matter to the churches for further study but failed to make provision for settlement by a future synod.

b. The church owes its many layworkers in evangelism a clarification of their ecclesiastical status. —*Adopted*

2. That synod request the churches to send their reactions to Report 37 to the committee by January 1, 1978. —*Adopted*

3. That synod declare the above to be its answer to Overtures 8, 10, and 20. —*Adopted*

The session is closed with prayer.

FRIDAY MORNING, JUNE 24, 1977

Twenty-second Session

ARTICLE 78

The session is opened with devotions.

The roll is called and all the delegates are present.

The minutes of the Thursday, June 23, 1977 sessions are read and are approved.

A letter is received from Dr. Marion Snapper notifying synod of his acceptance of the appointment to the position of Professor of Church Education at the Seminary. It is received as information.

ARTICLE 79

Advisory Committee 6, *Radio and Publication Matters*, the Rev. J. Hofman reporting, presents the following: (The report of Advisory Committee 6 is continued from Article 63.)

I. SERMONS FOR READING SERVICES

A. *Material:* Report 18.

B. Recommendations:

1. That synod approve the publication of the "Living Word" sermon series from January 1, 1978 to January 1, 1979.

Ground: There is an apparent need for such sermons in certain areas of the denomination. —*Adopted*

2. That synod recommend, through announcements in our church papers, that our churches subscribe and use the "Living Word" sermons. —*Adopted*

3. That synod instruct the Synodical Interim Committee to oversee the work of the committee during the period indicated.

Ground: The report of the committee and correspondence received indicate some irregularities in the printing and distribution of the "Living Word" publications during the past year. —*Adopted*

II. PSALTER HYMNAL SUPPLEMENT COMMITTEE

A. Material: Report 46.

B. Observation:

The Psalter Hymnal Supplement Committee informs synod of ongoing projects which include the printing of liturgical songs in The Banner and the indexing of the Centennial Edition of the Psalter Hymnal. They are also recommending that synod begin revision and improvement of the Centennial Edition of the Psalter Hymnal. This project is estimated to take a minimum of 8 years and could possibly require as much as 12 years.

C. Recommendations:

1. That synod grant the privilege of the floor to Dr. John Hamersma. —*Adopted*

2. That synod appoint a committee to revise and improve the Centennial Edition of the Psalter Hymnal.

Grounds:

a. Recent synods have called for songs that meet the developing needs of the church, and it is fitting that each generation, mindful of our continuing Reformed tradition, act to be faithful in reforming more normatively in congregational song.

b. Lacunae exist in the present Psalter Hymnal edition which the Psalter Hymnal Supplement can only partially fill.

c. It is necessary to clarify, improve and/or revise texts and musical settings of some of the psalms and hymns and rethink their arrangement in the light of the Liturgical Committee Report of 1968.

d. So that the improvement of the church's song not be accomplished piecemeal, as under the present mandates to the Psalter Hymnal Supplement Committee (Acts of Synod 1972, p. 49) it would be wise to undertake a sustained, thorough revision of the church's liturgical songs that build upon the 1959 collection and those songs of the Psalter Hymnal Supplement and Banner pullouts that have proved worthy, adding to these whatever is needed for stronger worship services.

e. The proliferation of hymnals containing songs which are un-Reformed in doctrine, lacking in musical quality now being used in many of our churches make this revision an urgent matter. —*Adopted*

3. That synod instruct the committee to report to the Synod of 1978 as to the principles of music in the church and procedures to be used in the revision. —*Adopted*

4. That the Revision Committee address itself to the varied needs of the congregations caused by ethnic and cultural differences, as these have bearing on the selection of hymns in the proposed Revised Psalter Hymnal. —*Adopted*

5. That the Revision Committee shall number nine members, two of whom are now members of the Psalter Hymnal Supplement Committee, and one of whom is to be recommended by the Board of Publications. —*Adopted*

6. That synod authorize groups of new hymns and psalms to be printed at quarterly intervals in *The Banner*. —*Adopted*

7. That synod thank the committee for its work. —*Adopted*

III. CHRISTIAN LAYMEN'S LEAGUE

A. *Materials:*

1. Report 20-A.
2. Report 24.

B. *Observations:*

The Synod of 1976 decided that the League be asked to clarify its relation to Christian Reformed laymen as stipulated in the Christian Laymen's League constitution. The Synod of 1976 also mandated the SIC to urge the CLL, in accord with its constitution, to relate and co-ordinate its program with those of the boards and agencies of our denomination. The Synod of 1976 also requested CLL not to adopt new programs before presenting them to SIC for evaluation.

C. *Recommendation:* That synod give continued approval to the CLL for accreditation with the understanding that they continue working on the stipulations, specified by the Synod of 1976 (Acts of Synod 1976, p. 47).

Ground: The SIC reports that the CLL is in the process of complying with these directives.

ARTICLE 80

Advisory Committee 8, *World Ministries*, the Rev. J. Morren reporting, presents the following: (The report of Advisory Committee 8 is continued from Article 56.)

I. REAPPOINTMENT OF EXECUTIVE SECRETARY, BCRWM, DR. EUGENE RUBINGH

A. *Material:* Report 3.

B. *Recommendation:* That synod reappoint Dr. Eugene Rubingh as executive secretary for the Board for Christian Reformed World Missions for four years.

Ground: Dr. Rubingh was appointed by synod in 1975 to an initial two-year term as executive secretary. He has served well, and is recommended now by the CRWM board for an additional four-year term.

—*Adopted*

II. OVERTURE 16 RE COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL JUSTICE

A. *Material*: Overture 16 from Classis Hackensack.

B. *Observations*:

Classis Hackensack raises very important consideration re the question of the church's address to matters of social justice in our day, and asks for a standing committee to serve the church in these concerns.

Your advisory committee feels that there are likely other possibilities than another standing committee of synod, and feels that before such a standing committee would be appointed, a study committee could serve synod well in exploring various other possibilities.

C. *Recommendations*:

1. That synod appoint a one-year study committee with the mandate of dealing with Overture 16, which requests a standing committee on social justice. This committee is to study the ways that we as Christians of the Reformed faith, as individuals, and as a denomination can most effectively speak to the issues of social justice in our world. In dealing with the questions raised in the overture, the committee is encouraged to work closely with other organizations with similar concerns, for example, The Task Force on World Hunger, The Canadian Committee on Social Justice, etc.

Grounds:

a. The Scriptures provide numerous examples of, and directives regarding, God's demands for justice and his sending of prophets with this testimony to those in high places. (Cf. Exodus 6:10-13; Isaiah 3:14; Ezekiel 45:9; Daniel 4:27; Micah 6:8; Luke 3:18-20 and Acts 24:25.)

b. A study committee, such as proposed would find a working model for a possible committee on social justice in the Committee on Justice and Liberty of the Council of Christian Reformed Churches in Canada.

c. The question of social justice is a tremendously important and relevant question today, and is likely to be one in which the church must be giving positive leadership and direction in the immediate future.

d. Before the formation of any specific standing committee for social justice, it is likely wise to make a study of the various organizations presently surfacing in the area of social justice. —*Adopted*

2. That synod declare this to be its answer to Overture 16. —*Adopted*

3. That synod request the SIC to appoint the committee. —*Adopted*

ARTICLE 81

Advisory Committee 12, *Appointments*, Dr. F. Steen reporting, presents the following list of appointments for synodical approval:

I. OFFICERS AND FUNCTIONARIES

A. *Officers*

1. Stated Clerk: the Rev. Wm. P. Brink (1978).

2. Denominational Financial Coordinator: Mr. A. Vroon (1980).

3. Synodical Treasurer: Mr. L. Ippel (1978); Alt.: Mr. Clarence De Vries (1980).

B. Functionaries

1. Arrangements and Reports for Synod: G. Kamp, L. Ippel, Harry Faber.

2. Archivist: Dr. Herbert Brinks.

—*Adopted*

II. SYNODICAL DEPUTIES

Classis	Delegate	Alternate	Term Expires
Alberta North	Rev. N. B. Knoppers	Rev. R. Stienstra	1978
Alberta South	Rev. J. Joosse	Rev. D. Velthuisen	1979
Atlantic Northeast	Rev. R. Wildschut	Dr. J. VanderLaan	1980
British Columbia	Rev. D. Pierik	Rev. P. Jonker	1978
Cadillac	Rev. G. Heyboer	Rev. B. VanAntwerpen	1979
California South	Rev. D. Negen	Rev. C. VanderPlate	1980
Central California	Rev. N. Vanderzee	Rev. L. Dykstra	1980
Chatham	Rev. L. Slofstra	Rev. J. Nutma	1980
Chicago North	Rev. G. Vanderhill	Rev. A. Walma	1979
Chicago South	Rev. J. DeKruyter	Rev. J. VanderLugt	1978
Columbia	Rev. J. M. Moes	Rev. H. Spaan	1979
Eastern Canada	Rev. A. Vanden Ende	Rev. L. Mulder	1980
Florida	Rev. F. Diemer	Rev. E. Heerema	1979
Grand Rapids East	Rev. T. Hofman	Rev. J. C. Medendorp	1978
Grand Rapids North	Rev. W. Vander Hoven	Rev. H. Teitsma	1978
Grand Rapids South	Rev. M. Goote	Rev. A. E. Pontier	1980
Grandville	Rev. L. Bossenbroek	Rev. H. Erffmeyer	1980
Hackensack	Rev. B. Buursma	Rev. A. Stienstra	1980
Hamilton	Rev. H. R. DeBolster	Rev. J. G. Klomps	1978
Holland	Rev. W. Vander Haak	Rev. B. Den Ouden	1978
Hudson	Rev. W. Kooienga	Rev. J. Kruis	1980
Huron	Dr. R. Kooistra	Rev. P. Breedveld	1980
Illiana	Rev. A. Verburg	Rev. H. Arnold	1979
Kalamazoo	Rev. W. Buursma	Rev. H. VanderKam	1978
Lake Erie	Rev. J. T. Malestein	Rev. A. Hoksbergen	1979
Minnesota North	Rev. T. Wevers	Rev. R. Kok	1980
Minnesota South	Rev. P. Brouwer	Rev. J. Bultman	1980
Muskegon	Rev. T. Verseput	Rev. A. Hoogstrate	1979
Northcentral Iowa	Rev. J. Elenbaas	Rev. F. Walhof	1979
Orange City	Rev. J. Fondse	Dr. P. Y. De Jong	1980
Pacific Northwest	Rev. W. Ackerman	Rev. R. Vermeer	1980
Pella	Rev. S. Kramer	Rev. F. Van Houten	1978
Quinte	Rev. D. C. Los	Rev. A. De Jager	1980
Rocky Mountain	Rev. J. Kok	Rev. A. Mulder	1978
Sioux Center	Rev. J. Engbers	Rev. H. VandenHeuvel	1979
Toronto	Rev. C. Fennema	Rev. J. B. Vos	1980
Wisconsin	Rev. P. Vis	Rev. N. Haan	1978
Zeeland	Rev. A. E. Rozendal	Rev. O. De Groot	1978

—*Adopted*

III. BOARDS AND COMMITTEES

A. Back to God Hour

Member	Term Expires
Rev. A. Vanden Ende	1980
Mr. W. Vriesman	1980
Mr. S. Vermeer	1980
Mr. C. Wagenaar	1978
Rev. D. Clark	1978
Mr. H. Kooy	1978
Mr. A. Geurkink	1978
Rev. J. Eppinga	1978

Rev. S. Yazzie.....	1978
Mr. W. Voortman.....	1978
Mr. R. Struyk.....	1979
Rev. E. Los.....	1979
Rev. H. VanderWell.....	1979
Dr. R. Seven.....	1979

—Adopted

B. Board of Trustees—Calvin College and Seminary

Classis	Delegate	Alternate	Term Expires
Alberta North.....	Rev. H. De Moor, Jr.....		
Alberta South.....	Rev. F. Breisch.....	Rev. D. Velthuisen.....	1978
Atlantic Northeast.....	Rev. R. W. DeVries.....	Mr. J. W. Kuipers.....	1980
British Columbia.....	Rev. J. Kits.....	Rev. P. Jonker.....	1979
Cadillac.....	Rev. B. VanAntwerpen.....	Mr. H. Boehm.....	1978
California South.....	Rev. S. Cooper.....	Dr. A. Pauw.....	1980
Central California.....	Mr. D. Mellema.....		1980
Chatham.....	Rev. J. J. Hoytema.....		1980
Chicago North.....	Rev. R. Grevengoed.....	Rev. G. Vanderhill.....	1980
Chicago South.....	Rev. J. Vander Lugt.....	Rev. H. Vellinga.....	1978
Columbia.....	Rev. H. Leeestma.....	Rev. J. L. Alferink.....	1978
Eastern Canada.....	Rev. M. Geleyense.....	Rev. D. Tigchelaar.....	1979
Florida.....	Rev. H. Karsten.....	Rev. W. Hofman.....	1979
Grand Rapids East.....	Rev. W. De Jong.....	Rev. J. C. Medendorp.....	1978
Grand Rapids North.....	Mr. R. Hoekstra.....	Rev. C. Werkema.....	1979
Grand Rapids South.....	Rev. A. Brink.....	Rev. J. M. Hofman.....	1979
Grandville.....	Rev. L. Van Drunen.....	Rev. P. Vander Weide.....	1979
Hackensack.....	Mr. G. Monsma.....	Rev. P. Holtrop.....	1980
Hamilton.....	Rev. R. J. Sikkema.....	Rev. A. H. Venema.....	1979
Holland.....	Rev. W. Vander Haak.....	Rev. J. Leugs.....	1980
Hudson.....	Dr. J. Timmer.....	Rev. G. Frens.....	1980
Huron.....	Rev. A. Van Geest.....	Rev. P. Breedveld.....	1978
Illiana.....	Dr. E. Roels.....	Rev. C. Zylstra.....	1979
Kalamazoo.....	Rev. H. Bouma.....	Rev. F. De Boer.....	1979
Lake Erie.....	Dr. R. Swierenga.....	Rev. C. Bajema.....	1979
Minnesota North.....	Rev. R. Kok.....	Rev. B. Becksvooort.....	1980
Minnesota South.....	Rev. J. VanStempvoort.....	Rev. J. Bultman.....	1980
Muskegon.....	Rev. D. Van Beek.....		1980
Northcentral Iowa.....	Rev. F. Einfeld.....	Rev. L. Kuiper.....	1980
Orange City.....	Rev. P. De Haan.....	Rev. J. Sittema.....	1980
Pacific Northwest.....	Rev. O. Duistermars.....	Rev. W. Ackerman.....	1980
Pella.....	Rev. H. Petersen.....	Rev. S. Kramer.....	1979
Quinte.....	Rev. G. Corvers.....	Rev. D. C. Los.....	1979
Rocky Mountain.....	Rev. J. Boonstra.....	Rev. R. Veenstra.....	1978
Sioux Center.....	Rev. D. Smit.....	Rev. P. Bakker.....	1979
Toronto.....	Rev. L. Tamminga.....	Rev. C. Tuyl.....	1978
Wisconsin.....	Rev. L. Baker.....	Rev. J. Hoeksema.....	1979
Zeeland.....	Rev. T. Brouwer.....	Rev. A. Hannink.....	1978
Members-At-Large			
Eastern District.....	Mr. T. Wiersma.....	Mr. H. VanDenend.....	1978
Central District.....	Mrs. K. De Mol.....	Mr. A. Bultman.....	1978
	Mr. H. J. Bloem.....	Dr. W. De Young.....	1979
	Mr. N. De Graaf.....	Mr. K. Bergsma.....	1979
	Dr. H. Van Reken.....	Mr. W. Post.....	1979
	Dr. G. Niemeyer.....	Dr. H. Triesenberg.....	1980
	Mr. C. Nagel.....	Dr. T. Vanden Berg.....	1980
Midwest District.....	Mr. W. Geurkink.....	Mr. L. Veldhuizen.....	1980
Far West District.....	Mr. M. Hekman.....	Mr. H. TeVelde.....	1978

—Adopted

C. Christian Reformed Board for World Missions

Classis	Delegate	Alternate	Term Expires
Alberta North	Rev. H. Salomons	Rev. P. Dekker	1980
Alberta South	Rev. E. DenHaan	Rev. D. Velthuisen	1978
Atlantic Northeast	Rev. G. Cooper	Rev. J. Admiraal	1979
British Columbia	Mr. G. Ouwerkerk	Rev. G. Hogeterp	1980
Cadillac	Rev. K. Van Wyk	Rev. F. Van Dyk	1980
California South	Rev. J. Howerzyl	Rev. J. Gray	1980
Central California	Rev. G. Ebbers	Rev. P. Yang	1980
Chatham	Rev. S. Van Daalen	Rev. L. Slofstra	1979
Chicago North	Rev. C. Van Essen	Mr. A. DeJong	1979
Chicago South	Rev. W. Boelkins	Rev. P. Han	1980
Columbia	Rev. J. Petersen	Rev. R. D. Steen	1978
Eastern Canada	Rev. J. Quartel	Rev. A. VandenEnde	1980
Florida	Rev. F. Diemer	Rev. C. Van Ens	1979
Grand Rapids East	Rev. W. Timmer	Rev. D. Stravers	1978
Grand Rapids North	Rev. G. P. Veenstra	Mr. J. S. Brondsema	1979
Grand Rapids South	Mr. H. Scholten	Dr. P. Dommisse	1978
Grandville	Rev. J. Uitvlugt	Rev. S. Cammenga	1979
Hackensack	Rev. C. Niewenhuis	Rev. J. Rickers	1980
Hamilton	Rev. J. De Jong	Rev. H. VanderPlaat	1979
Holland	Rev. E. Bradford	Mr. M. Essenburg	1979
Hudson	Rev. W. Kosten	Rev. L. VanderZee	1980
Huron	Rev. C. Bishop	Rev. B. Bakker	1980
Illiana	Rev. A. Lindemulder	Rev. L. Smits	1979
Kalamazoo	Rev. H. Brink	Rev. S. Bultman	1978
Lake Erie	Rev. J. Hollebeek	Rev. A. Hoogewind	1980
Minnesota North	Rev. C. J. Toeset		1980
Minnesota South	Rev. H. Vanderaa	Rev. W. Van Hal	1980
Muskegon	Rev. J. Morren	Mr. G. Hasper	1980
Northcentral Iowa	Rev. K. VanDeGriend	Rev. R. DeYoung	1980
Orange City	Mr. F. Vogel	Mr. F. Hubers	1978
Pacific Northwest	Rev. D. Bouma	Rev. S. Workman	1979
Pella	Rev. R. Holwerda	Rev. F. VanHouten	1978
Quinte	Rev. R. W. Popma	Rev. A. Vanden Pol	1979
Rocky Mountain	Rev. P. Redhouse	Rev. M. Heyboer	1978
Sioux Center	Rev. J. Kroon	Rev. R. Blauw	1979
Toronto	Rev. J. B. Vos		1979
Wisconsin	Rev. P. Vis	Rev. J. Meyer	1979
Zeeland	Mr. O. Aukeman	Rev. G. W. Sheeres	1980
Members-At-Large			
Eastern Canada	Mr. S. Harkema (1978)	Mr. J. Oegema	1979
Western Canada	Mr. N. Brouwer		1980
Eastern U.S.	Mrs. J. Bosma		1980
Midwest U.S.	Mr. G. Kuik		1980
Far West U.S.	Dr. H. De Jong		1980
Central U.S.	Mr. D. Radius		1980
	Mr. D. Bratt (1978)	Mr. E. Dykstra	1979
	Mr. A. Huibregtse	Dr. M. Sharda	1979

—Adopted

D. Christian Reformed Board of Home Missions

Classis	Delegate	Alternate	Term Expires
Alberta North	Rev. J. Boonstra		1978
Alberta South	Mrs. B. Walpot	Rev. H. Wildeboer	1980
Atlantic Northeast	Rev. P. Vermaat	Rev. L. B. Mensink	1979
British Columbia	Rev. P. DeBruyne	Rev. C. Spoor	1980
Cadillac	Rev. W. Vanden Bosch	Mr. G. Koster	1978
California South	Rev. L. Tanis	Rev. D. Negen	1978

Classis	Delegate	Alternate	Term Expires
Central California	Dr. R. Gritter	Mr. O. Heersink	1980
Chatham	Rev. P. Kranenburg	Rev. R. Fisher	1979
Chicago North	Rev. J. Ebbers	Rev. R. Grevengoed	1979
Chicago South	Rev. R. M. Hartwell	Rev. G. Hutt	1978
Columbia	Rev. J. Jeffers	Mr. E. Boeve	1979
Eastern Canada	Rev. G. Ringnald		1980
Florida	Mr. J. Hofman	Rev. J. Vander Laan	1980
Grand Rapids East	Rev. R. G. Timmerman	Mr. P. G. Wobbema	1980
Grand Rapids North	Rev. E. Knott	Rev. M. Groenendyk	1979
Grand Rapids South	Rev. W. Swets	Rev. N. R. Prins	1979
Grandville	Rev. L. Kerkstra	Rev. K. Vis	1980
Hackensack	Rev. A. Rienstra	Rev. S. Vander Klay	1978
Hamilton	Rev. J. Zantingh	Rev. J. Groen	1980
Holland	Mr. G. Vander Bie	Mr. J. Dykstra	1979
Hudson	Rev. D. Wisse	Rev. P. Zylstra	1980
Huron	Rev. J. Koole	Rev. L. J. Howerzyl	1978
Illiana	Rev. E. Cooke	Rev. H. Vanderwell	1978
Kalamazoo	Rev. G. Rozenboom	Mr. B. Sharpe	1979
Lake Erie	Rev. A. Machiela	Rev. D. Postema	1979
Minnesota North	Rev. M. Reitsma	Rev. R. Buining	1980
Minnesota South	Rev. P. Brouwer	Rev. H. Lamsma	1980
Muskegon	Rev. G. Postema	Mr. J. Klomp	1980
Northcentral Iowa	Rev. C. Roelofs	Rev. F. Walhof	1979
Orange City	Dr. A. Boeve	Rev. J. Cooper	1979
Pacific Northwest	Rev. W. Vanden Bos	Rev. R. VanderLey	1979
Pella	Mr. J. Hugen	Mr. M. Klyn	1978
Quinte	Rev. H. Katerberg	Rev. A. J. Vanden Pol	1980
Rocky Mountain	Rev. J. Hofman, Jr.	Mr. W. Rozema	1979
Sioux Center	Rev. W. Brouwers		1979
Toronto	Rev. S. VanderMeer		1980
Wisconsin	Rev. G. Van Enk	Mr. J. Ribbens	1979
Zeeland	Rev. B. Mulder	Mr. C. Scholma	1980

Members-At-Large

Central U.S.	Mr. M. Van Dellen	Mr. R. De Boer	1978
	Mr. E. Berends	Mr. W. Peterson	1978
	Mr. R. Vos	Mr. P. Van Putten	1978
	Miss G. Vander Ark	Mr. M. Vander Ark	1979
	Mr. H. Soper	Mr. R. Rottschäfer	1980
Eastern U.S.	Mr. R. Fiemster	Mr. H. Van Denend	1978
Western U.S.	Dr. J. Vander Beek	Mr. M. Tanis	1978
Rocky Mountain	Mr. H. Thomas, Jr.	Mr. W. G. Bowman	1980
Southwest Ontario	Mr. H. Nieman	Dr. J. Oosterhuis	1979
Eastern Canada	Dr. D. H. Poel	Dr. B. Kiesekamp	1978
Western Canada	Mr. B. Bult	Mr. M. Jurius	1978

—Adopted

E. Christian Reformed Board of Publications

Classis	Delegate	Alternate	Term Expires
Alberta North	Rev. G. Pols	Rev. S. DeWaal	
Alberta South	Mrs. G. Haagsma	Rev. H. VanNiejenhuis	1980
Atlantic Northeast	Mr. T. K. Dykstra	Mr. N. G. Bruinsma	1979
British Columbia	Rev. J. Tuininga	Mr. A. Peetoom	1978
Cadillac	Dr. J. B. Koops	Rev. G. Heyboer	1979
California South	Rev. C. Van der Plate	Rev. M. Zylstra	1979
Central California	Mrs. R. Donker	Dr. H. De Jong	1979
Chatham	Rev. A. Beukema	Rev. H. Getkate	1979
Chicago North	Miss B. Bean	Mr. A. Hoving	1978
Chicago South	Rev. N. Punt	Rev. D. Zylstra	1978

Classis	Delegate	Alternate	Term Expires
Columbia	Rev. T. Dykman	Rev. P. Niewiek	1980
Eastern Canada	Mrs. S. Cook	Mr. H. Van Schepen	1980
Florida	Mr. P. Witte	Mr. R. Sikkenga	1980
Grand Rapids East	Dr. W. Spoelhof	Miss N. VanderArk	1980
Grand Rapids North	Mr. C. Barendrecht	Mr. J. Day	1980
Grand Rapids South	Rev. W. H. DeVries	Mr. R. Otte	1980
Grandville	Rev. W. Van Antwerpen	Rev. L. Bossenbroek	1978
Hackensack	Miss D. Kelder	Miss W. Knoll	1978
Hamilton	Rev. J. Kuntz	Mr. S. DeJong	1979
Holland	Mr. R. Holwerda	Mr. D. Zwier	1978
Hudson	Miss L. Eiten	Mr. I. Martin	1980
Huron	Mrs. J. K. Boersma	Mrs. B. Nalda	1979
Illiana	Rev. P. Brink	Rev. I. Apol	1980
Kalamazoo	Dr. S. Dykstra	Dr. D. Hendriksen	1979
Lake Erie	Rev. A. Hoksbergen	Mrs. C. Beversluis	1978
Minnesota North	Mr. S. Osenga	Rev. B. Becksvoot	1979
Minnesota South	Rev. B. DenHerder	Rev. H. Baak	1978
Muskegon	Rev. M. Beelen	Mr. D. Schelhaas	1978
Northcentral Iowa	Mr. A. Cooper	Mrs. W. Geiken	1978
Orange City	Mr. H. Pluim	Mr. N. Vander Ark	1978
Pacific Northwest	Rev. S. Pastine	Rev. R. Slager	1980
Pella	Rev. S. VanderPlaats	Mr. R. DeJager	1980
Quinte	Mr. W. Vos	Rev. A. DeJager	1979
Rocky Mountain	Rev. G. DeVelder	Mr. T. Weeda	1977
Sioux Center	Mr. M. Alons	Mr. H. Haak	1980
Toronto	Rev. M. Greidanus	Rev. A. Kuyvenhoven	1978
Wisconsin	Mr. W. Leys	Mr. F. Stremmler	1980
Zeeland	Rev. S. Newhouse	Rev. C. VanderMeyden	1980

Executive Business Committee

Mr. Jack Brouwer (1978)

Mr. Kenneth J. Horjus (1978)

Mr. Preston Kool (1979)

Mr. Everett Huizenga (1980)

Education Committee

Dr. S. Dykstra (1979)

Dr. D. Bergsma (1979)

Rev. H. DeRooy

(Home Missions Rep.)

Mr. Barry Foster (1979)

Rev. M. Greidanus (1978)

Prof. W. C. Hendriks (1980)

Mr. K. Horjus (1978)

Miss Cora Vogel (1978)

Mrs. R. Van Reken (1979)

Dr. Marion Snapper (1979)

Periodicals Committee

Mr. R. Holwerda (1978)

Rev. M. Beelen (1978)

Mr. J. Brouwer (1978)

Rev. A. Hoksbergen (1978)

Dr. H. Stob (1978)

Dr. J. Timmerman (1980)

Rev. W. Van Antwerpen (1978)

Mr. Preston Kool (1979)

—Adopted

F. Christian Reformed World Relief Committee

Classis	Delegate	Alternate	Term Expires
Alberta North	J. Ellen	H. Vriend	1980
Alberta South	D. VanderWekken	J. F. VandenDool	1979
Atlantic Northeast	A. Jackson		1980
British Columbia	A. Tukker	J. Snel	1980
Cadillac	J. Gernaat	W. Hoekwater	1978
California South	P. Scholten	A. Parkes	1980
Central California	L. Fondse	C. DeJong	1978
Chatham	M. Vander Zwan	A. Bisschop	1980
Chicago North	A. Hoving	H. Buurma	1978
Chicago South	F. Iwema	R. Wolterink	1978

Classis	Delegate	Alternate	Term Expires
Columbia	H. Buys	M. Feddes	1979
Eastern Canada	J. W. Potma	S. Tabak	1980
Florida	D. Bouwer	J. Meiste	1978
Grand Rapids East	D. Gabrielse		1980
Grand Rapids North	D. Molewyk	W. Duthler	1980
Grand Rapids South	Dr. H. J. Kreulen	H. J. Blacquiére	1978
Grandville	J. Sjoersdma	A. Haan	1980
Hackensack	G. Kuipers	A. Statema	1978
Hamilton	J. Kerkhof	K. Mantel	1979
Holland	H. Lubbers	C. J. Hulst	1980
Hudson	R. Kuiken	Dr. V. De Vries	1980
Huron	W. Klompenhower	H. Exel	1978
Illiana	G. Kroll	N. Zuidema	1979
Kalamazoo	J. VanderPloeg	A. Woltersom	1978
Lake Erie	K. Verburg	R. Pennings	1979
Minnesota North	L. Ruis	J. S. Zondervan	1980
Minnesota South	R. Van Essen	W. VanderWerf	1978
Muskegon	Dr. N. Boeve	D. Reinders	1980
Northcentral Iowa	H. Eiten	C. VanderPloeg	1979
Orange City	F. TenNapel	M. Visser	1978
Pacific Northwest	T. Lund	H. Wouters	1979
Pella	R. D. Dieleman	K. VanGilst	1979
Quinte	P. Feddema	W. Piersma	1979
Rocky Mountain	B. Muller	K. Schneider	1979
Sioux Center	R. DeStigter	Dr. W. Alberda	1978
Toronto	A. VanderMeulen	W. Rekker	1979
Wisconsin	J. Thonus	F. Sterk	1980
Zeeland	B. Hulst	J. Meyer	1978

Members-At-Large

Medical	Dr. D. De Vries	Dr. P. Van Vliet	1978
Business Person	K. Holtvluwer	Miss D. Tuinstra	1979
Attorney	C. Van Valkenburg	D. Swierenga	1978
Accountant	D. Pruis	E. Westenbroek	1980
Minister	Rev. J. Bergsma	Rev. J. Heerema	1980
Sociologist	J. Tuinstra	H. Start	1980

—Adopted

G. Synodical Interim Committee

District	Member	Alternate	Term Expires
Far West U.S.	Mr. E. Blankers	Mr. J. N. Snapper	1978
	Rev. L. Dykstra	Rev. T. Van Kooten	1979
Western Canada	Rev. P. Van Egmond	Rev. N. B. Knoppers	1980
Rocky Mountain to Mississippi River	Mr. H. Vermeer	Dr. S. Kanis	1978
	Rev. J. Kok	Rev. H. Petersen	1978
Central U.S.	Mr. F. Hollebeck	Mr. H. Petersen	1978
	Mr. W. Sytsema	Mr. G. Raterink	1979
	Mr. M. Ozinga	Mr. C. Ackerman	1980
	Dr. W. Spoelhof	Mr. I. Slagter	1980
	Rev. L. Hofman	Rev. J. De Kruyter	1980
	Rev. A. J. VanderGriend	Rev. J. Meppelink	1979
Eastern Canada	Rev. J. Van Harmelen	Rev. L. Tamminga	1978
	Mr. W. Posthumus	Mr. S. Harkema	1980
Eastern Coast U.S.	Dr. G. Stob	Rev. D. Wisse	1978

Stated Clerk, Denominational Financial Coordinator, and Synodical Treasurer, *ex officio*.

—Adopted

IV. STANDING COMMITTEES

A. *Back to God Tract Committee*: Mr. J. De Vos (1979), Mr. W. De Waard (1979), Mr. L. Haas (1979), Mr. S. Lambers (1979), Mr. K. Swets (1978), Mr. J. Tibbe (1979), Rev. W. Vander Hoven (1978), Rev. R. Broekhuizen (1980), Rev. C. Bremer (1980).

B. *Bible Translation Committee*: Dr. A. Bandstra, Dr. D. Holwerda, Rev. S. Bultman, Dr. D. Engelhard, Dr. B. Van Elderen, Dr. L. Vos, Dr. C. Vos, Dr. M. Woudstra.

C. *Chaplain Committee*: Dr. D. Van Halsema (1980), Mr. N. Berghoef (1980), Rev. D. Visser (1978), Mr. D. J. Swierenga (1978), Rev. J. Van Til (1979), Rev. M. Baarman (1979), Mr. Evert Vermeer (1979), Mr. Harold Mast (1979), Mrs. Jean Ettesvold (1979), Dr. Melvin Hugen (1980).

D. *Church Help Fund Committee*: Mr. H. Huizinga (1978), Rev. P. Bakker (1979), Rev. Louis Bouma (1979) Mr. T. Van Bruggen (1979), Rev. J. Fondse (1980), Alt., Mr. H. De Groot (1979), Alt., Rev. James Cooper (1980).

E. *Educational Assistance to Churches Abroad Committee*: Rev. J. Schuurmann (1978), Rev. J. Heerema (1978), Dr. R. De Ridder (1979), Mr. M. Essenburg (1979), Mrs. Edna Greenway (1980), Rev. Edward Van Baak (1980), Mr. W. Medendorp (1980).

F. *Fund for Needy Churches Committee*: Mr. J. Swierenga (1978), Mr. R. Schaafsma (1979), Rev. J. Vander Lugt (1978), Rev. George Holwerda (1980), Mr. G. Vande Werken (1980).

G. *Historical Committee*: Dr. L. Oostendorp, Dr. H. Zwaanstra, Dr. H. Ippel, Rev. J. Leugs.

H. *Interchurch Relations Committee*: Dr. J. Kromminga (1979), Rev. G. Bouma (1978), Dr. J. H. Bratt (1979), Rev. J. Kuntz (1980), Prof. J. Stek (1978), Mr. A. Bel (1979), Rev. W. Buursma (1980), Rev. C. Boomsma (1980), Rev. W. P. Brink, ex officio.

I. *Liturgical Committee*: Rev. A. Hoksbergen (1979), Rev. C. Bajema (1980), Dr. J. De Jong (1978), Rev. D. Hart (1978), Rev. N. Knoppers (1979), Dr. N. Wolterstorff (1979), Ms. N. Vander Ark (1979), Dr. R. Wells (1980).

J. *Ministerial Information Service Committee*: Rev. W. Van Peurseem (1978), Rev. D. Negen (1980), Rev. B. Niemeyer (1978), Mr. H. Te Velde (1978), Mr. G. Groen (1980), Mr. C. Vander Brug (1979).

K. *Ministers' Pension Fund Committee*: Mr. A. Walters (1978), Rev. J. Van Ryn (1978), Mr. P. Brouwers (1978), Mr. D. Oosterhouse (1978), Mr. R. Helder (1979), Rev. H. R. De Bolster (1979), Mr. C. Dornbush (1980), Mr. H. Kreeft (1980).

L. *Sermons for Reading Services Committee*: Rev. H. D. Praamsma (1980), Rev. M. N. Greidanus (1978), Rev. A. Venema (1979), Dr. R. Kooistra (1980).

M. *Synodical Committee on Race Relations*: Ms. E. Cortina (1978), Mr. J. Fernandez (1978), Rev. M. Beelen (1978), Rev. H. Uittenbosch (1978), Dr. P. Wong (1979), Mr. R. Pinto (1979), Mr. T. Taylor

(1979), Rev. G. Negen (1979), Dr. R. Mouw (1980); Ms. Carol Kramer (1980), Ms. M. Pioche (1980), Mr. S. Rhodes (1980), Mr. B. Hulst (1980).

N. *Unordained Employees' Pension Fund*: Mr. D. Oosterhouse (1979), Mr. A. Van Zee (1978), Mr. L. D. Bos (1979), Mr. L. Ippel (1979), Mr. M. Grevengoed (1979). —*Adopted*

V. REPRESENTATIVES

A. *American Bible Society*: Mr. D. Bush, Alt., Mrs. J. Last (1978).

B. *Canadian Bible Society*: Rev. K. Verhulst, Alt., Rev. A. Vanden Pol (1978).

C. *Christian Laymen's League*: Rev. D. Vanderwall, Alt., Rev. A. VanderGriend (1978).

D. *Dordt College*: Rev. J. Fondse (1979).

E. *Faith, Prayer and Tract League*: Mr. F. Brummel (1978).

F. *Lord's Day Alliance of Canada*: Rev. J. Zantingh., Alt., Rev. C. Tuyl (1978).

G. *Lord's Day Alliance of the U.S.*: Mr. R. Wezeman, Alt., Rev. E. Stuart (1978).

H. *Luke Society*: Dr. Ray De Haan (1980).

I. *Reformed Bible College*: Rev. D. Stravers, Alt., Rev. V. Luchies (1978).

J. *The Evangelical Literature League*: Mr. W. Schultze (1978).

K. *Trinity Christian College*: Mr. A. Hoving (1979).

L. *United Calvinist Youth*:

a. *Calvinist Cadet Corps*: Rev. E. Piersma, Alt., Rev. T. Lapinsky (1978).

b. *Calvinettes*: Mrs. J. Meyer, Alt., Mrs. D. Gebben (1978).

c. *Young Calvinist Federation*: Mr. R. Menkveld, Alt., Rev. H. Minnema (1978).

M. *World Home Bible League*: Rev. J. DeKruyter, Alt., Dr. E. Roels (1978). —*Adopted*

VI. STUDY COMMITTEES (First named is convener and chairman)

A. *Advisory Committee on Protests and Appeals*: Dr. T. Minnema, Mr. C. Van Valkenburg, Rev. P. Breedveld, Dr. J. Daling, Rev. J. Klomps, Mr. W. Piersma, Dr. F. Steen, Dr. H. Stob, Mr. G. Van Wyk; Alts., Rev. H. Petersen, Mr. R. Walter.

B. *Belgic Confession Translation Committee*: Dr. J. Primus, Mrs. Lois Read, Mrs. J. Hoekstra, Rev. P. Holtrop, Dr. A. Otten, Rev. L. Verduin, Dr. S. Wiersma.

C. *Biblical Teachings on Marriage and Divorce*: Rev. Wilbur Van Dyke, Dr. D. Holwerda, Dr. Robert Bakker, Mrs. Linda Dykstra, Rev. G. Gritter, Dr. Mel Huguen, Dr. J. Vander Laan, Dr. P. Van Katwyk, with one woman to be added by the SIC.

D. *Committee re Dr. Boer's Confessional-Revision Gravamen*: Rev. B. Nederlof, Dr. H. Zwaanstra, Dr. B. Van Elderen, Dr. A. A. Hoekema,

Rev. H. Hoekstra, Dr. R. Kooistra, Mr. J. Vander Ark, Dr. A. Wolters, Dr. N. Wolterstorff; Alts.: Rev. N. Plantinga, Dr. C. Kromminga, Mr. H. Bratt.

E. *Committee on "Lay-workers in Evangelism"*: Dr. A. DeJong, Rev. H. Arnold, Mr. Dirk Aardsma, Sr., Dr. Derke Bergsma, Mr. H. Bielema, Rev. R. Hartwell, Mr. C. Laning.

F. *Contemporary Testimony Committee*: Dr. G. Spykman, Rev. A. Kuyvenhoven, Rev. J. Eppinga, Rev. M. Greidanus, Rev. T. Hofman, Dr. R. Mouw, Rev. C. Tuyt.

G. *Hermeneutical Principles Concerning Women in Ecclesiastical Office*: (Continued) Dr. A. Bandstra, Dr. G. Van Groningen, Dr. P. Bremer, Dr. D. Engelhard, Dr. S. Greidanus, Dr. S. Kistemaker, Dr. M. Woudstra; Alt., Mr. C. Libolt.

H. *New Confessions Committee*: Dr. L. Oostendorp, Rev. M. Greidanus, Mr. H. Arens, Mr. S. DeYoung, Dr. J. Kromminga, Rev. F. Van Houten.

I. *Psalter Hymnal Revision Committee*: Mr. J. Van Laar, Miss E. Brink, Mr. B. Fioole, Dr. J. Hamersma, Mrs. M. Post, Rev. J. Reiffer, Dr. C. Seerveld, and two members to be appointed by SIC.

J. *Psalter Hymnal Supplement Committee*: (Continued) Dr. J. Hamersma, Mrs. M. Post, Mr. M. McGervey, Dr. C. Seerveld, Mr. G. Warmink, Mr. J. Worst, Mr. B. DeVries, Rev. J. Vriend, Mr. B. Polman.

K. *Service Committee for the Use of Members' Gifts*: Mrs. Rose Van Reken, Mrs. Claudia Beversluis, Rev. Jim Kok, Rev. L. Slofstra, Mrs. Bernice Vanden Berg, Mr. A. Walcott; Alts., Mrs. Thea B. Van Halsema, Dr. Wm. Stob, Mrs. Donna Hekman.

L. *Study Committee on Capital Punishment*: Dr. Henry Stob, Dr. Hessel Bouma, III, Dr. Stephen Monsma, Dr. Clarence Vos, Dr. Louis Vos.

M. *Committee in Loco-Clinton*: Rev. D. Evans, Mr. E. Ennema, Rev. J. Van Harmelen.

N. *Committee on Social Justice*: (To be appointed by the Synodical Interim Committee)

O. *Committee to Study Church Order Article 13a in the Light of the Guidelines for Understanding Ecclesiastical Office and Ordination*: (Continued) Rev. J. R. Kok, Rev. A. E. Mulder, Mr. M. Bosch, Mr. J. Hooyer, Mr. M. Van Dyke, Rev. L. Van Essen, Rev. D. Van Oyen.

ARTICLE 82

A letter of acceptance is received from Dr. E. Rubingh, expressing his gratitude for his reappointment as Executive Secretary of the Board for Christian Reformed World Missions. This is received as information.

The Stated Clerk presents to synod Mrs. Carol Smith and Mrs. Mary Braat, who served synod as secretaries in the synodical office, and also Laurey Zwart and Judy De Jong who served as assistants in the office. The delegates show their appreciation with applause.

ARTICLE 83

The minutes of the Friday, June 24 session are read and approved.

ARTICLE 84

The president of synod, the Rev. Bastiaan Nederlof, takes note of the good and cooperative spirit that prevailed at synod, addresses a word of thanks to the delegates, to the vice-president and the clerks, and expresses thanksgiving to God and the wish for God's blessing upon the decisions of synod, and upon the delegates, as well as our entire denomination.

The vice-president, Dr. P. Y. De Jong, expresses the gratitude of synod for the wise and judicious leadership of the president in conducting the sessions of synod.

The Stated Clerk, the Rev. W. P. Brink, in behalf of synod, presents inscribed gavels to the president and vice-president, and gratuities to the clerks of synod.

ARTICLE 85

The president in closing remarks, focuses synod's perspective on the power of the Word of God, reminding the delegates to walk in its power, and then asks the delegates to sing "Lord Speak to Me." The president leads synod in the closing prayer to which the delegates respond by adding their "Amen!"

The president declares the Synod of 1977 adjourned!

BASTIAAN NEDERLOF, president
PETER Y. DE JONG, vice-president
LOUIS TAMMINGA, first clerk
LEONARD J. HOFMAN, second clerk

Attested a true copy:

WILLIAM P. BRINK, stated clerk
2850 Kalamazoo Ave. SE
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49508

REPORTS OF BOARDS

REPORT 1

THE BACK TO GOD HOUR

(Arts. 30, 63)

The dedication of the International Communication Center on May 29, 1976, was a high point in our denominational life. This new facility, located in Palos Heights, Illinois, provides our church with a well designed headquarters for our broadcasting outreach, houses an up-to-date television studio, and is a center for program conception and development. The broad participation in the festivities that marked that day and the earnest dedication of the building, its equipment and the staff that work within it to the proclamation of our historic Reformed faith also made this day a significant step forward in our nearly four decades of using broadcasting to make our message known. And now, with this report to synod, we review the ministries that are headquartered and expressed within this new building

Each Back to God Hour Ministry Distinct It is often pointed out that The Back to God Hour has grown over the years to include ministries in eight different languages. While this numerical description of the work is helpful, it is more important that we understand that each of these ministries is distinct and each expresses a very specific approach to the culture it is designed to serve. The ministries are at various stages of development and each is surrounded by its own expectations. Moreover, all of these ministries are in flux as they try to be fully responsive to the peoples they serve. Formal data concerning these ministries are found in the tabulated material that accompanies this report.

The Back to God Hour Program Ministers to a Changing World In assessing the impact of The Back to God Hour program, it is important to remember that the broadcasting situation is considerably different in 1976 from what it was in 1946. Since World War II, the number of stations has increased rapidly, the half hour and hour radio show has disappeared, and new forms of music have defined radio sound. In spite of such drastic changes, this program continues to enjoy industry acceptance. This was underscored near the end of 1976 when the way was opened for airing the program on New York City's WOR on Wednesday evenings at 10:30, immediately after a well-known talk show, a possibility which increased the audience by 77,000 people. The maintenance of a program that is attractive to large, well-managed stations is essential if we are to reach large audiences. Listener response also continues to be encouraging and there is evidence that listener support of the work is growing. One

listener, living in downtown Chicago, contributed \$18,750, his gift accompanied by a rough, pencil-written note.

English as a Missionary Language Because of the wide-spread use of English throughout the world, The Back to God Hour Committee (hereafter called "the committee") has developed several overseas releases in this language. The regular Back to God Hour program is used throughout Australia and is heard in New Zealand. After some adjustments are made, this program is also played in Africa, Europe, the Far East and South America over missionary stations. In addition, a special program called *Radio Today* is broadcast daily from the island of Bonaire and from the Seychelles, into countries like troubled Uganda, Tanzania, and Kenya. The response to this new release of *Radio Today* has been encouraging.

Arabic Ministry Experiences Breakthrough The Arabic ministry of The Back to God Hour, directed by the Rev. Bassam Madany, a native of the Middle East, received remarkable response during 1976. When one remembers that the ministry, started in 1958, received virtually no response whatsoever during its initial years, the sometimes more than 1000 letters a month which it began to receive during 1976 is astonishing. Several factors have caused the ground swell of interest in the Arabic work. First, it has been possible to increase the frequency of the broadcasts and their coverage by the use of a powerful station on the island of Cyprus. Secondly, radio is an extremely dominant form of communication where this broadcast is heard. Thirdly, Islam is faltering and the young are actively examining other religious options. With all this, we sense the special blessing of the Lord, who we believe is using this broadcast to bring reformation to North Africa and the Middle East, areas of the world in which Christianity once flourished and where it may well flourish again. This Arabic ministry is exceptionally satisfying because the expenditure of relatively small amounts of money results in a very complete and dominant ministry that influences an extremely widespread area.

Spanish Program Reaches Many Nations Under the direction of the Rev. Juan Boonstra, the Spanish language offerings of the committee are heard in many different Latin American countries, in Central America, in Spain itself, and in many places in the United States where Spanish is spoken. Possibilities for broadcasting in Spanish are manifold since station availability in the target area is high. The Spanish department produces radio programs in several formats, including the daily broadcast from Bonaire called *Radio 316*, and a daily broadcast from HCJB called *Alpha and Omega*. Its television program *Reflexion* is also broadcast in select areas along with radio broadcasts, giving our Spanish ministry an opportunity to reach an even wider audience. Careful attention to listeners' need for literature and pastoral correspondence confronts this department with enormous record keeping responsibilities. This ministry is conducted in a context in which hundreds of different voices compete for attention, and it is sorely needed

as an antidote for some of the bizarre expressions of religion that are found within the nations it reaches.

Chinese Ministry Benefits from Widespread Network The Chinese language ministry, which was expanded in 1976 to include offerings in both Mandarin and Cantonese, uses several powerful radio stations to insure that the entire population of China is covered by this broadcast. They are located on Cheju Island, Korea, at Incheon, Korea, on the island of Luzon, the Philippines, and Swaziland, Africa. In addition, stations in Vancouver, Canada, and San Francisco bring the broadcast to the large Chinese populations who live in these cities. The Rev. Isaac Jen (pronounced *Run*), a minister with a great deal of experience as a home missionary, a foreign missionary, and as a teacher, a native of Shanghai, China, provides this ministry with the leadership that is necessary to insure program distribution to this wide-spread network, but even more importantly, his experience equips him to present his material in a way that is meaningful for the Chinese nation. The year 1976 saw the first response from Communist China itself, and gradually we are hearing more from overseas Chinese as well.

Fifth Largest Nation, Indonesia, Scene of Back to God Hour Ministry In Indonesia, where atheism is illegal and the people are deeply interested in knowing more and more about religion, the Rev. Junus Atmarumeksa has conducted a ministry since 1969. The Rev. Mr. Atmarumeksa manages to maintain an effective network which presents his countrymen with several different programs. His programs also blanket the country from the powerful Far East Broadcasting station in Manila.

Portuguese Language Ministry Benefits from New Administration Though practically as old as the Indonesian ministry, it was not until 1976 that the Portuguese language ministry, heard throughout the mammoth country of Brazil, received a full-time administrator and speaker. He is the Rev. Wilson Castro Ferreira, a man with wide experience in his church, who now views conducting and improving the Portuguese language work as his primary task. His programs blanket the country from Bonaire, and he is now working on developing a network of local outlets as well. This ministry, headquartered in Campinas, Brazil, benefits from the interest and support of the Presbyterian Church of Brazil.

French Language Ministry Also Heard in Africa Another ministry of The Back to God Hour which has expanded significantly throughout 1976 because of the attention of a full-time administrator and speaker is the French language work. The Rev. Aaron Kayayan works diligently not only in the preparation of broadcasts heard throughout Europe, North Africa and Quebec, but he also carries out in-depth correspondence with listeners and supplies them with helpful literature. Since French is understood by most educated Euro-

peans, response comes from every European nation. Recently his African outreach was strengthened under the sponsorship of the Dutch Reformed Church of South Africa which now brings his programs over the powerful TWR station in Swaziland.

Board of World Missions and Back to God Hour Conduct Joint Mission in Japan The cooperative efforts of the Board of World Missions and The Back to God Hour have resulted in the presentation of a strong broadcast mission to Japan. Rev. Henry Bruinooge, of the Board of World Missions, supervises the Tokyo office which is the headquarters for The Back to God Hour radio programs. It was necessary to make an adjustment in one of these programs during 1976, reducing it from a ten-minute program to a five-minute program. The impact of this change is being watched carefully. The fifteen-minute long daily program enters Japan from Cheju island in Korea. This work is especially noteworthy because of the effective way the broadcasting activity is tied into the life of the Reformed Church of Japan.

Each Ministry Includes a Literature Outreach All of the ministers, both in Palos Heights and in the foreign offices, produce literature which brings in-depth studies to listeners. Generally it is possible to deliver these materials, though there are areas where government hostility toward Christianity makes letters and literature undeliverable. In some areas, correspondence to listeners is kept at a minimum so that listeners will not be put in jeopardy. The ministry of *Today (The Family Altar)* continues to be an outstanding element of this work. It enjoys a readership of more than 300,000, is sent to many countries, and is translated into several languages.

Groundwork Laid for CRC-TV in 1976 With the synodical decision that paved the way for the development of our television ministry, The Back to God Hour began to move forward in this new field. The development was accompanied by several frustrating elements, not wholly unexpected considering the size of this new venture. The full studio, which had been slated for completion no later than September, was actually not turned over to us until the middle of January. Moreover, staff training has been an extremely time-consuming matter as well.

Special Television Report to be Presented to Synod The Synod of 1976 mandated The Back to God Hour to continue to pursue its study of our church's use of television "in order to provide more specific guidelines regarding objectives, costs, program formats, and program emphases" (Art. 59). In the nature of the case, it would be premature for us to attempt to formulate such a report at this stage of our program development. The committee gave its approval to the program concept at its February meeting, and the staff is only now proceeding with the production of additional programs. It must also be remembered that this activity will not receive funding

until well into 1977. However, by the time that synod meets, it should be possible to provide the church with useful data and with the CRC-TV budget for 1978. In connection with this, the committee has determined to keep the expenditures for television within the \$10.00 per family quota figure for the year 1978 as well as for 1977. It is our feeling that this level of quota commitment will provide us with an adequate base to insure significant industry exposure at least for the initial years.

Administration of Back to God Hour under Area Representative Committee

The Back to God Hour Committee is comprised of ministers and laymen who represent areas of the United States and Canada. At present the committee members are: Rev. Richard J. Venema, president (Midwest Area), Dr. Sidney Greidanus, vice-president (Eastern Canada Area), Dr. Raymond Seven, treasurer (Chicagoland Area), Rev. Howard Vanderwell, secretary (Chicagoland Area), Rev. Dexter Clark (California Area), Rev. Jacob Eppinga (Southern Michigan Area), Mr. Abe Geurkink (Tri-State Area), Mr. Harold Kooy (Pacific Northwest Area), Rev. Eugene Los (Michigan Area), Mr. J. Robert Struyk (Eastern Area), Mr. Roger Triemstra (Chicagoland Area), Mr. William Voortman (Eastern Canada Area), Mr. Clarence Wagenaar (Western Canada Area), and Rev. Sampson Yazzie (Rocky Mountain Area).

Within the organization itself, Dr. Joel Nederhood is the Director, and Mr. Jerry Vreeman is his assistant. Rev. Bassam Madany supervises the Arabic and French language ministries, Rev. Juan Boonstra supervises the Spanish and the Portuguese language ministries, Rev. Isaac Jen supervises the Chinese language ministries, Mr. Donald Dykstra is the administrative manager, and Mr. Jack Mulder is the supervising producer.

With the growth of the organization over the last few years, the committee has engaged in an examination of internal structure and has adopted an organizational chart which will receive final revision and ratification in May. Near the end of 1976, Mr. Dykstra visited the foreign offices in Tokyo and Jakarta and the office of the Australian Back to God Hour which is supervised by the Synod of the Reformed Church in Australia. When one examines the large number of program releases in the tabulated material, it is obvious that most of the administrative matters of The Back to God Hour are related to production, and those who have management responsibilities are also deeply involved in program production. The Palos Heights staff consists of twenty-five full-time employees, and a number of interns are used for television.

Other Organizations Enable The Back to God Hour to Minister

In carrying on its work, The Back to God Hour has close relationships with a number of organizations that are deeply involved in our ministries. Among them are the large missionary radio organizations such as Far East Broadcasting, Trans World Radio, and HCJB. Moreover, we depend a great deal

upon the services of our advertising agency ADMARK, which represents us within the industry, and secures advantageous releases for us. RACOM Associates, a not-for-profit corporation that has been set up solely to promote The Back to God Hour, has served the organization well in a fund raising capacity, and the building program and much of the expansion that has recently occurred can be directly related to their aggressive, tireless work on behalf of this ministry.

To attempt to convey the impact Back to God Hour ministries are making is impossible if one is to observe the brevity that is appropriate for this report. Perhaps we can best sense the magnitude of this impact when we simply remind one another that each program release is designed to communicate the blessed message of the gospel. Obviously, some programs are more effective than others. But each is a vehicle to bring the message that we know is the most powerful force in the world. Obviously, I cannot begin to recount the evidences that are received over the course of a year that indicates that God is using these ministries to change people. But he is! And all of us who are involved are daily grateful for the privilege that is ours. The work is arduous. It is occasionally exceedingly frustrating. But it is marvelous and filled with joy.

There is no other denomination that has developed a broadcasting ministry such as the ministry the Christian Reformed Church has developed under the blessing of our Lord. As we represent our church we are very conscious of the exceptional way this work is supported by our people in prayer and by many other expressions of interest. The gifts that the Christian Reformed Church brings to this ministry are extremely impressive. So, working together, we can talk to individuals within the privacy of their homes and we can combat non-Christian world views.

So we join you in beseeching our Lord to strengthen us all. May he continue to use us in spite of our unworthiness. To him alone be the glory!

MATTERS REQUIRING SYNODICAL ATTENTION

1. The committee requests that Dr. J. Nederhood, and either the president, the Rev. R. Venema, or the secretary, the Rev. H. Vanderwell, be given the privilege of the floor when Back to God Hour matters are discussed.
2. The committee requests that the Rev. Aaron Kayayan be given permission to address synod on behalf of The Back to God Hour.
3. The committee requests approval of the French language ministry through June 1981.
4. Nominations:

CHICAGOLAND AREA

Mr. Norman Ozinga
Mr. Wayne Vriesman

EASTERN CANADA

Rev. Albert Dreise

Rev. Antonie Vanden Ende

MIDWEST AREA

Mr. Ted J. Van Bruggen

Mr. Stanley Vermeer

5. The committee requests that the proposed budget for 1978 be approved and the quota of \$25.00 be adopted.
6. The committee requests that synod recommend The Back to God Hour for one or more offerings for above quota needs.
7. The committee requests that synod recommend CRC-TV for one or more offerings for above-quota needs.

The Back to God Hour Committee
Dr. Joel Nederhood, Director

PROGRAM-BY-PROGRAM REPORT OF THE BACK TO GOD HOUR'S WORLD-WIDE BROADCAST SCHEDULE

Program	Language	Length in Min.	Format	Freq'cy	Coverage	Cost Basis	Stations	Total Number of Broadcasts (weekly)
1. The Back to God Hour	E	30	a	Wkly	USA & Canada	Paid*	269	269
2. The Back to God Hour (Overseas Release)	E	30	a	Wkly	Overseas	Paid*	30	30
3. The Back to God Hour (Australian Release)**	E	30	a	Wkly	Australia	Paid	15	15
4. Radio Today	EE	30	b	Daily	India, SE Asia	Paid	3	24
5. Insight	E	4.5	c	Daily	USA	Free	21	105
6. Racom Spots (Radio & TV)	E	1	d	NA	USA & Canada	Free	NA	NA
7. Saatu-L-Islah	A	30	a	Wkly	Arab World	Paid	2	3
8. Saatu-L-Islah	A	15	c	M-Sat.	Arab World	Paid	5	31
9. Saatu-L-Islah	A	15	c	M-Sat.	Arab World	Free	1	6
10. La Hora de la Reforma	S	15	a	Wkly	USA	Paid	5	5
11. La Hora de la Reforma	S	15	a	Wkly	USA	Free	4	18
12. La Hora de la Reforma	S	15	a	Wkly	L.A.	Paid	44	39
13. La Hora de la Reforma	S	15	a	Wkly	L.A.	Free	49	49
14. La Antorcha Espiritual	S	15	a	Wkly	MEX	Paid	11	11
15. Radio 316	S	30	b	Daily	L.A.	Paid	1	29
16. Alfa y Omega	S	30	b	Daily	L.A.	Paid	1	7
17. Reflexion	S	5	c	Daily	L.A.	Paid	5	13
18. Reflexion	S	5	c	NA	MEX	Paid	1	9
19. Reflexion	S	5	c	NA	USA	Paid	2	8
20. Reflexion	S	5	c	NA	USA	Free	1	7
21. Reflexion	S	5	c	NA	L.A.	Free	29	29
22. Reflexion	S	5	c	NA	MEX	Paid	1	3
23. Luz jara o Caminho	P	30	b	Daily	Bra.	Paid	1	7
24. Local Portuguese	P	15	b	Daily	Bra.	Paid	6	10
25. Perspective Reformees	F	15	a	Wkly	Canada	Paid	9	9
26. Perspective Reformees	F	15	a	Wkly	Europe	Paid	3	4
27. Perspective Reformees	F	15	a	Daily	Europe & Africa	Free	1	7
28. Majestic Plans***	I	5 & 15	NA	NA	Indonesia	NA	NA	NA
29. Window to Tomorrow	J	15	a/h	Daily	Japan	Paid	2	14
30. Asa no Kotoba	J	5	a	Daily	Japan	Paid	1	6
31. Good News for the Whole World	CM	15	a	Daily	China	Paid	2	16
32. Good News	CM	15	a	Tu-Th-Sa-Su	China	Paid	1	4
33. Good News	CC	15	a	Mo-We-Fr-Sa	China	Paid	1	4
34. Good News	CC	15	a	Monday	China	Paid	1	1
35. Good News (from May)	CM	15	a	Daily	China	Paid	1	7
36. Good News	CM	15	a	Daily	S.E. Africa	Free****	1	7
37. Good News	CM	15	a	Sunday	Vancouver	Paid	1	1
38. Good News	C	15	a	Sunday	Vancouver	Paid	1	1
39. Good News	M	15	a	Sunday	San Francisco	Paid	1	1
40. Good News	C	15	a	Sunday	San Francisco	Paid	1	1

CODE:

E - English
 A - Arabic
 S - Spanish
 P - Portuguese
 F - French
 I - Indonesian
 J - Japanese
 CM - Chinese Mandarin
 CC - Chinese Cantonese

a - Music/Sermon Format
 b - Magazine Format-News-Music-Message
 c - Talk Only
 d - Spot Announcements
 NA - Not applicable

* A sizable portion of the The Back to God Hour network is provided by stations on a free public service
 ** Produced and financed in cooperation with The Reformed Church in Australia
 *** Produced in cooperation with Geredja Kristen Indonesia and Indonesian Broadcasting Foundation
 **** Paid by Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk of South Africa

City	Station	Time	KHz	City	Station	Time	KHz
ALABAMA				GEORGIA			
Huntsville — WAAY		8:30 a.m.	1550	Atlanta — WSB		8:05 a.m.	750
Montgomery — WCOV		9:30 p.m.	1179	Warner Robins — WAVC		3:30 p.m.	1350
Ozark — WOAB-FM		8:30 a.m.	104.9				
ALASKA				GUAM			
Anchorage — KYAK		8:30 a.m.	650	Agana — KUAM		8:30 a.m.	610
Nome — KICY		7:30 a.m.	850				
North Pole — KJNP		4:00 p.m.	1170	HAWAII			
ARIZONA				Honolulu — KAIM		4:00 p.m.	870
Flagstaff — KCLS		8:30 p.m.	600	IDAHO			
Phoenix — KHEP (Sat.)		11:30 a.m.	1280	Boise — KGEM		9:00 a.m.	1140
Phoenix — KOOL		8:30 a.m.	960	Twin Falls — KLDX		9:00 a.m.	1310
Tuscon — KOPO		8:30 a.m.	1450	ILLINOIS			
CALIFORNIA				Carbondale — WCIL		9:30 a.m.	1020
Fresno — KMJ		10:00 a.m.	580	Champaign — WDWS		9:30 p.m.	1400
Los Angeles — KHJ		8:00 a.m.	930	Chicago — WEFM		10:00 a.m.	99.5
Modesto — KTRB		12:00 Noon	860	Chicago — WLAK-FM		8:00 a.m.	94.0
Modesto — KTRB-FM		12:00 Noon	104.1	Chicago — WMBI		4:30 p.m.	1110
Sacramento — KEBR-FM		4:00 p.m.	100.5	Lansing — WLNK-FM		8:30 a.m.	106.3
San Bernardino — KMEN		8:30 a.m.	1290	Rockford — WQFL-FM		7:30 p.m.	100.9
San Diego — KSDO		9:30 p.m.	1130	Rockford — WRCK		9:00 a.m.	1440
San Francisco — KABL		8:30 a.m.	960	INDIANA			
San Francisco — KEAR-FM		4:00 p.m.	97.3	Crown Point — WFLM-FM		8:30 a.m.	104.0
Santa Cruz — KSCO		9:30 p.m.	1080	Fort Wayne — WLYV		9:30 a.m.	1450
Santa Maria — KUHL		8:30 a.m.	1440	Indianapolis — WNDE		9:00 a.m.	1260
COLORADO				Lafayette — WXUS-FM		8:30 a.m.	92.7
Alamosa — KGIW		9:00 a.m.	1410	Terre Haute — WAAC		11:30 a.m.	1300
Denver — KOA		8:30 a.m.	850	IOWA			
Fort Collins — KCOL		9:30 p.m.	1410	Ames — KASI		9:30 a.m.	1430
Greeley — KYOU		8:30 p.m.	1450	Ames — KASI-FM (Sat.)		6:00 p.m.	107.1
Morrison (Denver) — KWBL-FM		8:30 p.m.	91.1	Cedar Rapids — KHAK		8:30 a.m.	1360
Pueblo — KPUB		9:00 a.m.	1480	Des Moines — WHO		11:00 p.m.	1040
CONNECTICUT				Iowa City — KXIC		9:00 a.m.	800
Hartford — WTIC-FM		8:00 a.m.	96.5	Knoxville — KTAV-FM		9:30 p.m.	92.1
Hartford — WTIC		8:30 a.m.	1080	LeMars — KLEM		8:30 a.m.	1410
Middletown — WIHS-FM		2:30 p.m.	104.9	Mason City — KRIB		8:30 a.m.	1490
DELAWARE				Ottumwa — KBIZ		8:30 a.m.	1240
Wilmington — WDEL		10:30 p.m.	1150	Sioux Center — KDCR-FM		8:30 a.m.	91.3
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA						& 9:30 p.m.	
Washington — WGMS		8:00 a.m.	570	Sioux City — KWSL		8:30 a.m.	1470
Washington — WGMS-FM		8:00 a.m.	103.5	Waterloo — KWWL		8:30 a.m.	1330
Washington — WWDC		8:30 a.m.	1260	KANSAS			
FLORIDA				Colby — KXXX		8:30 a.m.	790
Fort Lauderdale — WAFG-FM		6:00 p.m.	90.3	Topeka — WIBW		8:30 p.m.	580
Fort Meyers — WINK		9:30 p.m.	1240	Wichita — KFDI		10:00 p.m.	1070
Jacksonville — WJAX		10:30 p.m.	930	KENTUCKY			
Lake Worth — WLIZ		9:30 a.m.	1380	Louisville — WVEZ-FM		8:30 a.m.	107.0
Melbourne — WMMB		8:30 a.m.	1240	LOUISIANA			
Miami — WGBS		8:30 a.m.	710	New Orleans — WWL		8:00 a.m.	870
Miami — WLYF-FM		8:00 a.m.	101.5				
Miami — WCMU-FM		11:30 a.m.	89.7				
Orlando — WHOO		10:30 p.m.	990				
Sarasota — WKZM-FM		3:00 p.m.	105.5				
Tampa — WDAE		10:05 p.m.	1250				

City	Station	Time	KHz	City	Station	Time	KHz
MARYLAND				NEW JERSEY			
Baltimore	WFIL-FM	9:00 a.m.	101.9	Franklin	WSUS-FM	8:00 a.m.	102.3
Hagerstown	WJEJ	9:30 a.m.	1240	Newark	WFME-FM	5:30 p.m.	94.7
MASSACHUSETTS				NEW MEXICO			
Boston	WCOP	10:00 a.m.	1150	Albuquerque	KOB	9:00 a.m.	770
Waltham	WCRB-FM	8:30 a.m.	102.5	Farmington	KWYK	1:00 p.m.	960
West Yarmouth	WOCB	9:30 a.m.	1240	Gallup	KGAK	9:30 a.m.	1330
MICHIGAN				NEW YORK			
Battle Creek	WBCK	10:30 p.m.	930	Beacon	WBNR	9:30 a.m.	1260
Cadillac	WWAM	12:00 Noon	1370	Binghamton	WINR	8:30 a.m.	680
Charlotte	WCER	12:30 p.m.	1390	Buffalo	WWOL	10:30 p.m.	1120
Detroit	WCAR	8:30 a.m.	1130	New York City	WOR	8:30 p.m.	710
Flint	WFDF	10:30 p.m.	910	Rochester	WHAM	9:30 a.m.	1180
Fremont	WSHN (Sat.)	5:30 p.m.	1550	Schenectady	WGY	8:30 p.m.	810
Grand Haven	WGHN	4:00 p.m.	1370	Syracuse	WSOQ	11:00 a.m.	1220
Grand Rapids	WFUR	4:30 p.m.	1570	NORTH CAROLINA			
Grand Rapids	WFUR-FM (Mon.)	11:30 p.m.	102.9	Morganton	WMNC	10:30 p.m.	1430
Holland	WHTC	4:00 p.m.	1450	Plymouth	WPNC	9:00 a.m.	1470
Holland	WJBL	8:30 a.m.	1260	Raleigh	WPTF	10:00 a.m.	680
Jackson	WKHM	9:00 a.m.	970	Winston-Salem	WSJS	10:30 p.m.	600
Kalamazoo	WKZO	8:30 a.m.	590	NORTH DAKOTA			
Lansing	WJIM	8:00 a.m.	1240	Grand Forks	KRAD	9:00 a.m.	1590
Lansing	WJIM-FM	8:00 a.m.	97.5	OHIO			
Lapeer	WMPC	9:00 a.m.	1230	Akron	WAKR	9:30 a.m.	1590
Manistique	WTIQ	8:30 a.m.	1490	Cincinnati	WKRC	9:00 a.m.	550
Mount Pleasant	WCEN	8:00 p.m.	1150	Cincinnati	WWEZ-FM	8:30 a.m.	92.5
Muskegon	WKBZ	9:00 a.m.	850	Cleveland	WJW	8:30 a.m.	850
Saginaw	WSAM	11:30 a.m.	1400	Columbus	WTVN	8:30 a.m.	610
Saulte Ste Marie	WSOO	11:30 a.m.	1230	Dayton	WHIO	8:00 a.m.	1290
MINNESOTA				Toledo	WCWA	8:30 a.m.	1230
Duluth	WDSM	10:30 a.m.	710	Toledo	WSPD	9:30 p.m.	1370
Minneapolis-St. Paul	KSTP	10:30 p.m.	1500	Youngstown	WBBW	9:30 a.m.	1240
Minneapolis-St. Paul	KTIS	4:00 p.m.	900	OKLAHOMA			
Morris	KMRS	1:00 p.m.	1230	Hobart	KTJS (Sat.)	8:30 a.m.	1420
St. Cloud	KCLD	8:30 a.m.	1450	Oklahoma City	KOFM	9:30 a.m.	104.1
Wilmar	KWLM	1:00 p.m.	1340	Pawhuska	KOKN	8:30 a.m.	1500
Worthington	KWOA	12:00 Noon	730	OREGON			
MISSISSIPPI				Albany	KWIL	9:30 p.m.	790
Hattiesburg	WXXX	8:30 a.m.	1310	Portland	KXL	8:30 a.m.	750
Jackson	WJDX	8:00 a.m.	620	PENNSYLVANIA			
MISSOURI				Danville	WPGM	8:30 a.m.	1570
Kansas City	WHB	9:00 a.m.	710	Harrisburg	WCMB	8:30 a.m.	1460
St. Louis	KXOK	7:30 a.m.	630	Johnstown	WJAC-FM	8:30 a.m.	95.5
MONTANA				Philadelphia	WFLN	7:30 a.m.	900
Belgrade	KGWV	12:30 p.m.	630	Pittsburgh	WWSW	8:30 a.m.	970
Bozeman	KBMN	8:30 a.m.	1230	Washington	WJPA	9:30 a.m.	1450
Butte	KBOW	9:00 a.m.	550	York	WZIX	10:30 p.m.	1350
Great Falls	KMON	9:00 a.m.	560	PUERTO RICO			
NEBRASKA				Vieques	WIVV	9:00 p.m.	1370
Omaha	KLNG	9:00 a.m.	1490	RHODE ISLAND			
Scottsbluff	KNEB	9:00 a.m.	960	Providence	WEAN	9:00 a.m.	790

City	Station	Time	KHz	City	Station	Time	KHz
SOUTH CAROLINA				CANADA			
Greenville	WFBC	10:30 p.m.	1330	ALBERTA			
SOUTH DAKOTA				Brooks	CKBR	9:00 a.m.	1340
Rapid City	KVSR-FM	4:30 p.m.	97.9	Edmonton	CHQT	8:30 a.m.	1110
Vermillion	KVRA	7:30 p.m.	1570	Edson	CJYR	10:00 a.m.	970
Winner	KWYR	4:00 p.m.	1260	Fort McMurray	CJOK	9:00 a.m.	1230
Yankton	WNAX	10:15 p.m.	570	Peace River	CKYL	7:00 p.m.	610
TENNESSEE				Taber	CKTA	9:30 a.m.	1570
Knoxville	WRJZ	9:30 a.m.	620	BRITISH COLUMBIA			
Memphis	WREC	9:30 a.m.	600	Abbotsford	CFVR	11:30 a.m.	1240
Nashville	WSIX	8:00 a.m.	980	Burns Lake	CFLD	9:15 a.m.	1400
TEXAS				Duncan	CKAY	7:30 p.m.	1500
Dallas	KRLD	8:00 a.m.	1080	Osoyoos	CKOO	8:30 a.m.	1240
El Paso	KHEY	9:00 a.m.	690	Penticton	CKOK	8:30 a.m.	800
Houston	KPRC	8:30 a.m.	950	Smithers	CFBV	9:15 a.m.	1230
Lubbock	KFYO	10:15 p.m.	790	Summerland	CKSP	8:30 a.m.	1405
McAllen	KVMV-FM (Sat.)	11:30 p.m.	96.9	Vancouver	CJVB	9:00 a.m.	1470
San Antonio	WOAI	9:30 a.m.	1200	Vernon	CJIB	10:00 a.m.	940
UTAH				MANITOBA			
Brigham City	KBUH	8:30 a.m.	800	Altona	CFAM	9:30 a.m.	950
Logan	KVNU	9:00 a.m.	610	Boissevain	CJRB	9:30 a.m.	1220
Ogden	KLO	9:00 a.m.	1430	Steinbach	CHSM	9:30 a.m.	1250
Provo	KOVO	9:00 a.m.	960	Winnipeg	CKJS	9:15 a.m.	810
Salt Lake City	KALL	9:00 a.m.	910	NEW BRUNSWICK			
Salt Lake City	KSL	9:30 p.m.	1160	Fredericton	CFNB	10:30 a.m.	550
Vernal	KVEL	9:00 a.m.	1340	Newcastle	CFAN	9:30 a.m.	790
VIRGINIA				NOVA SCOTIA			
Charlottesville	WCHV	8:30 a.m.	1260	Digby	CKDY	5:00 p.m.	1420
Norfolk	WKEZ-FM	8:00 a.m.	95.7	Halifax	CJCH	8:00 a.m.	920
WASHINGTON				Kentville	CKEN	5:00 p.m.	1490
Bellingham	KGMI	9:00 a.m.	790	Middleton	CKAD	5:00 p.m.	1350
Bellingham	KISM-FM	9:00 a.m.	93.0	New Glasgow	CHEC	7:30 a.m.	1320
Kennewick	Koty	9:00 a.m.	1340	Sydney	CJCB	10:15 a.m.	1270
Lynden	KLYN-FM	8:30 a.m.	106.5	Windsor	CFAB	5:00 p.m.	1450
Seattle	KGDN	2:30 p.m.	630	ONTARIO			
Seattle	KIRO	9:30 p.m.	710	Brandtford	CKPC	10:00 p.m.	1380
Spokane	KHO	9:00 p.m.	590	Cornwall	CJSS	8:00 a.m.	1220
Spokane	KMBI	4:30 p.m.	1330	Ft. Frances	CFOB	10:30 a.m.	800
Sunnyside	KREW	8:15 a.m.	1230	Hamilton	CKOC	7:00 a.m.	1150
Tacoma	KTNT	8:30 a.m.	1400	Kapuskasing	CKAP	9:00 a.m.	580
Yakima	KIT	10:00 p.m.	1280	Kingston	CKLC	8:30 a.m.	1380
WISCONSIN				Ottawa	CFGO	8:30 a.m.	1440
Berlin	WISS	9:00 a.m.	1090	Owen Sound	CFOS	1:30 p.m.	560
Cornell	WWIB-FM	9:30 p.m.	103.7	Pembroke	CHOV (Sat.)	7:00 p.m.	1350
Lacrosse	WKTY	8:30 p.m.	580	Samia	CHOK	8:30 a.m.	1070
Madison	WIBA	9:30 p.m.	1310	St. Catherines	CHSC	8:30 a.m.	1220
Milwaukee	WEZW-FM	8:30 a.m.	103.7	St. Thomas	CHLO	4:30 p.m.	1570
Plymouth	WPLY	8:30 a.m.	1420	Stratford	CJCS	1:00 p.m.	1240
Waukesha	WAUK	8:30 a.m.	1510	Thunder Bay	CFPA	9:30 a.m.	1230
Wisconsin Rapids	WFHR	10:30 a.m.	1340	Toronto	CHIN-FM	8:00 a.m.	101.0
WYOMING				Toronto	CKFH	9:30 a.m.	1430
Casper	KVOC	9:00 a.m.	1230	QUEBEC			
Cheyenne	KFBC	9:30 p.m.	1240	Montreal	CFCF	9:30 p.m.	600
Sheridan	KWYO	9:00 a.m.	1410	SASKATCHEWAN			
<p>The program is heard on Sundays unless otherwise indicated.</p> <p>NOTE: Due to daylight saving time in some areas, the program is heard one hour earlier during the summer months.</p>							

ENGLISH OVERSEAS/THE BACK TO GOD HOUR

AFRICA
 WA—Monrovia, Liberia
 14:00 GMT 25 Meter Band
 3:30 PM LST 710 KHz and 60 Meter Band
 MUSIC RADIO - Swaziland (Sat.) 8:45 P.M. MW1376

ASIA
 Radio Sri Lanka—Colombo (Tues) 9:45 p.m.
 19, 25, 41 Meters
 P22—Taipei, Formosa 8:00 a.m. 910 KHz
 P24—Changhua, Formosa 8:00 a.m. 780 KHz
 P25—Kao-Shiung, Formosa 8:00 a.m. 1120 KHz
 P26—Hsin-Chu, Formosa 8:00 a.m. 1120 KHz
 KX—Inchon, Korea 3:30 p.m. 1060 KHz
 KP—Pusan, Korea 9:30 a.m. 1400 KHz

PACIFIC
 Philippines
 RH—Bacolod City 3:30 p.m. 1200 KHz
 YM—Dumaguete 3:30 p.m. 1200 KHz
 RS—San Carlos 3:30 p.m. 1200 KHz
 RP—Paauy 3:30 p.m. 1200 KHz
 RO—Roxas 3:30 p.m. 1200 KHz
 PR—Palawan 3:30 p.m. 1200 KHz
 AS—Manila (Wed.) 7:00 p.m. 680 KHz
 BC—Manila at 0500 hours GMT on 13, 16 and 19 meters,
 Sundays—beamed to Indo-China, India, Australia and
 New Zealand.

in the Philippines at 1 PM
 in Hong Kong at 1 PM
 in Vietnam at 1 PM
 in Singapore and Malaysia at 12:30 PM
 in Thailand at 12 noon
 in Burma at 11:30 AM
 in India and Ceylon at 10:30 AM
 in Australia at 3 PM
 in New Zealand at 5 PM
 C—Manila at 1200 hours GMT, on 25 and 41 meter
 bands, Tuesdays—beamed North and South
 in Japan and Korea at 9 PM
 in Mainland China and Taiwan at 8 PM
 in Indonesia and Malaysia at 7 PM
 in Australia at 10 PM

shelles (Indian Ocean)
 A—Victoria at 1615 GMT on 19 Meters (9:15 p.m. India)
 A—Radio Today - Daily Broadcast Service at 1:30 P.M.

AUSTRALIA

o 2KY Sydney 8:30 p.m.
 o 2MG Mudgee 6:30 p.m.
 o 3BO Bendigo 9:20 p.m.
 o 3CS Colac 7:30 p.m.
 o 3SR Shepparton 8:00 p.m.
 o 3UL Warragul 7:00 p.m.
 o 3YB Warrnambool 8:00 p.m.
 o 4KQ Brisbane 8:30 p.m.
 p 4WK Warwick 8:00 p.m.
 o 6BY Bridgetown 9:00 p.m.
 o 6MD Meredin 9:00 p.m.
 o 6WB Katanning 9:00 p.m.
 o 7AD Devonport 12:45 p.m.

Radio 7HT Hobart 7:30 a.m.
 Radio HCJB (Quito, Ecuador)
 Sydney (1020 KC) 5:30 p.m.

CARIBBEAN

PJA—6—Oranjestad, Aruba 9:30 p.m. 925 KHz
 TWR—Bonaire, N.A. 8:00 a.m. & 11:00 p.m. EST 800 KHz
 TWR—Bonaire, N.A. RADIO TODAY—The Daily
 Broadcast Service of the Christian Reformed
 Church broadcast on the 25 Meter Band at
 0100 GMT.
 USA: EST: 8 p.m., CST: 7 p.m. MST: 6 p.m. PST: 5 p.m.
 INDIA: 6:30 a.m.
 RADIO DOMINICA, Roseau, Dominica (Fri.)
 8:30 p.m. 590 KHz

EUROPE

TWR—Monte Carlo, Monaco (Thurs) 0815 GMT 31 or 41 Meter
 Monday MW 2200 GMT 205 Meters 1466 KHz Band

LATIN AMERICA

TIC—San Jose, Costa Rica 10:00 p.m. 1075 KHz
 6.037 and 9.645 MHz
 HRVC—Tegucigalpa, Honduras 10:00 p.m. 1380 KHz
 HOXO—Panama City, Panama 7:45 p.m. 760 KHz
 HCJB—Quito, Ecuador 0730 GMT
 49 Meter Band—Europe and India.

MIDDLE EAST

CBC—Nicosia, Cyprus
 Friday at 2045 GMT on 498 Meters (602 kHz)
 TWR—Cyprus to Middle East
 Friday at 2045 GMT on 240 Meters (1232 kHz)
 at 1945 GMT during Summertime

ARABIC/SAATU-L-ISLAH

WYFR—Scituate, Mass., U.S.A.
 Daily to Europe & North Africa
 at 1715 GMT on 16 Meter Band

FEBA—Seychelles, Indian Ocean
 Daily to Middle East at 1845 GMT
 & Sundays at 1830 GMT on 25 Meter Band

ELWA—Monrovia, Liberia
 Daily to North Africa & Europe
 at 0730 GMT & Sundays at 0715 GMT
 on 25 Meter Band

TWR—Monte-Carlo, Monaco
 Thursday & Friday at 2200 GMT
 on 205 Meters (1466 kHz)
 Friday & Sunday at 1800 GMT
 on 41 or 25 Meters
 to Europe, N. Africa & M. East

TWR—Cyprus to Middle East
 Sunday, Monday & Tuesday
 at 2015 GMT on 240 Meters (1232 kHz)
 at 1915 GMT during Summer Time

CBC—Nicosia, Cyprus to M. East
 Sunday, Monday, Tuesday & Thursday
 at 2045 GMT on 498 Meters (602 kHz)

CHINESE/GOOD NEWS FOR THE WHOLE WORLD

DWRF-AM — Philippines	10:15 p.m.; Tu., Th., Sa.	So. China
DWRF-AM — Philippines	9:30 p.m.; Mo., We., Fr.	So. China*
DZAS-SW — Philippines	10:30 p.m.; Tu., Th., Sa.	China & S.E. Asia
HLDA-AM — Korea	10:15 p.m.; We., Fr., Su.	No. & C. China
HLKX-AM — Korea	11:30 p.m.; Tu., Th., Sa.	No. & C. China
KGEI-SW — Redwoods, CA.	9:45 p.m.; We., Fr., Su.	China & S.E. Asia
Vila Verde-AM — Macao	4:15 p.m.; Friday	Hongkong, Canton*
CJVB-AM — Vancouver, BC	10:30 p.m.; Sunday	Vancouver*
CJVB-AM — Vancouver, BC	10:45 p.m.; Sunday	Vancouver
KBGR-FM — San Francisco	1:30 p.m.; Sunday	San Francisco*
KBRG-FM — San Francisco	1:45 p.m.; Sunday	San Francisco
TWR-SW — Swaziland	7:15 p.m.; Daily	S.E. Africa

FRENCH/PERSPECTIVES REFORMEES

TWR — Monte-Carlo, Monaco
 Tuesday on 41 Meter Band
 at 1:00 P.M. on 205
 Meters at 8:45 P.M. CET

Europe No. 1 to Europe & N. Africa
 Sunday at 5:45 A.M. CET
 on 182 kHz (1647 Meters) Long Wave

Radio Luxembourg
 Friday on 1271 Meters (236 kHz)
 Long Wave at 5:00 A.M. CET

WYFR — Scituate, Mass., USA
 Daily to Europe & Africa
 at 2015 GMT on 13, 16
 and 19 Meter Bands

CANADA

CFML—Cornwall, Ont	9:30 a.m.	1170 kHz
CFCL—Timmons, Ont	9:30 a.m.	620 kHz
CHRD—Drummondville, Que	10:15 p.m.	1480 kHz
CJLM—Joliette, Que	8:30 a.m.	1350 kHz
CHRS—Montreal, Que	8:00 a.m.	1090 kHz
CKLM—Montreal, Que	9:15 a.m.	1570 kHz
CKCV—Quebec City, Que	7:15 a.m.	1280 kHz
CJSO—Sorel, Que	8:30 a.m.	1320 kHz
CHLN—Three Rivers, Que	7:45 a.m.	550 kHz

INDONESIAN/WORD FOR TODAY and THE MAJESTIC PLAN

Broadcast daily and weekly on 70 local Indonesian stations in Jakarta, Surabaya and many other leading cities.

FEBC — Manila, the Philippines via short wave beams the programs back to Indonesia to cover the nation.

JAPANESE/WINDOW TO TOMORROW

Broadcasting Every Day
 HLDA — Cheju Island, Korea
 on a 250,000 watt AM Transmitter
 HCJB — Quito, Ecuador - Daily on SW Transmitter

PORTUGUESE/RADIO 73-15

From Trans World Radio on the Island of Bonaire beamed daily to Brazil.

Every Sunday local Brazilian stations carry it in Ponta Grossa, Castro and Jaguariava.

PANISH/LA HORA DE LA REFORMA

10	.....	Azul, Argentina
R 3	.....	Buenos Aires, Argentina
14	.....	C. Rivadavia, Argentina
2	.....	Bahia Blanca, Argentina
63	.....	La Paz, Bolivia
114	.....	Beni, Bolivia
112	.....	Yacuiba, Bolivia
108	.....	Quillacolla, Bolivia
27	.....	La Paz, Bolivia
93	.....	Santiago, Chile
111	.....	Temuco, Chile
141	.....	Loncoche, Chile
134	.....	Pitrufrquen, Chile
151	.....	Lebu, Chile
156	.....	Villarrica, Chile
82	.....	Pueblo Huido, Chile
HE	.....	Malaga, Columbia
LE	.....	Armero, Columbia
CB	.....	Barranquilla, Columbia
IT	.....	Quibdo, Colombia
ZW	.....	Riohacha, Colombia
JO	.....	Tumaco, Colombia
CU	.....	Bogota, D.E., Colombia
1W	.....	Bogota, D.E., Colombia
HO	.....	Medellin, Colombia
HD	.....	Barrancabermeja, Colombia
FC	.....	San Jose, Costa Rica
RA	.....	San Jose, Costa Rica
CK	.....	Santiago, Rep. Dominicana
Y	.....	Sto. Domingo, Rep. Dominicana
AE	.....	Santo Domingo, Rep. Dominicana
WN1	.....	Santo Domingo, Ecuador
JB	.....	Quito, Ecuador
GM7	.....	Shell, Ecuador
RG1	.....	Quito, Ecuador
RI5	.....	Riobamba, Ecuador
RS4	.....	Pichincha, Ecuador
JB2	.....	Cardena de 8 Emisoras, Ecuador
AD4	.....	El Carmen, Manabi, Ecuador
SP1	.....	Quito, Ecuador
OC6	.....	Latacunga, Ecuador
RO6	.....	Ambato, Ecuador
HQ	.....	San Salvador, El Salvador
DA	.....	San Salvador, El Salvador
N	.....	Guatemala, Guatemala
AX	.....	Guatemala, Guatemala
MQ	.....	Guatemala, Guatemala
VC	.....	Tegucigalpa, Honduras
U	.....	Tegucigalpa, Honduras
GP	.....	El Paraiso, Honduras
IC	.....	El Paraiso, Honduras
R	.....	Bonaire, Ant. Holandesas
7OZ	.....	Managua, Nicaragua
OL	.....	Managua, Nicaragua
D	.....	Managua, Nicaragua
MS	.....	Leon, Nicaragua
XO	.....	Panama, Panama
30	.....	Philadelfia, Paraguay
X-7F	.....	Ayaviri, Peru
Z-4V	.....	Huancayo, Peru
X-2B	.....	Trujillo, Peru

OAZ-4K	.....	Lima, Peru
OAX-SS	.....	Huanta, Peru
OAX-6Q	.....	Arequipa, Peru
WAPA	.....	San Juan, Puerto Rico
WGB	.....	Ponce, Puerto Rico
WUPR	.....	Utuaado, Puerto Rico
EAJ39	.....	Barcelona, Espana
EFJ-6	.....	Almansa, Spain
TWR-MC	.....	Monte Carlo, Monaco
CX 16	.....	Montevideo, Uruguay
CX 36	.....	Montevideo, Uruguay
CW-33	.....	Florida, Uruguay
YVMR	.....	Barquisimeto, Venezuela
YVTR	.....	Tucupita, Venezuela
KGEI	.....	Belmont, CA
KLOC	.....	Ceres, CA
KALI	.....	Hollywood, CA
WYFR	.....	Oakland, CA
WFB	.....	Miami, FL
WADO	.....	New York, NY
KGBT	.....	Harlingen, TX
KVMV	.....	McAllen, TX

MEXICO/LA ANTORCHA ESPIRITUAL

XEBI	.....	Aguascaliente
XECAM	.....	Campeche
XERPC	.....	Chihuahua
XEBN	.....	Cd. Delicias
XEAG	.....	Cordoba
XEFV	.....	Cosamaloapan
XEVQ	.....	Culiacan
XEDK	.....	Guadalajara
XEDL	.....	Hermosillo
XEJA	.....	Jalapa
XERPL	.....	Leon
XEZ	.....	Merida
XEVQ	.....	Mexicali
XEABC	.....	Mexico City
XERED	.....	Mexico, D.F.
XEXU	.....	Monclova
XEFB	.....	Monterrey
XEI	.....	Morelia
XEFE	.....	Nuevo Laredo
XECA	.....	Oaxaca
XEJS	.....	Parral
XEPOP	.....	Puebla
XERT	.....	Reynosa
XETU	.....	Tampico
XEKQ	.....	Tapachula
XEC	.....	Tijuana
XEUE	.....	Tuxtla Gutierrez
XEU	.....	Veracruz
XEVA	.....	Villahermosa
XEQL	.....	Zamora

FINANCIAL REPORT

THE BACK TO GOD HOUR

Financial Report - January 1 through December 31, 1976

Receipts

Synodical quotas	1,198,846.18
Churches - special offerings	211,254.06
Organizations	15,180.50
Individual gifts	450,957.63
Foreign designated	411,032.37
Station sponsorship	9,526.94
Other income	38,571.64

Total Income

2,335,369.32

Disbursements

Broadcasting	
Domestic	734,279.22
Foreign	
English	156,735.16
Arabic	106,560.16
Spanish	168,950.63
French	89,693.65
Indonesian	23,225.00
Portuguese	105,947.45
Chinese	44,352.07
Japanese	87,269.90
Recording & duplicating	46,327.42

Administration

Audit	2,928.00
Employees pension plan	10,190.12
Committee expense	6,837.58
Data processing	19,599.73
Equipment	3,912.39
Insurance	24,181.52
Maintenance & repair	10,849.50
Ministers' pension	4,000.00
Salaries	248,521.47
Social security expense	12,291.92
Supplies	29,574.05
Travel	15,169.03
Utilities	21,837.28
Family Altar	126,174.82
Sermons	58,333.16
Literature	86,495.00
Ministers' housing & allowances	21,300.00
Music production	600.62
Other printing	51,380.58
Professional services	12,907.22
Improvements	400.00
Other expenses	2,699.34
Interest	9,245.35

Total Disbursements

2,342,769.34

FINANCIAL REPORT

THE BACK TO GOD HOUR TENTATIVE BUDGET - 1978

Receipts

Synodical quotas	1,501,000	
Churches - special offerings	275,000	
Organizations	22,000	
Individual gifts	600,000	
Foreign designated	623,000	
Station sponsorship	15,000	
Other income	57,000	
Total Income		3,093,000

Disbursements

Broadcasting		
Domestic	850,000	
Foreign		
English	225,000	
Arabic	155,000	
Spanish	235,000	
French	110,000	
Indonesian	28,000	
Portuguese	130,000	
Chinese	74,000	
Japanese	110,000	
Recording & duplicating	62,500	

Administration

Audit	3,500	
Employees pension plan	15,000	
Committee expense	8,000	
Data processing	30,000	
Equipment	20,000	
Insurance	35,000	
Maintenance & repair	17,000	
Ministers' pension	4,000	
Salaries	330,000	
Social security expense	18,000	
Supplies	42,000	
Travel	19,000	
Utilities	35,000	
Family Altar	158,000	
Sermons	80,000	
Literature	130,000	
Ministers' housing & allowance	24,000	
Music production	500	
Other printing	90,000	
Professional services	20,000	
Other expenses	4,500	
Interest	30,000	
Total Disbursements		3,093,000

REPORT 1-A

THE BACK TO GOD HOUR
MISSION TELEVISION REPORT

(Arts. 24, 30, 61, 63, 73)

CHAPTER I

TELEVISION AND CULTURE

Since 1974, when synodical committees first began to contemplate our church's strong entrance into the television field, the sentiment has frequently been expressed that our church's television activity should be subjected to careful, continued scrutiny. Thus, when the Synod of 1976 accepted the Back to God Hour's Special Television Report as an "initial" response to the study requested by the Synod of 1975, it also mandated The Back to God Hour to engage in an ongoing study of the church's use of television and to supply the denomination with further evaluations of our use of this medium (1). As we become more and more involved in the actual production and distribution of television programs, we feel that such continuous examination is imperative, for television has immense power not only as a communication tool, but also as a modifier of those who use it. If the Christian Reformed Church achieves success in the production of useful television materials and in the proper use of this medium by the church as church, it could itself benefit richly from using this enormously effective tool of communication.

What we now describe in this report is *missionary television*, and that term is worth underscoring. Television can, obviously, be used to accomplish a variety of goals, but so far as The Back to God Hour is concerned, it is to be assumed, that its television production is designed to fulfill the missionary responsibilities of the church. It will be seen, as this report develops, that the missionary point of view dominates current program conception and execution, and it is hoped that the church's evaluation of our materials will be expressed in terms of its recognition of our desire to produce materials that will be useful in achieving a missionary goal.

When we highlight the concept *missionary television*, we also wish to express that our television work participates in the essential mystery that necessarily accompanies the church's mission. Among the elements of this mystery, is the power of the Word of Scripture itself. It is our conviction that it is communication of the Scripture alone which can function as a means of grace. We therefore view our programs as vehicles that can move the message of the Scripture from the church out into the world where it can be effective and powerful. Moreover, we are also fully aware that the effectiveness of the church's mission is entirely dependent upon the work of the Holy Spirit; though human efforts must sometimes approach the heroic in the work of mission, it is God alone who brings the increase. The unspiritual man is not able to receive the things of the Spirit of God (I Corinthians 2:14).

These fundamental missionary insights must be underscored at the beginning of this study. It is necessary, in the nature of the case, to engage in analysis of our culture, of the tool available to us, and of our use of this tool. It could well give the impression that television now provides the church with something which, if used skillfully, could usher in a new era of gospel communication. In place of undiluted optimism, there is an uneasiness that accompanies the use of television because it so dramatically represents the fruit of the technological age we now live in and it is usually so thoroughly identified with the secular quality of our present age. As we work with this medium, we feel a tension that arises because of the nature of our mission as church and the nature of television itself.

We are encouraged to pursue with great diligence, however, the development of a capability to use television effectively because the Scripture itself calls those engaged in Christ's mission to adapt themselves to their environment and to use every means to establish effective communication with the people of their age. The events described in Matthew 10 provide a useful model for us. Here Jesus indicates to the twelve who are being sent out as his representatives that they will be equipped by the Spirit to speak the appropriate message when they are in critical situations (v. 20). But Jesus prefaced these assurances by advising his followers to be "wise as serpents and innocent as doves" (v. 16). Obviously, Jesus' followers were expected to respond with great intelligence to their environment. We are expected to do the same. In this connection, it is also instructive to observe the relationship between the citizenship of the apostle Paul and the progress of the gospel in the first century. He often used the privileges and opportunities this citizenship gave him to further his work. Surely, people like ourselves who have long enjoyed a form of Christianity that has emphasized the integrity of both creation and salvation are obligated carefully to determine the usefulness of the medium of television for us as we seek to fulfill our mission/communication responsibilities in our time.

The degree of wisdom that must be developed within our community, if television is to be used mightily, will have to be exceedingly high, certainly higher than it presently is. At the same time, this wisdom could well be the undoing of those who are directly involved and of the church that supports them unless it is accompanied by the guileless, innocent spirit Jesus calls for in Matthew 10. Such a spirit can only be maintained if, along with growing capabilities, we are endowed with growing commitment to our Lord and to his Word.

If the church is to use television aggressively in the next several decades, it will be necessary to continue to develop a high degree of cultural awareness—of cultural realism. If we do not maintain cultural awareness, we will be tempted to be content with traditional modes of ecclesiastical behavior which are good and necessary in themselves but which may cause us to ignore serious grappling with the communications issues that confront us. This would amount to a retreat from reality which will disqualify us for the serious use of television. Thus, we begin this report with a description of the television dominated en-

vironment in which we will be working for the remainder of this century.

Douglass Cater has described television's rapid movement to dominance in North American culture by saying, "It arrived so swiftly and so totally: in January 1949 only 2.3 percent of American homes had the box with the cathode-ray tube. Five years later it had penetrated more than half of our homes. Today, 97 percent of them have one or more sets—a distribution roughly matching that of indoor plumbing" (2). Fully 60 percent of the homes in the United States are able to receive six or more television signals off the air (3). As cable systems enter many secondary markets, signal availability is being increased considerably.

We must assess the effect of this presence, however, not simply in terms of a quantitative description of set distribution and signal availability. Rather, we must be aware of the impact television is making upon culture in general and upon the people who watch it. It is, therefore, important that we take seriously evaluations of this impact as they are supplied by careful students of culture. Because church leadership tends to be print oriented and preoccupied with pressing, legitimate parochial affairs, it tends to be somewhat unaware of the cultural transformations caused by television. Judging from the reactions of those who are able to assess cultural change, television is accomplishing change in a way and to a degree that has possibly never been duplicated (4).

In spite of the extraordinary impact of television on our lives, careful evaluation of the precise nature of this medium's influence is currently undeveloped and marked by uncertainty. In an article, "Television As a Moral Educator," Keven Ryan says, "By and large, what TV is doing to us is still a mystery. It's new. We know that television is a complex experience which takes up a great deal of our lives, but we find it difficult to gauge its impact" (5). Other students of the influence of television on culture have noticed that it is indeed true that something is happening that is notably momentous and world changing, but we find it hard to assess it and understand it: "Television is essentially different from other media and . . . research into television requires a new approach" (6). We may, thus, encourage ourselves to do some very basic and fundamental thinking about television, understanding that the field is still undeveloped enough to benefit from whatever contribution we will bring to it.

Though the full assessment of the impact of television on society remains difficult to achieve, certain facts are becoming very clear.

The impact of television upon our culture can be described in terms of *exposure* to the medium. Television begins to make impressions on the very young within society, it continues to do so throughout one's life, and also affects the aged. "With its virtually unlimited access from cradle to grave, television both precedes reading and, increasingly, preempts it. . . . [It] is the first centralized cultural influence to permeate both the initial and the final years of life" (7). By the age of 16, the average child views 15,000 hours of television—this compares

with about 11,000 hours in school. Kenneth Keniston of MIT, Chairman of the Carnegie Council on Children, has said "Television has become a flickering blue parent occupying more of the working hours of American children than any other single influence—including *both* parents and schools" (8). During this time, he will have seen about 640,000 commercials (9). He will also have been exposed to a great deal of violence, as the Surgeon General's Report on Television has pointed out. In addition, television viewers are exposed to the points of view that dominate the networks which account for nearly 90 percent of all viewing time: their impact is actually far greater, since many of the shows released on non-network stations are originally produced by the networks (10).

Those who are in a position of responsibility to make decisions regarding the mission/communication strategies of the church are, by virtue of their training and their interests, not directly in touch with the reality of television as it is described by exposure data. We are told that children watch television on an average of five hours a day, and adults as much as six. Anyone who watches television that much is probably not qualified to make useful decisions regarding the church and its mission. And most church people would not allow their children to watch television up to the level of the national average, so, hopefully, their children have not been as affected by television as some others. Thus, it is difficult to evaluate the exposure data in terms of our lives and families. It is necessary for us, however, in determining the church's mission/communication task to imagine the nature of the television presence in the experience of those we are trying to reach with the gospel. We must never forget that television is without doubt the most pervasive single continuing presence in most of their lives. Paula Fass, in an article called "Television As Cultural Document," has said: "Television confronts most of us regularly, as an uninvited dinner guest, the sandman of sleep, often the teacher, and, for many, a daily companion. It's a habit, a sedative, even a social mediator as it introduces us to the facts and fantasies of American society. Few media are so near and so omnipresent" (11). Though we deplore this state of affairs, deploring it will do no good. What we have noted is more than likely an accurate description of the exposure to television experienced by most of the people to whom we are speaking in North America.

Because of the intensity and extent of television's impact on culture, the effect of this medium must be considered whenever we attempt analyses of the environment in which we conduct our mission. And this necessity is all the more pressing because the impact of television on individuals and upon society is considerably greater than even the extended exposure to it would lead us to expect. That is, a person is influenced by television on a considerably deeper level than he would be, for example, if he participated in sports to the same extent. George Gerbner and Larry Gross have described this impact in their article called "Living With Television."

Gerbner and Gross describe television as it must be described—in

terms of its religious impact. They point out that people watch it in much the same way as people attend a church service except that they watch it considerably more religiously (12). They locate the power of television to educate and change people's lives in its entertainment potential, and this is a point that needs to be highlighted as the church attempts to communicate its message to those outside it. Gerbner and Gross assert that "entertainment is the most broadly effective educational fare in any culture" (13). They are probably correct. The experience of the Chinese Communists in which they used traveling troupes of players to conduct dramas throughout the country, dramas which indoctrinated the people in the dogmas of Communism, is a contemporary example of the power of entertainment to educate (14). When we think of entertainment, we must not think simply of situation comedies and other lighthearted presentations: we must think of it broadly, as any event that engages the undivided attention of a person or a group of persons. People want to have their attention engaged in such a concentrated way, and even when they are being exposed to something serious and important they feel "entertained" as they are absorbed by what is occurring. So, Gerbner and Gross indicate that because of television's extremely powerful educational (entertainment) power, it has become the primary medium of socialization for most people, imposing upon them standardized roles and behavior. "Its function is, in a word, enculturation" (15). With its enormous power to impose social roles and patterns, television has achieved an ability to determine cultural directions and to indicate which elements of culture are important: "No national achievement, celebration, or mourning seems real until it is confirmed and shared on television" (16). Gerbner and Gross point out that if a movement or cause wants to be considered important within society, it will be forced to utilize television: "Representation in the world of television gives an idea, a cause, a group its sense of public identity, importance, and relevance. No movement can get going without some visibility in that world or long withstand its power to discredit, insulate, or undercut. Other media, used selectively and by special interests or cultural elites, cultivates partial and parochial outlooks" (17).

These evaluations alert us to the extraordinarily dominant role television plays in culture today and underscore the fact that we will not be able to express our mission/communication responsibilities in areas dominated by television unless we continuously take this medium into consideration. Richard Adler says, "If this country has a unifying culture, it is the mass, popular culture: and today, television is the most vital expression of that culture," and he quotes John Leonard, who goes so far as to say that "television is now our only way of talking to each other about who we think we are" (18).

While we may fervently hope that analyses which emphasize the strength of television's impact on culture are not fully true, and may feel that the Christian community has succeeded in creating an island of resistance (though this is debatable), our hopes do not change the fact that the analyses noted above most likely very accurately describe

the mission field of North America where we do much of our work. And the full impact of television can be perceived only if we recognize that the cultural changes which television is introducing are occurring on most fundamental levels.

Students of television point out that we are presently returning to a culture that is dominated by non-verbal communication. Alberta E. Siegel, in her article "Communicating With the Next Generation," places her description of our current return to a non-verbal culture in an evolutionistic framework: she reminds her readers that for 40,000 years man depended exclusively on non-verbal forms of communication—distal communications—and she suggests that we should not become unduly alarmed that once again non-verbal forms are supplanting the traditional reading and writing (19). While we reject her evolutionary frame of reference, her reminder that communication can occur without the heavy reliance that we tend to place on verbal, print tools should not be ignored. There are apparently communication realities that inhere in the electronic character of the medium of television that render it exceedingly effective in communication without high dependence upon verbalization. The effectiveness of television is not merely caused by its being visual, nor even by its being a moving visualization, but there seems to be a unique power that is rooted in the relationship between electronic configuration of the television event and the neurological structure of the human brain. This means that television is not only especially important for communication with children, but it is just as important for communication with adults, for our ability to receive information along non-verbal channels in terms of television's electronics and our "electronics" remains with us throughout our lives.

The ability of television to form a complete circuit, so to speak, with the human mind makes it the powerful and virtually irresistible communicator it can be. Caleb Gategno, in his book *Toward a Visual Culture*, has emphasized that, whenever a person watches television, he is being in a very literal sense, "brainwashed" (20). When we watch television, our brains are awash in the electronics of the television event. Television is, from this point of view, in the words of Marie Winn, indeed *The Plug-in Drug* (21). Douglass Cater has pointed out that continued exposure to television actually causes modification within the human brain: "thinking people—at least those over 25—are left-brained in development. That is they rely mainly on the left hemisphere which controls sequential, analytical tasks based on the use of propositional thought. But TV, we are informed, appeals mainly to the *right* hemisphere of the brain, which controls appositional—that is, non-sequential, non-analytic—thought" (22). When students of television comment on the fact that the precise nature of the impact of this medium upon us is a mystery, one of the components of this mystery is the difficulty of determining what prolonged exposure to television does to the human mind.

We tend to feel uneasy with descriptions of television that are made in terms of its relationship to the structure of the human mind, and it is probably true that we should guard ourselves against being overly impressed by such data. It has been suggested, for example, that the new

communications realities that television has created demand that we redefine the very nature of truth; truth, in fact, is no longer a meaningful category—we must rather speak about the *effects* of electronic communication (23). We must reject such a position. At the same time, we will have to take into consideration in our own mission/communication activities that we are living in an environment in which a significant shift has taken place. Tony Schwartz, in his book *The Responsive Chord*, quoted by Cater, spotlights the differences between our era and the earlier print dominated era in a way that must be remembered: “Gutenberg man lived by a communication system requiring the laborious coding of thought into words and then the equally laborious decoding by the receiver—similar to the loading, shipping, and unloading of a railway freight car. Electronic man dispenses with this by communicating experience without the need of symbolic transformations. What the viewer’s brain gets is a mosaic of myriad dots of light and vibrations of sound that are stored and recalled at high speed” (24).

As we try to evaluate the effectiveness of television for communication, data provided by Peter H. Wood are also helpful. In an article which appeared under the aegis of the Aspen Institute, Wood highlighted the similarity between television viewing and the dream. He points out that both television and dreams are highly symbolic, contain much that is disjointed and trivial, and are marked by a high degree of wish fulfillment (25). When one reflects on this observation, and remembers the zany, preposterous associations that often dominate television, the outlandish, fantastic sets, and the realization of the impossible that often occurs in television, there is clearly a close match between the picture on the tube and what goes on in one’s mind while dreaming. This highlights the insidious ways television insinuates itself into one’s head (26). It seems fairly obvious that prolonged exposure to television will have a damaging effect on human personality. Jerry Kozinski has shown this in his novel *Being There*, which, though fanciful, is close enough to the possibilities to make one shiver. He tells of a man who, after near total immersion in television was entirely unable to respond to the real world (27).

One might possibly use the material we have examined regarding the effectiveness of television to indicate the great danger this medium poses to the church, especially at present when television is almost totally dominated by the amoral (immoral) viewpoint which characterizes network television. The data we have surveyed indicate that the only way to escape the detrimental effects of television as it now exists is to resist addiction to it. Turning television off is a serious and important act, and children must be supervised carefully in their use of it. Adults must be careful, too. But such admonishing of one another is not our purpose at the moment. Our purpose, rather, is to determine our mission/communication responsibility in this age. And clearly, television’s presence and effectiveness must be taken into consideration as we do this.

Although the impact of television has been detrimental in many cases, the church must recognize that its detrimental impact is as great as it is precisely because television is a tool of exceptional power. When

we consider the culture forming capability of this medium, and when we become aware of its potential for influencing all segments of society, it becomes obvious that we can responsibly pursue our mission/communication activity in areas that are dominated by television by taking into consideration its impact on culture and, if possible, by using it ourselves.

Moreover, we are all well aware of the positive effects which good television viewing can have. When one surveys the many good offerings which can be found on television these days, it is clear that the skillful use of this medium by the church which has the responsibility for communicating the most powerful message of all could have a very strong positive impact.

CHAPTER II

CRC-TV

The Back to God Hour must now determine how television can best be used by our denomination. We now find ourselves in a position in which we should be able to move steadily forward to the point where, several years in the future, we could well be in a position to use this medium very effectively. But the development of such a capability will not be easily achieved, nor will it be inexpensive. Thus, as we move forward, we will have to maintain a continuous cost/effectiveness monitoring system. For the present, we should examine where we are now, what we have learned, and the immediate prospects for market penetration.

Where We Are—The development of the Christian Reformed Church's television ministry over the last three years has been healthy. Though the progress has not been very visible it has occurred on a basic level. There has been a gradual building of a foundation upon which we can now build meaningful, in depth television activity. The progress that has been made can be described as follows:

- 1) In October, 1974, The Back to God Hour Committee decided to include in the projected International Communications Center the necessary square footage and height to accommodate a well equipped television studio.
- 2) In May, 1975, The Back to God Hour Committee decided to equip the studio with a four camera full color system that would be capable of turning out a finished product that would be compatible with equipment in stations using $\frac{3}{4}$ inch cassette and which with one additional operation, would be compatible with the equipment used in regular broadcast stations.
- 3) In June, 1976, synod decided to furnish the television ministry with firm financial base, by the designation of a \$10.00 annual quota for this developing work.
- 4) In September, 1976, training of Back to God Hour personnel began; this training still continues.
- 5) In January, 1977, the completed studio was turned over to The Back to God Hour, and it became possible to work on prototype programs.

6) In February, 1977, the first prototype program was completed, and the semi-documentary format was approved by The Back to God Hour Committee; at the same time, the television division of The Back to God Hour was established and designated CRC-TV.

7) From February, 1977, to the present, personnel of CRC-TV have continued to work on the production of more programs with a view to completing a package of four or five programs for test marketing during the fall.

What We Have Learned—In addition to the steps which can be numerically described, an intangible, but even more important development has occurred in connection with our television work. The opportunity for day-by-day contact with television has caused an increasingly clear picture to emerge of what will be demanded of CRC-TV if it is to function usefully in the production of missionary television.

TECHNICAL COMPONENTS

First of all, we have developed a deep awareness that it is extremely important that satisfactory levels of technical ability be achieved and maintained. It is one thing to acknowledge this somewhat abstractly, it is another to be impressed by this as a group works directly with equipment. When we think of television, we must remember that the extraordinary power of television is not only caused by its powerful electronics, but also by the technically high levels of production reached within the industry. Our programs will be compared mercilessly with other programs in terms of technical quality. Commercial television is now characterized by a wide range of production expertise that is able to turn out materials that are superb from a technical point of view. Consider the lavish sets of a program like *Donny and Marie*. Think of the clever direction of *All in the Family* and *Welcome Back Kotter*. Think of the extremely good writing of the *Mary Tyler Moore Show*. Religious programs like Robert Schuller's *Hour of Power* and Rex Humbard's program, benefit from topnotch production work.

We are more aware now than ever before that the audience we seek to reach with missionary television is accustomed to programs that are well produced and carefully scripted. If we are to enjoy a significant level of acceptance, we will have to have the ability to compete on the level of national syndication. A program that is professional in every way needs the following: a basically sound program idea, a well executed script, a skillful producer, carefully directed talent, technical personnel familiar with their duties, rehearsal after rehearsal, patient editing, and ruthless critique.

Over the last months, Back to God Hour television has made good progress in acquiring the components needed for the production of professional programs. Though our staff is presently small, it is made up of people who are thoroughly committed to the production of high quality materials. The development of personnel and skills for this work introduces into an organization a high level of tension and strain, and this, too, must be recognized and dealt with in a professional way.

INTEREST COMPONENTS

Another awareness that has grown over the last months is the awareness of the necessity of producing materials that are intrinsically interesting.

The concept of *intrinsic interest* is a key concept in understanding the direction we are now taking in our program production, and it must be elaborated. The matter of intrinsic interest is essential for the creation of missionary television. As we talk about this matter, it is necessary to declare that the emphasis on the necessity of developing intrinsically interesting materials in no way is meant to suggest that biblical material is not itself extremely interesting. The grand themes of the Bible, dealing as they do with the reality of creation, the nature and destiny of man, and the marvelous plan of salvation, are, in the nature of the case, supremely interesting, and we intend to capitalize on the interest dimension of these materials. At the same time, we must realistically recognize that man, as the object of our mission, has been to a large degree desensitized to the glories of these materials and is content frequently to be entertained by what is in fact trivia. In addition, we must recognize that there is a long tradition of surrounding the major themes of the Bible with materials and approaches that have tended to obscure their significance rather than highlight it. Thus, it is our purpose to utilize the interest awakening power of television to communicate the great messages of the Scripture.

When we speak of intrinsic interest, we refer to the interest which material has in itself; it is the intrinsic interest content that determines whether or not a person continues to watch something on television. Only if material is interesting will it be entertaining, engaging, engrossing. We know that our programs will be available along with several other offerings at the same time, and the viewer will be moving through the channels to see what interests him. Television viewers, as we know, move from channel to channel throughout an evening of viewing, in terms of the programs they want to watch. Radio listeners, on the other hand, often listen to one station day after day. Because of the way television viewers pick and choose what they are going to watch in the next hour or half hour, we must have material, especially in the early parts of our programs, that will attract the viewers' attention and make them eager to view what is being presented.

It is for this reason that the semi-documentary format has become the primary focus of production attention at CRC-TV, and this format allows us to surround a biblical truth with a context that will be intrinsically interesting. The Reformed perspective equips us for this approach, since the world-and-life dimension of the Reformed faith has accustomed us to seeing the truth of the Bible in connection with the realities of day-by-day life.

One of our first programs, *A Special Kind of Book*, provides an illustration of the way the semi-documentary approach can be used to establish a central biblical doctrine—in this case, doctrine concerning the Bible itself. The purpose of this program is to show the viewer that the Bible has a unique history, and it asserts that this history demonstrates

how God has preserved this very special book and made it available to us because, in the words of John 20:31, "These things were written so that you would believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and believing you might have life in his name." The items of intrinsic interest that were used to highlight the magnificent importance of the Bible are the following: an episode showing Caedmon, a seventh century folk-singer who was the first to translate the Bible into Anglo-Saxon lyrics; the life of William Tyndale which shows how he was willing to die to make the Bible available in English; the fascinating story of the discovery of the *Codex Sinaiticus* in the monastery of St. Catherine; and information about the Dead Sea Scrolls. This information, along with a number of other brief items that are designed to appeal to the man on the street, indicate that the Bible is an exciting book and it is reliable.

This entire program package is designed to communicate important information about the Bible in a way that will appeal to individuals who have only a passing acquaintance with it. Though it is not preaching in the usual sense, the entire program should be viewed as a combination of both implicit and explicit preaching. The total program is designed to render the message of John 20:31 clear and understandable. In addition, there is an explicit preaching element which states very clearly that the viewer must read the Bible himself, learn to know Jesus Christ, and then he will have eternal life. But even the element of explicit preaching is handled so that the viewer, hopefully, will not feel that he is being "preached to."

The initial programs will all be "specials" with titles such as "A Special Kind of Dying," "A Special Kind of Father," and "A Special Kind of Work." In each case a body of intrinsically interesting visual material which will be worth viewing in itself is being developed. The CRC-TV staff is presently committed to producing as many semi-documentary programs as possible of this nature, with the goal the 26 programs assigned to us by the Synod of 1976. In the development of *A Special Kind of Book*, we worked with a consultant who works in commercial television in Chicago, and a vice president in charge of news for one of the major stations, and we intend to stay close to the industry in the development of all these programs. The use of the semi-documentary approach could make it possible for us to release these programs in a regular week day time slot, possibly after the evening news, or some time during the day—in any case, this program approach gives us an opportunity to break out of the "Sunday morning ghetto."

Before leaving this discussion of the interest content of our programs, it is necessary to raise the question, why don't we simply have a television version of The Back to God Hour—since we feature primarily a spoken message (preaching) on The Back to God Hour, why not simply have that on our television programs?

In answering this, we should first of all say that the present focus of attention on semi-documentary type programs does not preclude the possibility of developing programs that would feature more straight talk, preaching, in the future. In fact, as soon as practicable, CRC-TV will

be producing shorter programs of this nature, similar to the 4½ minute INSIGHT program. Moreover, we may discover that the preaching format is much more usable than we presently think. After all, television is a changing medium and we have a great deal to learn; we must maintain a great deal of flexibility. But for the present we have chosen an alternative to a straight preaching program for the following reasons:

- 1) A preaching format does not use television to its full potential. Television is attractive for our mission because it allows the church, for the first time, to capitalize on the unique communication event which television is capable of creating. Whereas preaching is one-dimensional, television allows us to combine the spoken word with carefully controlled visual events which can fortify and heighten the effectiveness of the message being presented.
- 2) When a preaching format is used on television over a period of time, there is a great deal of emphasis on the person of the preacher. This can have a negative impact—people can become tired of a preacher and thus his usefulness for television will be short-lived. On the other hand they can become overly impressed with the preacher himself. The personality cult that can accompany television preaching is not compatible with the Reformed faith.
- 3) There are already a number of preaching programs on the air. Moreover, these programs, it should be noted, surround the preacher with a great deal of support talent and production which in fact make them very costly. To take Oral Roberts and Rex Humbard as examples, their programs are carefully managed worship services, preaching services that have been arranged especially for television. If we are to go into the preaching format, we would find it extremely difficult to duplicate what other established preaching programs are doing well, from a technical point of view.
- 4) It is felt that reliance on a preaching format, a worship service type of format, will deny us the opportunity to achieve prime time releases on major stations. If we present a worship service, we will be placed in the slot in which most worship services are found—Sunday morning, when most Christians are in church and most non-Christians are asleep.
- 5) In terms of our goal of producing missionary television, we presently feel that the semi-documentary approach will provide us with a large viewing audience comprised of people who are genuinely in need of becoming acquainted with the gospel; they will be attracted to the presentation by the intrinsically interesting material found in the programs.

The semi-documentary programs that are being produced are considered to be, in a very real sense, preaching. Each will be designed to communicate the Word. Preaching, after all, takes a number of forms. A missionary in a foreign culture must adapt his preaching to the environment in which he works. And it is our feeling that when we transpose preaching to the medium of television, what results is not the simple visual reporting of what goes on in a worship service, but what

results is precisely the type of semi-documentary program we are now making. After all, preaching is not simply a forensic event that gives satisfaction to the preacher and edification to the listener under ideal circumstances; the object of preaching is the communication of the Word of God. This message must strike the ear of the listener in the preaching event and enter his heart. We have long cherished the way this has been accomplished in our churches each Sunday, but the way this has been accomplished in church does not mean that this will insure successful communication everywhere. We feel that by means of a semi-documentary program, the gospel message that has been entrusted to us will be communicated to millions of people who would otherwise not understand its saving content. And if the communication of this gospel is actually accomplished by means of the use of a semi-documentary television program, this, we submit, is actually preaching.

We have been discussing the increasingly clear picture which has emerged over the last several months regarding just what will be demanded of CRC-TV over the next years if we are to do a creditable job of producing missionary television programs. We have noted the demand of maintaining high technical standards, and we have noted the demand of producing programs that are intrinsically interesting, and thus we have developed the semi-documentary approach. Along with these elements, we are learning more and more about the necessity of committing sufficient personnel and time to this work.

PERSONNEL

At the time of this writing, Back to God Hour personnel presently involved in television are the following: Joel Nederhood is the executive producer; he is responsible for program idea generation and script, and he appears in the program in an "anchorman" capacity. Jerry Vreeman represents Dr. Nederhood in the production of the program, working with production personnel; he also appears in the program. Jack Mulder is the supervising producer, and, as manager of the production department, he is responsible for job assignments; he also becomes directly involved in many technical elements relating to the programs. Carl Chan, a producer/director, is responsible for the actual transference of the program from concept stage to tape. Ron Klemm is involved in the programs as musical director and floor manager. Jan Slager works with the production of segments, lighting, and also appears in the programs. Don Kuiper is the cinematographer, and John Van Milligan is the engineer. In addition, part time personnel work with cameras, produce graphics, and work on other elements of production. We also use consultants from the industry, who advise us on acting, lighting, make-up, editing, and general industry standards.

The staff that is presently working on our programs, with a couple of exceptions, consists of people with other responsibilities in addition to their work in television. Our staff has made remarkable progress over the last months and is now moving forward with the production of further programs in the "special" series. The staff, however, will necessarily have to be expanded within the next several months. As the program

format jells, as production procedures become more familiar to all involved, and as the level of ability increases, additional personnel will be required if programs are to be produced in sufficient quantity. As the direction of our production is set and becomes known within the industry and within our community, we expect that other qualified people will be attracted to our organization.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

As our church continues to reflect on its developing television ministry, it is important to keep several considerations in mind. Among us who are presently involved, these considerations have taken increasingly definite patterns and we want them shared by the entire church.

First of all, we must be aware that as a denomination we are taking on a production responsibility that is far and away the greatest, sustained form of program production we have ever assumed. In the beginning of this report, we noted the extreme effectiveness of television. This effectiveness, however, is not achieved with ease. We are learning what is involved in controlling every aspect of the communication situation at every moment the communication event is going on, as this control is expressed in television. The visual dominates, of course, and the visual must be "intrinsically interesting" as we have seen. But this must be carefully mixed with the proper use of talent, who are carefully directed, and who must be willing to rehearse material over and over again. And, in addition to the spoken word brought by people who are on camera, there must be proper use of music and other sound. Each one of these elements demands meticulous attention.

So far as the production matter is concerned, we must work at upgrading our staff, and we must be ready to add more qualified people. On the long term, this will be expressed in increasing salary figures for production.

In connection with the production problem that now confronts us, we should be aware of several matters that suggest that we could well develop significant production strengths over the next five years. First of all, our entrance into the television field has already attracted the attention of people within our denomination who are working in the field. We can expect that such people will become better and better known to us over the years, some of them may be added to our staff, and others may be able to work with us on a consultative basis. Our church is of sufficient size to allow us to expect continual growth in production capabilities.

Secondly, when we think of our production problem, we are encouraged to recall that the Reformed perspective, which views all of life as related to the Lordship of Christ, prepares us to adopt a viewpoint that enables us to transpose our message into television. The Reformed faith renders all of human life sacred, and, as such, interesting. The whole range of human experience is open to us. All of creation is open to us. This Reformed world and life view uniquely qualifies us to pursue television production seriously.

Thirdly, and related to what has just been noted, we expect that we

will find that there are certain elements of our Reformed life which we have been trying to put in words for a long time that we will finally be able to put in the new language of television. Though the Christian message is often simplified to the point where it becomes nearly bland, or at least very flat and one-dimensional, we Reformed Christians know that this message is actually intriguing in the most profound sense. The dynamics of covenant life, for example, must be experienced to be appreciated. The language of television will enable us to convey something of the texture, something of the power that accompanies living totally under the direction of our covenant God. Thus we may expect that, under the leading of Christ's Spirit, we will be able to develop skills that will enable us as never before to communicate certain elements of the message we possess.

Another factor that must be kept in mind as we move forward with the use of this medium is the matter of competition. The television field is dominated by this word. We must meet satisfactory production standards, or we cannot hope to enjoy station acceptance. In terms of our mission goal, we are concerned to develop as large an audience as possible, and this means that we are competing for a share of the audience each time we go on the air. Because of the nature of television, the competitive factor dominates every aspect of program creation, from conception, to the final tape, to the marketing instruments that are employed.

To a great extent we have functioned with some success competitively in the broadcast industry with our current offerings in radio. The degree of industry acceptance for what we have done in radio provides us with a base for confidence as we move into this new field. However, radio production skills are not entirely transferable to the television field, and we must adopt the posture of beginners. There is a possibility that our initial television ventures may not be greeted by widespread industry acceptance. We will doubtlessly make mistakes. When we recognize the impact this medium can make, however, we must be willing to endure whatever embarrassments and frustrations can accompany such activity, and if we persist in our efforts we may be sure that on the long term we can expect to develop an ability to function efficiently in this new environment.

Because of the dominance of the competitive factor in television production, The Back to God Hour Committee is forced in these early stages to concentrate on high quality program production. It would be relatively easy to produce materials rather rapidly that would be acceptable in low density markets or on minimally attractive stations. We are concerned, however, to produce programs that will be acceptable to networks for prime time viewing. Though we are aware that the possibility of getting such time initially is marginal, producing materials that meet such standards will assure that whenever such possibilities exist, stations will use our material.

The matter of the competitive factor has important ramifications for our life as a denomination. For there has always been a conviction among us that the Reformed faith we enjoy is an exceedingly high

quality expression of Christianity, and it is the need of the hour. As we use television, we have the opportunity to take our precious faith out into the mainstream of the world, place it next to what is offered by the false faith of secular man, and have it judged by people who are conditioned by the viewpoints of this age. The competitive factor, is, of course, frightening from a certain point of view, and because of its intensity in connection with television, we might be tempted to abandon our television efforts. On the other hand, the competitive factor can also have an extremely stimulating impact among us; it can bring out the best. Those who now represent you in the production of our current programs find themselves stimulated by the matter of competition, rather than intimidated by it.

MARKETING

The purpose of this present report to synod is to indicate where we are at present in our television work, and to indicate what we have learned. It is our hope that the material presented indicates that those who represent you in this ministry are moving forward with sensitivity to the great demands for maintaining high technical quality, for maintaining a high level of production, and for operating successfully in a very competitive environment. We turn now to the matter of marketing.

The Synod of 1976 gave The Back to God Hour the mandate to produce 26 programs—counterparts to The Back to God Hour—to be aired on approximately 16 regular broadcast stations, and 100 cable stations. The general marketing projections for The Back to God Hour CRC-TV remain within the general time frame established by this decision. It must be remembered, however, that the production projections presupposed considerably earlier availability of studio facilities. Moreover, being made in a somewhat abstract situation, the 1976 projection did not anticipate some of the time necessarily consumed in staff training. Nevertheless, we will be able to move forward significantly in the achievement of this goal.

By next synod, we should be in a position to project some kind of time schedule which would indicate with some precision where we could be by 1980, 1985, etc. Such projections would be based on marketing/distribution activities that would begin to occur at the end of this year. By the beginning of 1978, we should be in a position to conduct in depth program marketing evaluation based on regular program distribution. There is a real possibility at this time that we will be well along in distributing the program assignment given to us by the Synod of 1976 by the end of 1978, which is within the scope of the synodical decision of 1976.

For the present, it is our intention to focus on the production of the 26 programs, referred to in the Acts of Synod as the counterpart of The Back to God Hour. These programs will follow the pattern of the program called "A Special Kind of Book." Our scheduling also calls for the production of two to four spot announcements during the remainder of 1977, with continued emphasis on this in 1978. Moreover, we will be experimenting with several other program formats, includ-

ing a shorter program in the 4½ minute range. In addition, we will stay very close to people in the industry, and maintain flexibility so that we will be able to respond to creativity that comes to us from various sectors.

We presently plan the test marketing of four or five programs in the fall. For this initial program release, we expect to use high quality stations in major markets, as well as significant cable stations. It is our intention to attempt to secure week day time for these releases, though some will probably be in the regular Sunday morning time slots. We feel that the material we present will be suitable for week day viewing. Ad/Mark, our advertising agency, is already making contacts on our behalf within the industry. In this initial marketing phase, we will be very dependent upon industry judgment and acceptance.

By the end of the year, we expect to be in a position to sign contracts for program releases in major markets. These releases will have to be supported by newspaper advertising. Moreover, we will expect to work closely with our churches in areas where these releases occur so that they will be in a position to be involved in whatever follow-up demands will result from these programs.

In releasing our materials, we feel that it is imperative to use large, well managed stations. Only then will we have access to the large number of people that television programming is dependent upon. It is extremely important that we make an early judgment regarding how secular stations receive our material, and how secular viewers react to it.

We feel that the continuance of our television work will depend to a significant degree upon financial support that comes from viewers. While we do not plan to solicit funds over the air in the usual sense, each program will be concluded with an announcement that indicates that the program has been made possible through funds furnished by the Christian Reformed Church and by interested viewers. We anticipate that viewers who want to see our type of programming continue will respond to this announcement. Such an announcement will be ineffective, if the program is not exposed to large audiences.

So far as marketing is concerned, we are convinced that program quality is the key to marketing. Thus, we are stressing program quality at present. If we can consistently present a quality product, and if we establish a reputation for such quality and work to merit such a reputation over a long period of time, we should be able to enjoy a large viewership for our material.

CHAPTER III

A WORD OF CAUTION

Before concluding this report, we want to inform the church that we are well aware that our use of television is an activity that is surrounded by serious dangers. We are entirely aware that the impact of television upon our culture has often been detrimental; apparently television can be a highly dehumanizing medium. And we must talk about this, too, for our church's use of this tool must be accompanied by sharp awareness of the possible dehumanizing impact of television.

The dehumanizing impact of television is expressed in certain realities that have thus far accompanied its use, which, so far as we know, may not be intrinsically a part of the medium. We refer to the close relationship between television and merchandising. Television as we know it is so intimately tied to merchandising that the actual product in the television industry is not the program, but the audience which is delivered to advertisers and sold. In addition, the dehumanizing impact of television has been heightened by the directions which programs that appeal to mass audiences have taken. The prevalence of violence, bizarre situation comedy, and sick sex that is found in television is obviously not raising the level of our humanity.

But quite apart from these realities which are related more to the use to which television is being put, there also seems to be degenerating effects which result from the medium per se. Daniel Borstin pointed out several years ago already that, whereas television was expected to draw society together, it has, in fact fragmented it (28). It is now possible for people to retreat to the fortress of their own home or apartment, scarcely ever venturing outside, and still have the illusion that they are participating in their society, when actually they are non-participants. Television is frequently blamed for destroying family conversation and the togetherness we expect in the family circle. With all of this, there is evidence, already noted in this report, that television has a narcotic effect on the human brain. Children who are exposed to great quantities of *Sesame Street* exhibit symptoms that suggest that their nervous systems are overloaded (29). The similarity between watching and dreaming also suggests that prolonged exposure to this medium can be damaging.

But there is a reaction to television that is peculiarly Christian that also tends to be primarily negative. Dr. Clifford Christians, of the University of Illinois, formerly of the staff of the Home Mission Board, has prepared several papers which have been discussed at length in Christian college settings; these papers have highlighted some of the way television apparently undercuts what we must consider to be the important qualities of the Christian community (30). Dr. Christians refers to the great role of oral, face-to-face communication in the Christian community, and the absolute necessity of maintaining it. He also cautions against a simple exuberance among Christians regarding television simply because it enables us to reach the greatest numbers at the lowest cost. He calls attention to the *Gospel Blimp*, the hilarious, though devastating, book by Joe Bayly, which lampoons the church's employment of technological methods of communication while it neglects the powerful witness that can occur naturally through ordinary conversation and expressions of love within one's community (31). He reminds us of the Pauline references to principalities and powers against which we fight, and suggests that we most likely find these today in the configurations that occur in culture in terms of mass communications. In our judgment, the skepticism he expresses is appropriate and must be borne in mind. It is not the intention of The Back to God Hour Committee to give the impression that in the use

of television, we have finally discovered the great instrument that will solve our communication problem once and for all. Nothing could be further from the truth. In fact, if Dr. Christians feels exercised by the questions he has raised, we feel even more exercised, for the full impact of his misgivings is felt with us who wrestle with this medium and seek to find a way to use it properly ourselves as church.

We feel that the church should candidly face the kinds of questions that are being raised regarding the use of television, and we caution against mindless optimism as we seek to discover what it means to transpose our message into the language of television. At the same time, we feel that at present we do not have grounds for pessimism, either. What we have instead is an opportunity to use a tool for communication which appears to be exceptionally useful for our purposes. It seems to this committee that we are obligated for the present and for the foreseeable future to work with all diligence with television, subjecting our work continuously to the considered judgment of the entire Christian community.

There are, after all, several reasons why we cannot simply turn aside from using television. Among them are these:

1. We must view the relationship that exists between the electronics of television and the ability of the human mind to receive television's message as one that exists because of God's creation arrangement. One of the things that frightens us about television is that it is such an astonishingly effective communicator—so effective that the person receiving the message is hardly aware that he is receiving it. Thus, it is devastatingly destructive when the message transmitted is evil. We feel, though, that we who have the gospel message itself must use this medium for the transmission of this message as well.
2. Whether we like it or not, television has in fact achieved dominance as a communicator in areas like North America, and major events, if they are truly major, simply must be passed through the electronic grid television provides. Because of this dominance, it appears necessary that we make our message available in this form.
3. The object of our mission in many areas—North America among them—are people who (again, whether we like it or not) have been influenced by television and are conditioned to receive important messages almost exclusively by means of this medium. If we go to foreign cultures, we expect that missionaries will carefully analyze the object of the mission and use tools for communication that are useful in the environment they serve. In terms of our mission/communication responsibilities in North America, the fact that the object of our mission has been deeply affected by television must be taken very seriously.
4. We now have an opportunity to use television as a church community. This means that in our case all the elements of television can be controlled by people who are themselves controlled by the Scriptures and by the Lord of the Scriptures. We must remember that the detrimental impact television has frequently had, has been caused by the fact that the television industry is not oriented to a biblical

world and life view. It has thus often become a manipulating instrument that has been employed for non-worthy goals. Even so, television already is providing some very good services. And we have every reason to believe that the use of this medium by a church such as ours could have a powerful, beneficial consequence.

At the present time, The Back to God Hour Committee is extremely enthusiastic about the progress that has been made thus far and about the possibilities for the future. We are enthusiastic because it is our considered judgment that the evidence is weighted in the direction of suggesting that a proper use of this medium by a church like ours will be very, very productive. And we are enthusiastic because, for virtually the first time, an entire denomination, the Christian Reformed Church, is taking hold of television and with all of its spiritual, intellectual, and moral resources is seeking to determine the directions the Lord wants it to take. Our entrance into this field is not one person's idea, it is not the result of a high powered selling job, but it is the result of a slow and gradual movement that has been accompanied by growing sensitivities to the problems and demands that inhere in the use of this medium. We would not have the courage to advance into this new area if we did not believe that the rich resources of our cultural, theological, and faith tradition equip us to respond to the challenge of television in a meaningful way. We believe that a courageous, aggressive use of this medium now will not only have great short term results, but it will equip us to function effectively in our mission/communication task as this century draws to a close.

The key we believe to the proper use of television by our church is the word *serious*; we must use television *seriously*. This means that we must not become childishly excited by it. Nor must we view it as a kind of embellishment of our denominational life, like an airline for a little country. We must, rather, work hard at discovering how it may best be used to help us show others the riches of the salvation Jesus Christ has brought. Television could bring us out into the mainstream of our nations' lives in new ways. It could introduce more people to the Reformed faith than have yet been exposed to it. It could cause us to find ourselves in a new role of leadership within our nations which will demand the best that our community can offer. But again, the key will be the seriousness with which we work with this medium. Our seriousness will be measured in the amount of our resources of every kind we will be willing to commit to television.

* * * *

As an agency of our church, we ask each member to be in prayer for all of us who presently are directly involved in developing our television ministry. We wait on the leading of the Lord. We feel we are being obedient to him. He will give us the wisdom we need. He will make us useful!

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That synod accept the above report as a response to Article 59, Acts of Synod 1976.

That synod accept the above report as a description of our church's present evaluation of the use of television in responding to our mission/communication calling, and urge The Back to God Hour to continue to provide synod with in depth, critical reports of its television ministry from time to time over the next several years.

1. It is presently unclear precisely how the use of television should be integrated into our total broadcast mission and into other elements of our mission as well.
2. A determination of the precise value of television for us and its impact can be achieved only after sufficient market penetration has occurred.
3. The use of television by our church will benefit from continuous examination to insure that detrimental results do not accompany the use of this tool.

That synod urge other agencies, organizations, and individuals within the church who feel they have significant observations and judgments regarding the use of television to supply The Back to God Hour with their insights.

1. Proper use of television will depend on the mobilization of all available resources that have bearing on the use of this medium.
2. Appropriate critique of the development of this medium can be achieved only if there is widespread denominational participation.

That synod continue the annual \$10.00/family quota for the year 1978 and allow The Back to God Hour to inform viewers that the television ministry also depends upon viewer support.

1. A simple declaration of program funding can be expressed without moving in the direction of solicitation of funds.
2. Continuation of this ministry will require more funds than can be provided by the Christian Reformed Church alone.
3. It is reasonable to expect that there will be many viewers who will support the type of television we will be producing if they are aware that their support is needed.

FOOTNOTES

- (1) *Acts of Synod*, 1975, Art. 35-B-4; *Acts of Synod*, 1976, Art. 59-A, B.
- (2) Douglass Cater, "The Intellectual in Videoland," *Saturday Review*, 5/31/75, p. 13. Douglass Cater is founder of the Aspen Institute Program on Communications and Society and executive editor of the Aspen Program's Series on Communications. He has served on the staff of President Lyndon Johnson and worked on the shaping and passage of the Public Broadcasting Act of 1967.
- (3) Richard Adler, *Television as a Cultural Force*, (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1976), p. 6. Richard Adler is assistant director of the Aspen Program and director of its Workshop on Television Criticism. He is also serving as director of a program of research on the effects of television advertising on children at the Harvard Graduate School of Education.
- (4) Marshall McLuhan has described the difference between the print oriented culture of the past and the electronic environment in which we now live. His *Gutenberg Galaxy*, published in 1962 and reprinted in 1966, ushered in an awareness of what has happened to us over the last several years. A more recent article of his, "At the Flip Point of Time—The Point of More Return" *Journal of Communication*, Autumn, 1975, pp. 102-106, describes how the progressive "intensification of visual experience pushed auditory and oral culture into abeyance."

(5) Keven Ryan, "Television As a Moral Educator," *Television as a Cultural Force*, p. 111. Keven Ryan is Associate Dean in the College of Education at Ohio State University. He has also taught on the faculties of Stanford, Harvard, and the University of Chicago.

(6) George Gerbner and Larry Gross, "Living With Television," *Journal of Communication*, Spring, 1976, p. 174. George Gerbner is Professor and Dean and Larry Gross is Associate Professor at the Annenberg School of Communications, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia.

(7) *Ibid.*, p. 176.

(8) *Newsweek*, September 22, 1975, p. 55.

(9) Alberta E. Siegel, "Communicating With the Next Generation," *Journal of Communication*, Autumn, 1975, p. 22. Professor Siegel is Professor of Psychology in the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at Stanford University. She was a member of the Surgeon General's Scientific Advisory Committee on Television and Social Behavior.

(10) Richard Adler, *Television as a Cultural Force*, p. 11.

(11) Found in *Television as a Cultural Force*, p. 37. Ms. Fass is Assistant Professor of History at the University of California, Berkeley.

(12) George Gerbner and Larry Gross, "Living With Television," *Journal of Communication*, Spring, 1976, p. 177.

(13) Edgar Snow, *Red Star Over China* (New York: Grove Press, 1971), pp. 114-116.

(14) Gerbner and Gross, p. 175f.

(15) *Ibid.*, p. 175.

(16) *Ibid.*, p. 176.

(17) *Ibid.*, p. 176f.

(18) Richard Adler, *Television as a Cultural Force*, pp. 3, 4. John Leonard writes about television under the name "Cyclops". The Leonard quote is from William Severini Kowinski, "Cyclops: man with one eye in the land of the blind," *TeleVISIONS*, October/November, 1975, p. 5.

(19) Alberta E. Siegel, "Communicating With the Next Generation," *Journal of Communication*, Autumn, 1975, p. 14.

(20) Caleb Gategno, *Toward a Visual Culture*, (Chicago: Educational Solutions).

(21) Marie Winn, *The Plug-in Drug* (New York: Viking Press) 1977.

(22) Douglass Cater, "The Intellectual in Videoland," *Saturday Review*, 5/31/75, p. 14.

(23) *Ibid.*

(24) *Ibid.*

(25) Peter H. Wood, "Television As Dream," *Television as a Cultural Force*, pp. 17-35.

(26) Alberta E. Siegel says, "We need to think about how to study insidious effects [of television]," "Communicating With the Next Generation," p. 19.

(27) Jerry Kozinski, *Being There* (New York: Bantam Book, 1976.)

(28) Daniel J. Borstin, "Television," *Life*, September 10, 1971, pp. 35 ff.

(29) Werner I. Halpert, "Turned-on Toddlers," *Journal of Communication*, Autumn, 1975, p. 68, 69.

(30) Clifford Christians, *A Cultural View of Communications: Some Explorations*, unpublished working papers—numbers 1, 2, 3, 4.

(31) *Ibid.*, Paper No. 2, p. 12.

SUPPLEMENTARY ITEMS

In connection with defalcations that occurred within two denominational agencies, an audit of the individual agencies was initiated by the finance committee of the Synodical Interim Committee. In a letter to the chairman of the finance committee of SIC, our treasurer has stated: "It is our feeling that the initiation of such an investigation does not fall within the province of the SIC." He requested further clarification from SIC's finance committee, and The Back to God Hour Committee wishes to inform synod of its difficulties with this procedure. Since each agency is charged with the responsibility of maintaining proper auditing procedures, and since our auditor's report is submitted annually to the finance committee of the Synodical Interim Committee, it seems to The Back to God Hour Committee that an audit, decided upon unilaterally, coming from the SIC, is an intrusion into an area of responsibility already assigned to our committee.

The Back to God Hour Committee has also gone on record as favoring the United Mission Sunday plan for a unified Sunday of Thanksgiving for Missions, scheduled for September or October.

The Back to God Hour Radio Committee

Joel Nederhood, Director

REPORT 2
CALVIN COLLEGE AND SEMINARY
 (Arts. 26, 74)

This report covers actions of the Board of Trustees of Calvin College and Seminary from June 1976 to February 1977. A supplementary report will follow after the May 1977 meeting of the board.

I. INFORMATION

A. *The Board of Trustees*

1. The semiannual meeting of the board of trustees was held at the Knollcrest Commons, February 7-10, 1977. With the addition of the new classis, Atlantic Northeast, the board now numbers thirty-eight classical representatives, with a total of forty-seven delegates. There are thirty-five ministers and three non-clerical members who represent the classes. There are nine non-clergy who represent the four districts designated by synod.

2. The following delegates were elected as officers at the February board meeting:

President	Rev. William Vander Haak
First vice-president	Dr. Edwin Roels
Second vice-president	Mr. Norman De Graaf
Secretary	Rev. Wilbur L. De Jong
Assistant secretary	Mr. Berton Sevensma
Treasurer	Mr. Henry De Wit

3. Class visits were assigned and were carried out in keeping with regular procedure that the classes of college and seminary faculty members eligible for reappointment be visited.

4. The Board Restructure Committee made its final report and the recommendations were adopted by the board. A change was made in the rules regarding board treasurer; namely, that he "need not be a member of the board of trustees and . . . ordinarily will be the vice-president of business and finance." It was also recommended that the president of the board of trustees shall appoint members from the executive committee to serve in an advisory capacity to the college and seminary administration on college, seminary, and business matters. It was further decided to develop procedures and materials for better orientation of new members to the board of trustees.

5. A committee on Naming of Buildings reported, suggesting some amendments to the present Building Name Policy. They will present a final report in May.

6. Faculty/Board Conference

Dr. Henry Ippel from the History Department gave an interesting and humorous lecture entitled, "The Bible and England's 'Viet Nam,'" in which he contrasted the English use or application of Scripture to the revolutionary activities of the colonists in America. He drew or implied

certain analogies in our use or misuse of Scripture today relative to modern issues.

Dr. Bert De Vries, also from the History Department, gave an illustrated lecture on the "Five Seasons of Excavation at Tell Hesban" in which he had an active part.

B. Seminary

I. Faculty

a. General Information

The membership of the faculty remains unchanged from last year, except for the addition of Dr. Richard De Ridder as a regular faculty member, by virtue of his appointment as Professor of Church Polity and Church Administration. His formal installation in that office took place on Sunday morning, January 9, in the Shawnee Park Christian Reformed Church.

Dr. Marten Woudstra is on sabbatical leave for the entire year. He is residing in the Netherlands while working on a commentary on Joshua.

Dr. Fred H. Klooster is on leave during the first and third academic quarters, working on a commentary on the Heidelberg Catechism. Prof. Harold Dekker is performing half-time teaching services, continuing his involvement as a Grand Rapids city commissioner, and spending the remainder of his time pursuing an academic program at a Chicago seminary. The board took note of the bereavement of Prof. Dekker in the loss of his mother last summer. The rest of the faculty are engaged in full-time teaching.

Dr. Gordon Spykman and Mr. Clayton Libolt are providing teaching services to replace those of Professors Woudstra and Klooster. Dr. Henry Stob continues to teach the "philosophical" courses in the Department of Moral and Philosophical Theology. Speech teachers from Calvin College continue to render service in the critique of sermon delivery by students.

Dr. David Engelhard and Dr. Melvin Hugen continue to serve, respectively, as academic dean and dean of students. Professor Robert Recker is faculty secretary for this year.

Dr. Melvin Hugen was granted a sabbatical leave for the second and third quarters of the academic year 1977-78.

b. Staff Changes

1) The faculty submitted the name of Mr. John Vander Lugt to the executive committee for the appointment to the position of registrar at Calvin seminary. Mr. Vander Lugt was interviewed at the December meeting of the executive committee and was approved for the position. He has accepted the appointment but will not be able to begin service until June. He is a graduate of Calvin College and Seminary and has been teaching Bible courses at a local high school since his graduation.

2) Reappointments (cf. II, Recommendations, for the reappointments of Dr. Melvin Hugen and Dr. Marion Snapper).

3) The Rev. Vernon Geurkink is completing the third year of his three-year appointment as Coordinator of Field Education. He has indicated his desire to return to a pastoral position. The board expressed its thanks and appreciation to him for the service rendered in this position in the consolidation and further development of the program of Field Education at the seminary during the years 1974-77.

4) The board approved the appointment of the Rev. Robert C. De Vries as Coordinator of Field Education for a three-year term. The Rev. Mr. De Vries graduated from Calvin seminary in 1971 with a Th.M. degree. He served an internship in Ann Arbor and a pastorate in Boca Raton, Florida, before coming to the Fellowship Christian Reformed Church in Big Rapids, Michigan in 1970. He has been intimately associated with the seminary's field education program throughout his ministry. He has supervised two summer students, two SWIM teams and four full-time interns at various times and places. He has participated and assisted in the seminary's supervisor's workshop. The board believes that the Rev. Mr. De Vries understands the field education program thoroughly and has a vision for what it can become in the future.

2. Academic Matters

a. Calvin Studies Society

President Kromminga reported the formation of a new society to be known as the "Calvin Studies Society." The formation of this society implies recognition of the importance of Calvin Studies and the potential for advancing them. It also reflects the prominent place Calvin College and Seminary, and particularly their library, occupies in the thinking of North American Calvin scholars. Mr. Peter De Klerk, the theological librarian, continues to pursue the task of enlarging our Calvin resources.

b. Urban Pastoral Education

Last May the board approved seminary participation in a newly-formed Seminary Consortium for Urban Pastoral Education (SCUPE). This is a Chicago-based organization designed to provide education and experience in urban ministry to students of participating schools. This is the first year of its operation. One Calvin Seminary student is currently studying in its program, and it is expected that one or two others will do so next year. Dr. Melvin Hugen is Calvin Seminary's representative on its board. A Special Interest Seminar at the seminary to be held in February, will focus on urban education and the operations of SCUPE. A review and evaluation of its operations will be submitted to the board later, possibly in May, 1977.

c. Special Program for Ministerial Candidacy

President Kromminga called the board's attention to this program as one which merits critical scrutiny with possible future modification for the following reasons:

- 1) the amount of participation in the program (about 20% in 1976);

2) the amount of administrative time involved in the program; and

3) a consideration of the real objective of the church in maintaining such a program. It raises the question whether this procedure is consistent with the best preparation for ministry in the Christian Reformed Church and with the degree of support and supervision which the church lavishes upon its own theological school. A review might be in order at some future time.

d. Continuing Education Units

Various educational institutions have begun to award "Continuing Education Units" (CEU's) for participation of ministers and other persons in workshops and seminars provided under their auspices. Continuing Education Units are not, strictly speaking, academic credits, but may serve as an indication of the degree to which and the manner in which a professional person is bolstering his professional competence.

Recognizing the value of such continuing education units, the seminary faculty has adopted regulations under which they will be awarded. These conform closely to the standards which are applied by other schools throughout the nation.

The board approved these regulations.

e. Personal Qualifications For Ministry

The board of trustees adopted the statement on "Personal Qualifications for the Ministry" as a working document in the seminary's program. This document is the result of faculty efforts to implement the recommendations of the report on Psychological Testing submitted to the board of trustees in February 1975.

f. Joint Committee on Seminary Program

This committee was appointed by the board in February 1975 with a two-year mandate to monitor the implementation of the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Seminary Program. The report gave evidence of many hours of hard work on the part of both the committee and the faculty. Many of the recommendations of the ACSP have already been implemented by the faculty and others are well on the way toward implementation. The report also demonstrated an excellent working relationship between both the board committee and the faculty and intra-faculty relations. The committee was dismissed with thanks and commended for its fine piece of work.

g. New Elective Course

The board approved a new course offering as a three-hour elective described as *The Apocalypse*. This will be an exegetical study of the book of Revelation, including a critical analysis of the main types of interpretation.

h. Early Examination For Candidacy

Carl Bruxvoort, a senior student, is applying for an internship in Japan for the year 1977-78, and intends to be a candidate in June, 1978. The Japan internship will not end until June 30, 1978, which raises a problem with respect to the sequence of events (board inter-

view and synod declaration) leading to candidacy in 1978. The board approved his request for an early examination pending ratification by synod. (cf. II, Recommendations)

i. Committee to Study the Recommendations of Synod Regarding the Examination for and Declaration of Candidacy

The committee's mandate and report are here submitted for your information. It was adopted by the board of trustees and its recommendations are submitted to synod for its consideration and adoption. (cf. II, Recommendations)

Mandate:

The mandate given by the board to its subcommittee arises out of the following mandate given by synod to the board (Acts of Synod 1975, pp. 89, 90) :

"That synod declare that 'since the examination for candidacy is to determine one's fitness to be considered eligible for a call by any of our churches' the synod, as the broadest assembly representative of all the churches, should be meaningfully involved in this examination.

Grounds:

"a. The declaration of candidacy, which synod has never relinquished, should be extended in some sense to the examination for candidacy to make the declaration meaningful.

"b. It is appropriate both theoretically and practically that the church and her future ministers be brought into contact with each other in more than a merely formal way on this significant occasion.

"c. Efforts to humanize the contact between synod and the candidates apart from synod's participation in the examination have not produced satisfactory results.

"That synod request the board of trustees or its executive committee to study Report 35 and recommend a procedure whereby the synod can be directly and meaningfully involved in the *examination* for and the *declaration* of candidacy.

Grounds:

"a. The board of trustees is a committee of synod.

"b. The board possesses the experience necessary to make the most fruitful recommendations.

"c. The board is aware of the desire for and the need of more direct involvement of synod in this matter."

The board's procedure:

The board of trustees has assigned to a subcommittee the task of preparing the recommendations which synod has requested. Having twice considered the products of this subcommittee's labors, the board finds it impossible to comply with synod's request.

Some of the obstacles encountered in this effort are as follows:

While it might be relatively easy to propose ways in which the *declaration* of candidacy could be made meaningful, it is much more difficult to involve synod in the *examination* for candidacy, which is the heart of the synodical mandate to the board.

Any system of examination in which the board was *not* involved would demand devotion of a great deal of synodical time to this examination.

Any system in which both board and synod are involved would mean overlapping and duplication of effort, and in essence two separate examinations for one purpose.

It is very difficult to reduce synod's expenditure of time to manageable proportions without reducing synod's examining panels to unrepresentative size.

Under current arrangements synod is represented in this examination by one of its committees, namely the board of trustees, which represents all areas of the church and which includes both ordained and unordained persons; the reasons for synod's past referral of this task to the board would appear to continue to outweigh the advantages sought in devising a participation in the examination by synod.

It is the judgment of the board that the only viable alternative to the present procedure is to have synod resume the entire examination. The board judges also that in the light of synod's past experience with these examinations, this alternative is not to be recommended.

Recommendations:

1. That synod continue to conduct the examination for candidacy by way of its committee, the board of trustees.

Grounds:

a. The board of trustees is a duly constituted committee of synod which is broadly representative of the Christian Reformed Church.
b. The reasons for which synod referred this task to the board of trustees in the past are still valid.

2. That synod instruct the board of trustees to continue to seek ways to make the declaration of candidacy more meaningful; e.g., by

a. providing each delegate to synod with a profile and photograph of each prospective candidate at the opening of synod's sessions; and

b. inviting and encouraging the candidates, as far as possible, to be present at the session of synod at which the declaration of candidacy is made.

j. M.C.E. Placement

The faculty decision quoted below indicates the faculty's action on the matter of placement service for graduates in the Master of Church Education (M.C.E.) Program:

"The Field Education office shall serve the M.C.E. graduates with a placement service. This shall include the keeping of a student's dossier and publicizing openings which come to the attention of the Field Education office.

Ground: The Field Education office is the appropriate *locus* for such a service.

"The activation of an individual's placement file and the accumulation of data to be placed therein shall be the responsibility of the student. N.B. Such a file would typically contain a curriculum vitae

and letters of recommendation solicited by the student." The above decisions are submitted to synod for information.

k. Minority Recruitment

A faculty activity which should be called to the synod's attention is its action with respect to recruitment of minority students and other concerns relative to minority groups.

The Synodical Committee on Race Relations has lent the seminary faculty unstinting cooperation in dealing with minority concerns. Last May the faculty discussed a report submitted to it by a joint SCORR-seminary committee, and reached the following decisions:

"That the seminary faculty establish goals re:

- 1) Establishing contact with the minority church community;
- 2) Recruiting minority seminary students;
- 3) Obtaining minority lectures and eventually a minority faculty member;
- 4) Making curriculum changes in terms of meeting the needs of minority students as well as all students preparing for ministry in multi-racial settings.

"That the faculty arrange for a visit by Dr. Griggsby, ATS consultant, at the earliest possible time, especially with a view to consideration of curriculum matters."

These decisions were referred to the administrative council for further implementation and for advice and recommendation to the faculty.

The administrative council has taken up that assignment, but unfortunately has little to show for its efforts to the present time. A letter was sent in October to the Black Pastors' Conference, requesting assistance in various aspects of relations with the black communities in Grand Rapids. To date no response has been received. Dr. Marshall Griggsby, consultant to the Association of Theological Schools, was invited to spend a day with the faculty. On two occasions he was unable to fulfill his agreement to meet with us. The most recent development is the reception of a lengthy letter from him, to which the faculty will give attention at an early date.

The faculty is seriously concerned with the matter of improving its ministry and that of the Christian Reformed Church to minority communities. We have been largely frustrated to this point in our efforts to take up this problem in a meaningful way, but we pledge our continued efforts to do so.

1. The Veldman Legacy

The Rev. Richard Veldman left a legacy to Calvin Seminary, a percentage of which was designated to "be reserved and designated for post graduate students approved for advanced studies in Amsterdam." The money thus designated amounted to \$9,731.87. In formulating regulations to cover the use of these funds, certain judgments had to be made. Although the will did not so specify it was judged that the graduate studies ought to be *theological* studies and the locale for such studies in Amsterdam should be the Free University. It was also

thought not to be contrary to the spirit of the bequest to include the theological school of the Gereformeerde Kerken at Kampen among the approved schools.

The regulations approved by the faculty were adopted by the board of trustees.

C. College

1. Faculty

a. Faculty Profile, September 1976

In September 1976 there were 179 persons who were on full-time appointments to the teaching faculty at Calvin College. Of these, 160 were on regular appointment and 19 were on temporary appointments. (These figures compare to 157 and 12 in September 1975.) Twenty-three of these persons will be on leave of absence sometime during the course of the academic year. (This compares to 14 who were on leave in the 1975-76 school year.)

It is interesting to note that in the academic year 1975-76 there were 155 (169-14) full-time faculty members who were available for teaching the entire year and in 1976-77 there were 156 (179-23) available for the entire year. When one notes that the enrollment in 1976-77 was 3,915 compared to 3,674 in 1975-76, it is quickly apparent that the teaching load of the full-time staff has increased substantially from last year to this year.

This teaching load was relieved somewhat by the appointment of an extraordinarily large number of part-time staff. Thus, we have 58 persons on a part-time basis this year teaching the equivalent of approximately 26 full-time staff. This compares to 49 part-time people teaching the equivalent of approximately 19 full-time staff last year. The administration is pleased with the quality and dedication which characterize the part-time staff.

Because of the increased number of part-time faculty and the potential negative implications this trend may have in the long-range nature and quality of the teaching faculty, the administration is making a concerted effort to substitute full-time for part-time personnel whenever this seems reasonable and when outstanding candidates are available. The goal is to reduce the part-time staff to approximately 40 persons. Efforts toward this goal are reflected later in the report.

b. Staff Needs for 1977-78

The board of trustees authorized the appointment of 16 new members to the faculty, according to the president's recommendation. The rationale for this recommendation is partially reflected in "a" above but more particularly in the following considerations:

- 1) Enrollment projections (4,040, an increase of 125)
- 2) Reduction of part-time staff (from 50 to approximately 40)
- 3) Replacement of faculty to be on leave of absence
- 4) Size of introductory classes in selected departments

c. Leaves of Absence

A general leave of absence was approved for one faculty member and sabbatical leaves of absence of varying lengths were approved for 13

faculty members for 1977-78 and one sabbatical leave of absence for 1978-79.

d. Reappointments and/or New Appointments

The board processed 7 new appointments, 13 reappointments with tenure and/or change in rank, 24 reappointments of faculty with some changes in rank, reappointment of 2 administrators, and 2 promotions to the rank of full professor. (cf. II, Recommendations)

e. Retirements from the Staff

The board of trustees calls to the attention of synod the retirement of the following members of the faculty: Dr. John De Beer and Dr. Enno Wolhuis. The board recommends that synod take appropriate recognition of the services of these persons on the occasion of their retirement. (cf. II, Recommendations)

f. Bereavements

The board requested President Diekema to convey its sympathy to those of the staff who have recently experienced bereavements. The secretary has also sent letters of condolence and sympathy as well as appreciation to the families concerned. The board calls special attention to the death of Dr. Henry Ryskamp and Dr. John Van Bruggen.

g. Special Recognition, Achievements, and Honors

President Diekema presented a list of the professional honors and achievements of faculty members, along with a list of the professional activities and contributions made to church, Christian education, teachers' associations, etc., in the past year. The board took note of the faculty honors and achievements and instructed President Diekema to convey the board's congratulations to the faculty members for their accomplishments.

h. Illnesses

The board took note of illnesses on the staff and/or their families and emeriti. The board requested the President to convey to the persons and families mentioned its concern for their welfare as well as to convey our thanks to God for the restoration in full or in part reported.

i. Development Program

1) The board took note of the resignation of Dr. Kenneth Bootsma as Director of Development at Calvin College and Seminary, effective June, 1977.

2) Director of Deferred Giving—New Position

Calvin has long had an interest in introducing a deferred giving program because of the vast potential this program has for fund raising. Calvin was slow in developing an aggressive program because it was recognized that fund raising had to be balanced between acquiring funds for immediate needs and for long-term needs. Because the development office was understaffed, it emphasized the immediate cash or pledge rather than the long-term giving pattern.

However, serious efforts are being made to correct this situation and definite plans are being made to acquire a staff person with specific qualifications and clearly defined responsibilities. The board

has given authorization to form such a new position to be known as "The Director of Deferred Giving" as soon as such a qualified person can be recruited.

2. Academic Programs

a. New Courses

The introduction of the following new courses was approved:

- 1) Field Work in Middle East Archeology (History)
- 2) Introduction to Bilingual Education (IDIS)
- 3) Latin American Civilization (Spanish)

b. Change in Concentrations

Also approved was a resolution to make major concentrations for teacher education programs in art, music, and physical education ten and one-half courses and minors in these fields seven courses. This is necessary to make these programs conform to state certification requirements.

c. The Calvin Center for Christian Scholarship

The governing board of the new Calvin Center for Christian Scholarship has made good progress in the many tasks necessary toward implementing the Center effective September 1977. After soliciting possible topics from many sources, the governing board selected for 1977-78, *Christian Stewardship and Natural Resources*. The governing board is presently engaged in soliciting applications from potential Fellows in the Center from both the Calvin faculty and from Christian scholars and professionals elsewhere who can contribute significantly to the study of the topic.

C. Business and Finance

1. The board of trustees accepted the accountants' report as the official financial report of Calvin College and Seminary for the fiscal year 1975-76.

2. An accountants' letter was received re "system of internal accounting control." The business office personnel were instructed to comply with the recommendation in the letter.

3. Revised Budget for 1976-77

The revised operating budget for 1976-77, showing total projected revenue of \$8,791,000 and total projected expenditures of \$8,748,400, was approved as the official operating budget for the current fiscal year.

4. Transfer of Funds

It was decided to transfer \$110,000 of General Fund Reserve (\$743,422, Aug. 31, 1976) to a special account for the Center for Christian Scholarship, this amount representing the estimated cost of operating the Center for the first year, September 1, 1977 to August 31, 1978.

5. Tuition rates for 1977-78 as presented in the Schedule of Preliminary Budget for 1977-78 were approved as follows:

a. College Tuition

	Proposed for 1977-78	1976-77 Semester Rate	Increase
Non-Christian Reformed	\$1,115	\$1,030	\$85
Christian Reformed—			
Michigan within 10 miles	1,015	930	85
Michigan 10 to 150 miles	975	890	85
Out-of-State within 300 miles	925	850	75
Out-of-State 300 to 1,000 miles	885	810	75
Out-of-State over 1,000 miles	845	770	75

b. Seminary Tuition

	Proposed for 1977-78	In effect for 1976-77
M.Div. and M.C.E. candidates	\$22 per qtr. hr.	\$18 per qtr. hr.
Per unit of field education	\$12	\$10
Th.M. candidates	\$40 per qtr. hr.	\$30 per qtr. hr.

6. Quota Request

The board of trustees decided to request the Synod of 1977 for a 6% increase in quota for Calvin College and Seminary for the calendar year 1978. This assumes an increase of \$700.00 in base salary—from \$10,300 to \$11,000, or 6.8%.

7. Room and Board Rate for 1977-78

The room and board fee for 1977-78 will be increased by \$70 per year over that in effect for 1976-77—from \$1,100 to \$1,170, an increase of 6.4%. This is necessary to meet an increase in student wage rates, a projected substantial increase in utility costs, and a modest increase in food costs. In spite of the fact that Calvin's facilities and food program are above average, the cost to the student is significantly lower than at most other institutions in this area.

8. Commons Expansion

The board of trustees approved a recommendation to expand the commons and that the administration be authorized to retain architectural services to prepare final plans and specifications, to solicit and award bids for the project, and to proceed with the construction phase during summer, 1977.

Estimated cost of construction—5,000 sq. ft. @ \$40	\$	200,000
Additional kitchen and service equip. for snack shop		30,000
Additional store fixtures for bookstore		15,000
Design and engineering fees and miscellaneous costs		25,000
Total	\$	270,000
Financed through—		
Projected bookstore reserve at 8-31-77	\$130,000	
Advance on bookstore earnings for 2 years	40,000	170,000
General Plant Fund		\$ 100,000

9. Knollcrest East Apartment Addition

A motion prevails that the board authorize construction of the proposed 30-apartment project by awarding contracts to the following low bidders on the basis of the following budget and that any two officers of the board be authorized to sign the contracts.

General Construction—Graves and Associates		\$ 649,350	
Mechanical Construction—Peter Botma Plumbing		183,000	
Electrical Construction—Fryling Electric		78,900	
Architectural and Engineering fees @ 6%		55,000	
Furniture and Appliances at \$450 per student—estimate		80,000	
Carpet and Drapes		40,000	
Finish Landscaping		10,000	
			1,096,250
Contingency of 2½% for change orders, etc.			28,750
			1,125,000
	Total Budget		\$1,125,000
To be financed as follows—			
Present balance in housing reserves		\$183,000	
Projected income for 1976-77		142,000	325,000
			\$ 800,000
Through long-term HUD loan, note issue or bank loan			

10. Other Facility Needs

The board of trustees also authorized the administration to continue the purchase of architectural services to help study potential solutions to the need for additional space for a variety of other functions, such as classrooms, faculty offices, media center, physical education, student organizations, and library.

11. De Young Trust

The board took grateful recognition of the trust of John and Lucy De Young, consisting of 560 acres of Iowa farm land, recently deeded to Calvin College and Seminary.

II. RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Seminary

1. The board of trustees recommends that Dr. Melvin Hugen be reappointed as Professor of Pastoral Care with *tenure*.
2. The board of trustees recommends that Dr. Marion Snapper be reappointed as Professor of Church Education for two years.
3. The board of trustees recommends that synod grant the request of seminarian Carl Bruxvoort to submit to an early examination for candidacy. (cf. I,2,h above)
4. Regarding the matter of synod's involvement in the examination of candidates, the board of trustees recommends:
 - a. That synod continue to conduct the examination for candidacy by way of its committee, the board of trustees.

Grounds:

- 1) The board of trustees is a duly constituted committee of synod which is broadly representative of the Christian Reformed Church.

- 2) The reasons for which synod referred this task to the board of trustees in the past are still valid.
- b. That synod instruct the board of trustees to continue to seek ways to make the declaration of candidacy more meaningful; e.g., by
- 1) providing each delegate to synod with a profile and photograph of each prospective candidate at the opening of synod's sessions; and
 - 2) inviting and encouraging the candidates, as far as possible, to be present at the session of synod at which the declaration of candidates is made. (cf. I,2,i, above)

B. College

1. Retirements from the Staff

The board of trustees recommends that synod take appropriate recognition of the service of the following persons on the occasion of their retirement: Dr. John De Beer, Professor of Education, emeritus, and Dr. Enno Wolhuis, Professor of Chemistry, emeritus.

2. Appointments

The board of trustees presents the following recommendations for appointment:

- a. Mrs. Claude-Marie Baldwin, A.B. (expects M.A., June, 1977), as Visiting Instructor in Romance Languages (French) for two years
 - b. Mr. Kenneth Bratt, M.A., as Instructor in Classical Languages for two years
 - c. Mrs. Barbara Carvill, M.A. (expects Ph.D., June, 1977), as Assistant Professor of Germanic Languages for two years
 - d. Mr. Edward Ericson, Ph.D., as Visiting Professor of English for two years
 - e. Rev. Philip Holtrop, B.D., Th.M., as Assistant Professor of Religion and Theology for two years, terminal
 - f. Mrs. Charlotte Otten, Ph.D., as Associate Professor of English for two years
 - g. Mr. John Timmerman, Ph.D., as Associate Professor of English for two years
 - h. Mr. Gregory Mellema, Ph.D., as Assistant Professor of Philosophy for two years, effective September 1, 1978
3. Reappointments with Tenure (*italics indicate change of rank*):
- a. Beebe, John, Ph.D., *Professor of Biology*
 - b. Besselsen, Gilbert, Ph.D., *Professor of Education*
 - c. De Vries, Bert, Ph.D., *Professor of History*
 - d. Konyndyk, Kenneth, Ph.D., *Professor of Philosophy*
 - e. Lamse, James, Ph.D., *Professor of Germanic Languages*
 - f. Lucasse, Philip, Ph.D., *Professor of Education*
 - g. Roberts, Frank, Ph.D., *Professor of History*
 - h. Stapert, Calvin, Ph.D., *Professor of Music*
 - i. Terborg, Robert, Ph.D., *Professor of Psychology*
 - j. Van Poolen, Lambert, Ph.D., *Professor of Engineering*

- k. Walters, Mary, Ph.D., *Professor* of English
- l. Westra, Dorothy, M.A., Assistant Professor of Education

4. Reappointments — Faculty

The board of trustees presents the following recommendations for reappointment to the faculty (*italics* indicate change of rank):

- a. Ariza, Sandra, M.A., two years as *Instructor* in Romance Languages (Spanish)
- b. Blok, Kathryn, M.A., Ed.S., two years as Visiting Assistant Professor of Education (Two-year periodic evaluation will be made by the Administration.)
- c. De Haan, Sander, M.A., a two-year terminal appointment as Instructor in Germanic Languages (German)
- d. De Vries, Robert, Ph.D., two years as Assistant Professor of Political Science
- e. Diephouse, David, Ph.D., two years as Assistant Professor of History
- f. Dykema, Eugene, M.B.A., two years as Assistant Professor of Economics and Business
- g. Greenway, Edna, M.A., two years as Instructor in Romance Languages (Spanish)
- h. Hageman, Dolores, M.A., two years as *Instructor* in Physical Education
- i. Hoeksema, Thomas, Ph.D., two years as Assistant Professor of Education
- j. Hoesch, Karla, A.B. (M.A. expected in the summer of 1977), two years as *Visiting Instructor* in Physical Education
- k. Holquist, David, M.A., Ed.S., two years as Assistant Professor of Speech
- l. Huisman, Gertrude, M.A., M.Mus., two years as Assistant Professor of Music
- m. Kuipers, Kenneth, M.B.A., two years as Assistant Professor of Economics and Business
- n. Matheis, Norman, M.F.A., two years as Assistant Professor of Art. The recommendation of reappointment made by the Professional Status Committee for Norman Matheis reads as follows: "That Mr. Matheis be denied tenure and that he be granted a two-year appointment, effective September 1, 1977, according to the provisions of the tenure document. (cf. Article II,D,2)"
- o. Muilenburg, Gregg, M.A., one-year terminal appointment as Instructor in Philosophy
- p. Penning, James, Ph.D., two years as Assistant Professor of Political Science
- q. Stegink, LeRoy, M.A., two years as Assistant Professor of Education
- r. Tiemstra, John, Ph.D., two years as Assistant Professor of Economics and Business
- s. Tigchelaar, Peter, Ph.D., two years as Associate Professor of Biology

- t. Vanderploeg, W. Stevens, Ph.D., one-year terminal appointment as Assistant Professor of Philosophy
- u. Van Engen, John, Ph.D., one-year terminal appointment as Assistant Professor of History
- v. Weaver, Glen, M.Div., M.A., two years as Visiting Assistant Professor of Psychology
- w. Wierenga, Wilma, M.A., two-year terminal appointment as Instructor of Germanic Languages (Dutch and German)

5. Reappointments — Administrators

The board took note of the continuing appointments which the president designated for the following administrative officers who have served beyond their second appointment period:

- a. Rev. Bernard E. Pekelder, B.D., M.A., Vice-president for Student Affairs and College Chaplain
- b. Mr. Peter Vande Guchte, Ed.D., Vice-president for Student Personnel Services

6. Promotions

The board of trustees recommends that Dr. Beverly Klooster and Dr. Roger Stouwie be promoted to the rank of professor, effective September 1, 1977.

7. Deaths

The board calls the attention of synod to the deaths of two of its emeriti professors:

- a. Dr. Henry J. Ryskamp, Dean of the College, emeritus
- b. Dr. John Van Bruggen, Professor of Education, emeritus.

The board requests that synod refer this matter to its obituary committee for appropriate recognition for services rendered to Calvin College and the Christian Reformed Church.

The Board of Trustees,
Calvin College and Seminary
Wilbur L. De Jong, secretary

REPORT 2-A

CALVIN COLLEGE AND SEMINARY

(Arts. 14, 26, 64)

This supplementary report covers the matters acted upon by the executive committee since the February 1977 meeting of the board, and the decisions of the May 23-27 meeting of the board of trustees.

I. INFORMATION

A. *Calvin College and Seminary Board of Trustees*

1. The board of trustees held its spring semiannual meeting May 23-27, 1977 at the Knollcrest Commons.
2. The executive committee of the board of trustees met in regular session on March 10 and April 14.
3. Classical trustees who are members of the executive committee elected at the May meeting of the board are (terms to begin in September): Rev. T. Brouwer, Rev. W. De Jong, Mr. R. Hoekstra, Dr. E. Roels, Rev. R. Sikkema, Rev. L. Tamminga, and Rev. W. Vander Haak.
4. For nominations for District Trustees see Section II, Recommendation D, 1.
5. Changes in classical trustees since last January due to acceptance of calls, etc.:
 New representatives: Chicago North - Rev. Richard Grevengoed
 Muskegon - Rev. Donald Van Beek
 Orange City - Rev. Harold Hiemstra
6. The board of trustees has decided to rename the College Center in honor of Dr. William Spoelhof. This is in fact the implementation of a previous decision but delayed until after his retirement because of Dr. Spoelhof's response.

B. *Seminary Matters*

1. Faculty

a. Honors and Recognition

The board took appropriate recognition at a testimonial dinner of the completion of twenty-five years of service to Calvin Seminary by Dr. John Kromminga and Dr. Bastiaan Van Elderen.

b. Nomination for Systematic Theology Position

The board went on record as declaring that a need exists for a replacement for Dr. A. Hoekema, who is scheduled for retirement at the end of the 1977-78 academic year. The faculty was requested to take the steps necessary for the preparation of a nomination to be submitted to the board in February, 1978. Submission of nominations to the faculty for this position will be gratefully received.

c. The seminary president called attention to a wide variety of scholarly and semi-scholarly activities on the part of the faculty of which the board took grateful recognition.

d. The board of trustees, after interviewing Dr. Ford Lewis Battles,

tendered him a three-year appointment as Visiting Professor of Church History, with the following stipulations:

- 1) The services required include one course per term in Calvin Seminary, assistance in the development of a Calvin Research Center, and other lectures and faculty seminars to be mutually agreed upon.
- 2) His salary and fringe benefits are to be those of a Professor at Step 8 of the seminary salary scale, and are to be paid from the seminary budget.
- 3) His duties, other than teaching seminary courses, are to be supervised jointly by the presidents of the college and the seminary.

Dr. Battles is affiliated with the Congregational denomination. His study of Calvin's works has made him a convinced Calvinist. Among his many publications he is best known for his translation of Calvin's *Institutes*. An excellent Latin scholar, he has earned the reputation of being the outstanding authority on Calvin on the North American continent.

2. Student Affairs

a. Candidacy

Those men interviewed by the board and recommended to synod for candidacy for the ministry in the Christian Reformed Church are listed in Section II, A, Recommendation 4.

b. Licensure

After interview by the board, regular licensure was granted to twenty-eight students, and temporary licensure was granted to fourteen students in a variety of categories. The board also took note of twenty-seven students who were either granted licensure or extension of licensure by automatic extension or by action of the executive committee.

c. Application for Admission to the Seminary

Upon recommendation of the seminary faculty, seven students were admitted to the seminary in a Special Program for Ministerial Candidacy, and sixteen students were admitted as Degree Candidates Pre-Licentiate.

d. Seminary commencement was held at the Fine Arts Center on May 21, 1977, with Dr. William Pannell of Fuller Theological Seminary as the commencement speaker.

e. Scholarships

It was reported that the faculty awarded the following scholarships:

Diamond Jubilee Scholarship:	Daniel Brink
Calvin Seminary Graduate Scholarship:	Dean Deppe
Alumni Scholarships (2)	Rudy Ouwehand Ronald Vander Griend
Centennial Missions Scholarship:	John Bolt
Calvin Seminary Graduate Studies Fellowship:	
Talen Scholarship:	Cornelis Venema

3. Curriculum

a. New Courses

Since the February meeting of the board, the executive committee has approved new courses in *Social Ethics and Eschatology*, *Media*

for Teaching and Preaching the Heidelberg Catechism, Field Archaeology, Studies in the Extra-canonical Literature of the Early Church, and Studies in the Gospel of Matthew.

b. Continuing Education

The seminary faculty has adopted the following decisions with regard to continuing education:

“a. The Calvin Seminary faculty will begin to develop a vital continuing education program for CEU (Continuing Education Unit) credit for ministers and church educators who can in turn teach others.

b. The continuing education programs will be packaged in two or three day workshops rather than two-week courses.

c. The faculty will begin to implement the program in three stages:

1) The Academic Office will ask Dr. Snapper and Dr. Hugen, with assistance from Rev. D. Vander Brug and/or others, to instruct us in the best way(s) to prepare a workshop for a specific subject and a specific target population.

2) The Academic Office will then ask each faculty member to prepare a two or three day workshop on some aspect of his discipline which will be helpful for ministers and church educators.

3) The Academic Dean in consultation with the Educational Policy Committee will set some priorities *re* which courses should be taught and where we should conduct our workshops.

N.B. The understanding is that initially the modest costs of this program shall be covered by the conference fees charged to the participants.”

Subsequent to this decision, the academic dean has addressed a letter to the stated clerks of all the classes, asking them to provide us with an indication of the subject areas which would generate the most interest and to set up committees for cooperating with the seminary in this effort.

c. The board took note of the fact that the Master of Church Education program has produced its first graduates.

d. At the February board meeting the board requested the seminary president to convey to the faculty the board's concern regarding the urgency of continuing leadership in the development of a Reformed theology and methodology of evangelism.

C. *College Matters*

1. Faculty

a. Anniversary of Appointment and/or Retirement

The board appropriately recognized, at a testimonial dinner, Professors Arthur Otten, Robert Otten and David Tuuk for the completion of twenty-five years of service to Calvin College

At this dinner Mr. Harry Faber also was honored upon his retirement as security officer at the college.

b. Appointments (cf. II, Recommendations)

c. Reappointments (cf. II, Recommendations)

d. Leaves of Absence

The board approved leaves of absence for two faculty members and one administrator.

e. Resignations and Departures

The board gratefully acknowledged the services of the following who resigned, departed or completed short-term appointments: Mr. Joel Carpenter, Dr. Bernard Kreuzer, Mr. Norman Matheis, Mr. Gregg Muilenburg, Mr. Barton Siebring, Mr. Gary Talsma, Mr. David Vander Meulen, Mr. Peter Vander Nat, and Dr. John Van Engen.

f. Bereavements

The board requested President Diekema to express the sympathy of the board to those faculty members who have suffered bereavements.

g. Faculty Honors and Achievements

The board took grateful note of the faculty honors and achievements listed in the president's report, and asked him to convey the sentiments of the board to the personnel involved.

2. Curriculum and Educational Policy Matters

a. New Courses and Programs

The board approved the following new courses and programs:

- 1) Master of Arts in Teaching program of concentration in the teaching of reading, including three new courses in the Department of Education
- 2) Three new courses in Classical Languages: Classical Mythology, Classical Art and Architecture, and Graeco-Roman Culture
- 3) Physics 186, Introductory Physics Laboratory
- 4) A one-year continuation of Chemistry 306, Quantum Chemistry
- 5) Geology 261, Mineralogy
- 6) Philosophy 2XX, Neo-Marxism
- 7) Psychology 333, Physiological Psychology
- 8) Speech 1XX, Introduction to Communication Theory
- 9) English 2XX, Intermediate Composition
- 10) Group majors in Science and Mathematics
- 11) Economics 311, Auditing
- 12) Economics 209, Income Tax
- 13) Education 5XX, The School as a Social Organization

b. Adult and Continuing Education

Last fall, a special *ad hoc* committee of the faculty was appointed to develop, if possible, a sound rationale for the development of adult and continuing education programs at Calvin College. The committee has completed its work and both faculty and board have approved its final report. This is considered a meaningful way in which Calvin College can make a contribution to and perform a service for the community in which she finds herself.

3. Administration

a. Mr. William Monsma was reappointed as part-time assistant to the chaplain for the 1977-78 academic year.

b. The president recommended some administrative changes which involved the establishment of a Division of College Advancement. Dr.

Peter Vande Guchte was appointed as vice-president for College Advancement.

4. Student Affairs

a. Policy on Dance

A motion prevailed to adopt the following statement of position re the Dance Issue:

"Whereas the Synod of 1971 declares the conclusions of the Church and Film Arts study of 1966, particularly 'with respect to the relationship of the Christian to the world' and 'with respect to the exercise of Christian liberty,' to be a guide for the churches in dealing with the matter of dancing" (Acts of Synod, 1971, p. 139); and

"Whereas out of concern for the increasing practice of social dancing on the campus of Calvin College, the President of the College, on December 1, 1976, appointed an *ad hoc* Committee on Dancing, and said committee reported its findings to the President and the board of trustees at its meeting of May 23, 1977, and days following;

The board of trustees states its position on this matter in the following way:

"1. The board instructs the administration to implement immediately the development of social dancing in a Christian manner by:

a. instructing its art, music, drama, and physical education departments to provide leadership and direction in using the social dance in a Christian way, and

b. encouraging students to exercise their Christian liberty in the spirit of the admonitions of the Apostle Paul found in I Corinthians 6:12-14 and I Corinthians 8.

Grounds:

a. We have a tendency to adopt uncritically a dance style that ignores the richer dimensions of the social dance, such as the aesthetic, the creative, the cultural, the musical, etc.

b. "All Christians, according to the talents God has given them, must work positively and constructively to fulfill the cultural mandate" (Acts of Synod 1966, p. 34).

c. A policy allowing students the freedom to dance ought to be accompanied by instructions to those who guide these students to provide leadership in implementation, and by instructions to the students themselves.

"2. The board accepts the recommendation included in the report of the *ad hoc* Committee on Dancing that Calvin College 'allow for social dancing as an acceptable and wholesome, on-campus, recreational activity for Calvin students and staff,' as regulated by the guidelines given in the same report.

Ground: The decision of synod (1971) provides a sound basis for the college to authorize dancing within the above guidelines.

"3. The board instructs the administration to delay implementation of this policy until September 1978.

Grounds:

a. This will allow the Calvin College community the time needed

to implement the development of social dancing in a Christian manner.

b. This will allow the Calvin College constituency and the Christian Reformed churches and assemblies the time needed to express a collective mind on the position of the board of trustees.”

The rationale for this decision is found in *Appendix A*, attached to this report.

b. Commencement

College commencement for approximately 734 graduates was held at the Knollcrest Fieldhouse on May 21, 1977, with Dr. John Kromminga, president of Calvin Seminary, as the speaker.

D. *Business and Finance*

1. For budget and quota recommendations, see Section II, Recommendations.

2. The board gratefully approved the acceptance of an offer of the Henry J. Ryskamp family to finance the cost of furnishing the newly-established Calvin Center for Christian Scholarship as a memorial to the late Dean Ryskamp. The memorial fund currently totals \$10,000.

3. The board approved a recommendation to authorize the construction of the proposed addition to Hiemenga Hall on the basis of the following budget estimates:

Construction - 30,000 square feet at \$38.00.....	\$1,140,000
Architectural and engineering fees	60,000
Furniture and Equipment	50,000
	Total estimated cost
	\$1,250,000

To be financed by -

Special Gift Solicitation	\$ 500,000
General Building Fund	750,000

II. RECOMMENDATIONS

A. *The Seminary*

1. The board of trustees recommends that synod approve the reappointment of the Rev. John Schuurmann as special assistant in the theological division of the library for one year.

2. The board of trustees recommends that synod approve the appointment of the Rev. Marinus Goote as special assistant in the theological division of the library for one year.

3. The board of trustees recommends that synod approve the appointment of Dr. David Bosch, a minister in the Dutch Reformed Church of South Africa and Dean of the faculty of Theology of the University of South Africa, to teach one elective course in the seminary during the third quarter, 1977-78, subject to a favorable interview by the board next February.

4. Candidates

Upon recommendation of the seminary faculty, and after the interview by the board of trustees, the board recommends that synod declare

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

Gary Bekker	Duane Kelderman
Ronald Bouwkamp	Jake Kuipers
Roger Bouwman	Clayton Negen
Peter Deckinga	Thomas Niehof
Bernard De Jonge	Nico Peters
James Dekker	Ralph Pontier
Roger De Young	Peter Ravensbergen
Wayne De Young	Ronald Scheuers
Dean Dyk	Peter Slofstra
Wiebe Geerts	Donald Steenhoek
Richard Hartwell	Phil Stel
David Jonkman	John Terpstra
Gilbert Kamps	Phil Touw
Douglas Kamstra	David Van Gelder
John Keizer	Gerrit Vreeman

Candidacy for the following is contingent upon the completion of academic requirements:

Thomas Klaasen	Henry Smidstra
Ronald Klimp	John Tenyenhuis
Gregg Martin	William Veenstra
Daniel Mulder	

5. The board of trustees recommends that synod approve the appointment of Dr. Ford Lewis Battles according to the stipulations set forth in I, B, 1, d above.

6. The board of trustees recommends that synod take appropriate recognition of the completion of twenty-five years of service to Calvin Seminary by Dr. John Kromminga and Dr. Bastiaan Van Elderen.

B. *The College*

1. Appointments

Following satisfactory interviews with each, the board of trustees recommends that synod approve the following appointments:

- a. Ronald L. Blankespoor, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Chemistry for two years
- b. Bette Bosma, M.A., Instructor in Education for two years
- c. Bradley Class, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Romance Languages (Spanish) for two years
- d. Daniel M. Ebels, M.S. (Ph.D. expected in 1977), Assistant Professor of Economics for two years
- e. Dewey Hoitenga, Jr., Ph.D., Professor of Philosophy for one year, terminal
- f. Roger Konyndyk, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Mathematics for one year, terminal
- g. Arie Leegwater, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Chemistry for two years (effective September, 1978)
- h. Clayton Libolt, M.A., Instructor in Religion and Theology for one year, terminal
- i. Robert Manweiler, Ph.D., Visiting Professor of Physics for one year, terminal
- j. Carl Mulder, Ed.D., Associate Professor of Education for two years

- k. Robert J. Pauw, M.A., Instructor of Philosophy for one year, terminal
 - l. Ronald Pederson, M.F.A., Visiting Instructor in Art for one year, terminal
 - m. Jeffrey Pettinga, M.A., Assistant Professor of Physical Education for two years
 - n. Corwin E. Smidt, Ph.D., Visiting Assistant Professor of Political Science for two years
 - o. Brenda Van Halsema, B.A., Instructor in Art for two years
 - p. Timothy J. Van Laar, M.F.A., Instructor in Art for two years
 - q. Jay Van Hook, Ph.D., Professor of Philosophy for one year, terminal
 - r. John D. Wassenaar, M.A., Instructor in Economics for one year, terminal
2. Reappointments
- The board of trustees recommends that synod approve the following reappointments:
- a. Nancy Van Noord, M.A., two years as Instructor in Physical Education
 - b. Lois Read, M.A., one year as Assistant Professor of Romance Languages
 - c. Wayne Te Brake, Ph.D., one year as Assistant Professor of History
3. Administrative Staff Appointment and Reappointment
- The board of trustees recommends that synod approve the following:
- a. Judith Mullins, M.Ed., appointed as Dean of Women for two years
 - b. Joan Laarman, M.S.W., reappointed as counselor in the Broene Counseling Center for one year
4. The board of trustees recommends that synod take appropriate recognition of the completion of twenty-five years of service to Calvin College by Professors Arthur Otten, Robert Otten, and David Tuuk.
5. The board calls the attention of synod to the death of the Rev. John Weidenaar, Professor emeritus of Calvin College. The board requests that synod refer this matter to its obituary committee for appropriate recognition for services rendered to Calvin College and the Christian Reformed Church.

C. *Business and Finance*

1. The board of trustees recommends the approval of the proposed operating budget for the fiscal year ending August 31, 1978, projecting total revenue of \$9,802,000 and total expenditures of \$9,785,000. This proposed budget incorporates the tuition rates which were adopted by the board in February, a 6.3% increase for 1978 in the average per family quota, and an increase in base salary for all professional staff members of \$700, from \$10,300 to \$11,000, as adopted tentatively in February.
2. The board recommends that synod approve the following area quota scale for 1978:

	Rate in effect for 1977	
Area 1	\$57.25	\$55.00
Area 2	48.00	43.25
Area 3	42.00	40.50
Area 4	20.00	18.50
Area 5	57.25	55.00
Area 6	37.25	36.25
Area 7	23.00	20.50

3. The board recommends that synod continue the \$1.00 per family seminary expansion quota for 1978. This is in keeping with the intent expressed by the 1974 Synod to provide this special quota for five years.

D. Board Matters

1. Nominations for District Members of the Board of Trustees

a. Central District	Regular	*Glenn Niemeyer, Hudsonville, MI Henry Triezenberg, Grand Rapids, MI
	Alternate	Robert Baker, Grand Rapids, MI
Central District	Regular	Calvin H. Nagel, Grand Rapids, MI Emily Brink, Champaign, IL
	Alternate	*Tunis Vanden Berg, Fremont, MI
b. Midwest District	Regular	*Wesley Geurkink, Princeton, MN Loren Veldhuizen, Orange City, IA
	Alternate	Kathryn Vander Kooi, Luverne, MN

*Incumbent

We request that the nominee not elected as regular delegate be added to the alternate nomination.

2. The board of trustees respectfully requests synod to grant the privilege of the floor to the president of the board, the Rev. William Vander Haak, and the secretary of the board, the Rev. Wilbur L. De Jong, when matters pertaining to the college and seminary are presented.

The Board of Trustees of
Calvin College and Seminary
Wilbur L. De Jong, secretary

Appendix A

To: President Anthony Diekema
From: *Ad hoc* Committee on Dancing

I. MANDATE

The undersigned were appointed by President Diekema to review "the basic questions surrounding the entire matter of the place of dancing at Christian colleges, and more specifically, at a distinctively Reformed

Christian college such as Calvin . . . and to make recommendations for consideration by the college administration and the board of trustees" (Letter of appointment, December 1, 1976).

II. HISTORY

Dancing as it currently occurs in Calvin's residence halls evolved in three steps: hall complexes planned hall parties that included mixer-type games and ended with dancing; hall complexes planned closed hall parties with dancing as the only activity; hall complexes planned parties with dancing as the only activity and invited the entire residence community.

The rationale for this action was that residence hall recreation rooms were viewed as the equivalent of a person's home recreation room, and, therefore, students were allowed to plan dances as they might do in their own homes. The euphemism "party with music" was coined to avoid possible offense to people outside the college community. Advertising was limited to the residence halls; music was to be provided by records or tapes. These dances served as a purely social activity, allowing for mixing among residents who live on campus. President Spoelhof kept the board of trustees informed of these developments through his semi-annual reports to the board.

This action was also taken to counter off-campus, student organized dances, over which the college had no control. Some serious drinking problems had arisen in conjunction with off-campus dances. In the last five years, we have had few off-campus dances, although the practice may be resurfacing in view of two off-campus dances sponsored during second semester of this academic year.

Many students, however, raised serious questions about the validity of the "recreation room" rationale, and the honesty of the "parties with music" euphemism. Commuter students were hesitant to attend a "resident event" and therefore felt left out. Besides, the limited space of the hall basements was an additional deterrent to their participation. They observed that they were denied the right to sponsor this type of social activity enjoyed by resident students.

Hence, in February 1975, an *ad hoc* committee was formed to consider the place of dancing in a Christian college. The report of that committee is attached (Attachment 1), and it was used in conversations with administrators from Dordt and Trinity Colleges.

It was the judgment of the administrators of three colleges that social dancing, under certain guidelines, could be an acceptable social activity for Christian students. Our intention to come to a common position is outlined in Attachment 2. However, since the recommendations did not meet with the approval of the board of Dordt College, the proposal was not brought to the Calvin board in May 1975.

But the issue remained. Hence, in October 1976, the administrators in the Division of Student Affairs proposed to President Diekema a policy for all-campus dances. The president judged that this issue should be studied by administrators, students, and members of the board of trustees. There followed the appointment of the committee which now reports.

III. PROCEEDINGS OF THE COMMITTEE

The committee conducted their review of the questions surrounding dancing through two principal means: first, to review past college and denominational documents that considered the question of dancing as an acceptable social activity for Christians; second, to invite representatives of the college community to closed committee hearings for the purpose of stating their perspectives on the "dancing questions."

The documents reviewed by the committee that were judged to be relevant background to the conclusions of this report are:

1. The Place of Dancing in a Christian College, February 27, 1975 (Attachment 1).
2. To Governing Boards of Calvin, Dordt, and Trinity Colleges, March 28, 1975 (Attachment 2).
3. Overture and Supplementary Report on Dancing from Classis Hamilton, Acts of Synod 1971.

(This report has not been duplicated and appended due to its availability in the Acts of Synod 1971. We refer to either your personal or your church library for perusal of this report.)

In our hearings, the following points of view were presented:

A. A psychology professor theorized on false cognitive labeling of emotions as it may occur in a social dance setting. Due to the heterosexual setting of dancing, some students are vulnerable to experiencing "inflated feelings of affection" for someone of the opposite sex with whom they have danced, if they misinterpret their feelings of simple psychological arousal for affection. However, it was noted that the dancing that currently takes place at Calvin encourages social mixing rather than "pairing off" with only one person. Very little dating is associated with the dances. This would hinder individuals from focusing their feelings and attention on just one person, which in turn would minimize any false labeling. The committee also recognized that false labeling of feelings was certainly not unique to the dance setting, but occurred in other social settings as well.

B. Two students expressed concern over the type of music to which some students like to dance. Their major criticism was about the immorality of some lyrics, to which the committee was very sensitive. Even though the music generally takes precedence over lyrics from a dance perspective, nevertheless, Christians who choose to dance should exercise Christian sensitivity and discretion in the selection of songs that have appropriate lyrics. One student stated that he believed the "spiritual atmosphere" of the campus was jeopardized by dancing, although he was not specific in just how he thought this occurred.

C. Several students who were involved in organizing dorm dances briefed us on the planning of a dance and the making of music tapes. They were very sympathetic to our concerns about the standards used in selecting the music; they claimed to select songs based on their "danceability" and "familiarity" while avoiding songs with offensive lyrics. These students enjoyed planning dances and attending them. They judged that the majority of students living in halls attend at least several of the

dorm dances held throughout the year and that dancing was an appropriate recreational and social activity for Calvin students.

D. Representatives of the Commuter Committee agreed with the students' point of view in Part C. They were very strong in their request that Calvin College allow dancing for the whole college community instead of limiting it to the dorm community. They argued that some commuters attend the dorm dances if they hear about them and many attend unofficial Calvin dances that are held off-campus and promoted by student entrepreneurs. Therefore, they concluded that the potential offense to members of the Calvin community would be minimal.

E. Members of the Student Personnel Services Division talked very candidly with us about the potential negative effects that dancing might have on recruitment and public relations. The admissions counselors briefed us on the struggles that local Christian high schools are having with their dance policies. These representatives thought that it would be a minority of potential students who might take offense at a college policy that allows social dancing on campus, but they were sympathetic to the requests of our current student body to allow for such dancing. However, they thought it important for our committee to give some consideration to the negative repercussions that they predicted would follow a change in the social dance policy. Our committee agreed that the possibility indeed does exist; projecting the magnitude of such a reaction is virtually impossible.

In addition to documents and hearings, letters were written to four other Christian liberal arts colleges (Gordon, Taylor, Westmont, and Wheaton), asking each for input on its dance policy and rationale for such policy. Responses were received from Gordon, Taylor and Westmont. None of the colleges reporting allow dancing as a school sponsored social activity, but their rationale is based on the college community's choice to impose additional rules regarding personal behavior which are not prescribed by Scriptural principles.

IV. RECOMMENDATION

That Calvin College adopt a policy statement which would allow for social dancing as an acceptable and wholesome, on-campus, recreational activity for Calvin students and staff.

V. RATIONALE

A. Dancing is not forbidden in Scripture. In fact, Scripture speaks with approval of dancing in religious, worshipful settings as well as in general social settings of joy, celebration and gladness (Eccl. 3:4, Luke 15:25). In all cultures, throughout all history, dancing has been the idiom whereby sociality, celebration, community have been expressed in village, town-square, community hall, and church.

B. Social dancing provides an activity in which many young men and women can be participants rather than just spectators, as is the case with most other social events, such as concerts, films, plays, and athletic contests. We judged that the social interaction of our students, males with females, commuters with residents, would be enhanced by virtue of the

“mixing quality” of student dances. The committee was enthusiastic about these positive aspects of dancing and thought it would be a good addition to the campus social life spectrum.

C. Regarding the music played at dances, the committee acknowledges that some lyrics and perhaps even some tunes reflect a spirit not in harmony with the Christian faith. However, this objectionable type of music does not need to be selected in light of the wide range and supply of more appropriate music. The committee judges that Calvin students can be entrusted with the responsibility to select music that is in keeping with Christian principles.

D. Social dancing, in the minds of some people, carries too great a potential to evil for Christians participating in it. The committee disagrees. In measuring the potential to evil in a given activity, it is important to remember that such potential can really only be measured in terms of the heart of man. Although God alone can measure the heart accurately, we can measure it in part. But again, our measurement will depend upon our perspective. We view man (and our youth), not from the perspective of total depravity, but as new persons in Christ. Although we believe them to be by nature totally depraved, we also believe that they have been redeemed by the grace of God and that this grace is operative toward sanctification. As such, we can allow them the liberty to act out “Christianly” their choices of entertainment, such as dancing, as well as their choices in other areas of life.

E. The impact of a change in the social dance policy at Calvin, such as we are proposing, is impossible to fully predict. The committee is aware that many current Calvin students approve of social dancing and were allowed to do such during their high school careers. On the other hand, we realize that for some students and some constituents, social dancing is not an acceptable activity by personal choice, and this personal restriction is, at times, projected as an expectation for all Christians. As a committee, we judge that some negative reaction will ensue with the adoption of the proposed recommendation. However, we believe this reaction will not be so great as to impede the more important academic mission of Calvin College. In view of the fact that dorm dances have not caused significant negative reaction, it appears reasonable to assume a similar response with the moderate expansion we propose.

F. We as a committee chose not to repeat the work already done by previous groups regarding the congruency of social dancing with the synodical decision of 1971. Instead, we call your attention to Section II, Part A and B, of the March 28, 1975, document (Attachment 2).

VI. GUIDELINES FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS

1. There shall be no more than one all-campus dance per month, to be held on a Friday night or another night which precedes a non-school day (excluding Saturday and Sunday). An all-campus dance may be sponsored by social committees of the residence halls or by the Commuter Committee.
2. Each residence hall complex and the Commuter Committee shall be permitted, in conjunction with a special dinner or banquet, to hold one

“closed dance” (limited attendance) per year in the Dining Hall.

3. The sponsoring committees shall observe the following procedures:
 - a. **Publicity:** This shall be confined to the campus only.
 - b. **Attendance:** Dances shall be open to Calvin students and staff only. A current Calvin I.D. will be required for admission.
 - c. **Entry:** The sponsoring committee shall be responsible for staffing all entries to insure that only Calvin students and staff are in attendance.
 - d. **Facilities:** The sponsoring committee shall be responsible for making all arrangements with, and shall be accountable to, the appropriate building supervisors in regard to facility use and maintenance.
 - e. **Conduct:** The sponsoring committee shall be responsible for insuring that all college regulations and expectations are observed (e.g., no drinking or drunkenness, responsibility of students to comply with requests by designated sponsors or authorities, etc.). Any student violation of college policies shall be referred to the All-Campus Discipline Committee for adjudication.
 - f. **Adviser:** The sponsoring committee shall secure at least one staff member (from faculty, administrators or resident directors) to be present as mentor at the dance they sponsor.
 - g. **Music:** Music shall be provided by Calvin all-student groups or by records. The sponsoring committees shall exercise Christian discretion in their selection of music and lyrics, so that it is consistent with Christian moral standards.
 - h. **Admission fee:** A charge not to exceed 50¢ to defray expenses may be charged. No dance shall be used as a means to raise money; any surplus money shall be returned to the treasury of the residence hall or the Commuter Committee.
4. Failure to observe the above guidelines shall lead to a review by the Student Affairs Division, with possible revocation of the rights to hold residence hall or all-campus dances.
5. The new policy shall be subject to review at the end of the school year.

Rev. Bernard Pekelder, chairman
 Jeanette Bult De Jong, secretary
 Harry Bloem
 William J. Boer
 Rev. Wilbur De Jong
 Mary Schrottenboer
 Shirley Vogelzang

Attachment 1

February 27, 1975

THE PLACE OF DANCING IN A CHRISTIAN COLLEGE

(A preliminary report to be used in discussions
 with representatives of Dordt and Trinity Colleges)

Background:

A committee composed of two faculty members, two administrators, two representatives from the Student Senate, and two representatives

from the residence hall social committees met two times for three hours to discuss the above subject. An agenda was agreed upon which covered the general subject of dancing, and the specific question of dancing on campus. Materials available to committee members were the decisions of Synod 1966, and the overture of Classis Hamilton and the decision of Synod 1971.

Committee members judged that the overture of Classis Hamilton constituted a significant, in-depth study of dancing and related questions, and felt themselves in agreement with the observations about Scriptural data, sexuality, and the important place dancing can play in the social life of Christians. It felt no need (nor was there time!) to engage in a completely new study of these important areas of consideration.

The following, then, constitute preliminary conclusions of the committee on dancing in general and its place in the Christian college.

Dancing in General:

1. Not only does Scripture speak with approval of dancing in religious, worshipful settings, but also in the general social meetings of joy, celebration, and gladness (Eccl. 3:4, Luke 15:25). In all cultures, throughout all history, dancing has been the idiom whereby sociality, celebration, community have been expressed in village, town-square, community hall, and church.
2. While it is true that some lyrics and perhaps even some music reflects a spirit not in harmony with the Christian faith, the following considerations must be kept in mind:
 - a. The problem of music and lyrics is not the real issue at stake. If this is the issue, we should address ourselves to it apart from the dance, e.g. in records people play, radio stations to which they listen, etc.
 - b. The findings of Classis Hamilton were confirmed by members of the committee, who observe that rarely while dancing do they pay any attention to the lyrics. The music is the important factor; it determines the character of the dancing.
 - c. If we eliminate unacceptable music (or create Christian music for dancing) we still face the basic question: Is social dancing acceptable? The committee judges that it is.
3. The environment is very important. For this reason, social dancing among Christians in an appropriate setting, with Christian partners, should be encouraged.
4. The committee judges that the *role* of dancing is described excellently in the report of Classis Hamilton:

“Dancing as a form of entertainment provides a release of tension and energy, a proper means of fun and enjoyment and the opportunity to express the innate drive in man to respond to rhythm with bodily movements. As a general social function, dancing provides a pleasant, natural, and informal way for man to communicate and associate with others” (Acts of Synod 1971, p. 620).

The Christian College and Dancing:

1. The Christian college, while an educational institution, is concerned with the development of the whole man. Hence, we are directly involved

in the social life of students (e.g. residence hall living, social activities, discipline for inappropriate behavior, etc.). Thus, when we express concern about jeopardizing our educational role through social innovation, we should not leave the impression the social life of the student is only a peripheral interest. It too is part of the total educational task of the college.

2. The committee leaves to others the final judgment about outside reactions, but it is of the opinion that it would not be as adverse as some fear. It appears that dancing in residence halls at Calvin and off-campus dancing at Dordt have not prompted severe criticism by constituency.

3. The following guidelines are considered important if the college sponsors all-campus dances: [These guidelines should be prefaced, however, by acknowledging that "though there is a need for control and supervision, there is only One who can supervise the heart and mind. For the individual to exercise proper discrimination, our young people must grow in their relationship to Jesus Christ" (Acts of Synod 1971, p. 621).]

a. Dances shall be sponsored by official committees which, with the faculty adviser, shall be responsible for supervising the activities.

b. Dances shall be open only to students and their invited guests, and all publicity shall be confined to the campus.

c. All college regulations and expectations shall apply at the dances (e.g. drinking, drugs, responsibility of students to comply with requests made by designated authorities, etc.).

d. Music shall be provided only by student groups or records, and sponsoring groups shall exercise Christian discretion in their selection of the music played.

e. The type of dancing in which students engage should not violate Christian sensitivity and Christian moral standards. However, recognizing that even the good can be used for evil ends, and that only the Lord can judge the heart, we judge a specific list of prohibited actions (activities) is quite impossible.

4. The committee judges that the decision of synod (1971) does afford a sound basis for the college to authorize dancing with the above guidelines.

Bernard Pekelder
Calvin College
February 27, 1975

Attachment 2

Governing Boards of Calvin, Dordt, Trinity Christian Colleges
Esteemed Brethren,

This year the Student Affairs Divisions of our colleges have had under study the question of social dancing at our Christian colleges. This question was discussed at great length at a meeting of the presidents, academic deans, and chief student affairs officers at the spring consortium meeting.

Preceding this meeting there had been discussions, exchanges of studies, and several conference calls among the above parties. Consequently, the President of Calvin College called this matter to the attention of the board

of trustees in February, 1975. After lengthy discussion in the College Committee, the board authorized the president to explore the matter further with Dordt and Trinity, and to come to the May meeting of the board with a report. The Rev. H. Numan, the board appointed trustee to report for the *Calvinist Contact*, gave an account of this action in that paper.

At the spring meeting of the consortium, the principals mentioned above unanimously agreed to issue a joint report for presentation to their respective boards. This statement consists of two parts: the first deals with the procedure, and the second with the matter of dancing itself.

I. PROCEDURE

It is the opinion of all the administrators that social dancing, carried out under the guidelines of the attached statement, can be an acceptable social activity for Christian students. However, we await the judgment not only of our boards, but also of the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church as to whether or not this judgment is correct. In order to accomplish this we jointly agree to the following:

A. Each college shall be allowed the freedom to develop programmatic implementation of any policy position in terms of its own situation, and no college shall use the situation prevailing at another college for publicity aimed at taking advantage of another.

B. The statement of the guidelines and implementation shall be presented to each board for its endorsement. If all colleges endorse this statement, the Board of Trustees of Calvin College shall present it to the 1975 Synod of the Christian Reformed Church for approval.

C. Should any college board fail to approve the statement of position, the issue will not then be presented to synod. Each college shall then deal with the issue independently, and no college shall take advantage by any detrimental public reference to the joint effort outlined above.

II. STATEMENT OF POLICY

Although we recognize that it is not possible to legislate the morality of our students, this is not reason for us to avoid our responsibility to give positive Christian moral guidance in every area of student life. The synod called the entire church to the task of resisting worldliness in all its manifestations among us, including such activities as viewing films and dancing (cf. Synodical pronouncements in 1966 and 1971). We as Christian colleges are committed to combatting worldliness.

We understand that the synodical decision of 1971 on the report of Classis Hamilton implied that social dancing can be a legitimate and wholesome Christian activity. Synod did not, however, become explicit in this matter. Hence, we now offer the following principles and conditions as providing the proper interpretation of the synodical action, and conclude that in this context social dancing can be a wholesome activity for Christians:

A. *With Respect to the Relationship of the Christian to the World*

1. God created man in His image and mandated him "to have dominion over all the earth" (Gen. 1:28). This includes the cultural man-

- date to develop all the potentials of creation and to dedicate them to the glory of God.
2. Because sin entered the world, even the best works of man are defiled with sin (cf. Heidelberg Catechism, Question 62), but sin is being restrained by God's grace.
3. By God's particular grace sinners are, in principle, renewed and restored in their three-fold office as Christians in order that they may acknowledge the Kingship of Christ and may serve Him in all their activities (Heidelberg Catechism, Question 32).
4. The difference between believers and unbelievers cannot always be detected in the products of their cultural activities, but it becomes evident in their motivation, direction, and purpose (Rom. 1:1, 2).
5. Worldliness is the evil of giving the love of the heart to things temporal or sinful instead of giving love to God and seeking to do His will (Rom. 12:2; I John 2:15-17).
6. Every area of human life is a battlefield between good and evil, where the Christian must learn to discern and to do the will of God. Therefore, the Christian must accept and enjoy whatever things are true, honorable, just, pure, and lovely (Phil. 4:8), and he must reject and shun all evil.
7. The Christian must lead a life of spiritual separation from the world, even while enjoying those things which are neither commanded nor forbidden by the Word of God (I Cor. 7:31).
8. The Christian must not only abstain from and protest against evil in the world, but he must also call society to the obedience of Christ, thus serving as the salt of the earth and the light of the world (Matt. 5:13, 14).
9. All Christians, according to the talents God has given them, must work positively and constructively to fulfill the cultural mandate (Eccl. 9:7-10).
10. The Christian must make discriminate use of the products of culture, in harmony with the Scriptural principle of Christian liberty.

B. *With Respect to the Exercise of Christian Liberty*

1. In all moral issues concerning which the Scriptures make known the will of God, the Christian bows voluntarily and without reservation in faithful obedience (Matt. 6:10; Rom. 12:2; I John 2:17).
2. The Christian is free from every ordinance other than that which God demands in Holy Scripture, which is the only rule for faith and conduct (Gal. 1:18; Rev. 22:18, 19; Belgic Confession, Article 7).
3. In the use of things temporal, the Christian shall be guided by an enlightened conscience, in prayerful submission to the Word of God, and the guidance of the Holy Spirit, always maintaining an appreciative consideration of the pastoral guidance of the office-bearers of the church and of the mind of his fellow Christians.
4. The Christian honors human authority in the home, the church, the school, the state and in all other spheres of society only for the sake of Christ who is our eternal King. No human authority may lay down

laws of its own for Christian conduct. Those in authority do have the right to require submission to the law of Christ. They may and often must lay down regulations to maintain good order, but such regulations shall bind the conscience only insofar as they are in harmony with the Word of God (Matt. 28:18; Heidelberg Catechism, Question 104; Belgic Confession, Article 32).

5. The exercise of the Christian's freedom of conscience should be restrained, not by the dictates of his fellowmen, but by his own love and faith, his concern for his own spiritual welfare and that of others, and by his desire to do the works of faith according to God's law and to His glory (Heidelberg Catechism, Question 91).

6. Although Christian liberty is in principle a gift to all believers, it can be fully exercised only by those who are mature. The youth of the church are in a position analogous to that of Israel in the old covenant, being "under guardians and stewards" (Gal. 4:2). This places upon the parents the duty of guiding their children into a responsible exercise of Christian liberty; and places upon the church the duty of coming to an understanding of the complexities of the life of contemporary youth, and in that light the duty of instructing them so they may properly discern the will of God for their lives. (Acts of 1966, pp. 33, 34.)

C. The Following Conditions Shall Be Observed

1. Dances shall be sponsored by official committees which, with the faculty adviser, shall be responsible for supervising the activities.
2. Dances shall be open only to students and their invited guests, and all publicity shall be confined to the campus.
3. All college regulations and expectations shall apply at the dances, (e.g. drinking, drugs, responsibility of students to comply with requests made by designated authorities, etc.).
4. Music shall be provided only by student groups or records, and sponsoring groups shall exercise Christian discretion in their selection of the music played.
5. The type of dancing in which students engage should not violate Christian sensitivity and Christian moral standards. However, recognizing that even the good can be used for evil ends, and that only the Lord can judge the heart, we judge that to furnish a specific list of prohibited actions (activities) is quite impossible.
6. Each college shall impose its own limitations about time and location, and shall guard the interests of those whose conscience may prohibit participation in this activity.

REPORT 3

BOARD FOR CHRISTIAN REFORMED WORLD MISSIONS

(Arts. 23, 56, 80)

On June 18, 1888, the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church established the Board of Heathen Missions. This name was changed in 1924 to the Board for Indian and Foreign Missions, changed again in 1964 to the Board of Foreign Missions, and in 1976 to the Board for Christian Reformed World Missions. Among the initial regulations for the first Board of Heathen Missions stands this landmark statement of purpose: "A. The announcing and glorifying of the name of the Lord; B. The proclamation of the precious Gospel of salvation where hitherto this has not been done; C. Also to cooperate in the gathering to the church of the Lord of lost sinners who will be saved, and to the extension of Jesus' kingdom in the world." Though the name and manner of the mission have been modified by the years, it is striking to note that that early purpose still remains our high calling. During 1976, Christian Reformed World Missions was engaged in that enterprise in twelve fields around the world.

The work was carried on this past year in the face of unrest and turmoil. The former EKAS Benue Church, located in the area where Miss Johanna Veenstra walked over bush trails for thirteen years, had to deal with the awesome problems of schism and separation. Yet the church there grew and its ministry spread beyond the confines of Gongola State. In the Philippines, a notable day in May saw the establishment of the Christian Reformed Churches of the Philippines. A memorial to the work of a quarter of a century in Japan was memorialized in "Every Knee Shall Bow," a remarkable film describing the odyssey of our emissaries in that country. Although the growth was sometimes slow and the work agonizing, today the Reformed Churches of Japan stand fully autonomous, reaching into the context of their own society. From the oppressed poor of Latin America a call for justice and liberation gains momentum. The crisis for evangelical church and mission is to determine the biblical manner of response to demonstrate that "the truth shall make you free."

Thus 1976 contained significant events and challenges and in these pages we shall sketch briefly the developments that affected the life of our mission in the past months.

Section One

Organization and Personnel

A. The Board

The annual meetings of the board took place on February 8-10, 1977. The executive committee met regularly on the second Thursday of each month prior to the approval of the new Mission Order by the Synod of 1976. Subsequently the executive committee has met every other month in accordance with the Mission Order's provisions. The officers during

1976 were as follows: Rev. Norman Meyer, president; Rev. Harvey Brink, vice-president; Mr. Sidney De Young, chairman of the Finance Committee; Mr. Alvin Huibregtse, recording secretary; Dr. Eugene Rubingh, executive secretary.

Members-at-large

The adopted Mission Order stipulates that there shall be eight members-at-large. It is necessary therefore for synod to elect five such members. Profiles of each nominee submitted by the board will be presented to the appropriate synodical committee. The nominees are as follows:

- | | |
|-----------------|---|
| Western Canada: | 1. Mr. Norman Brouwer, Lacombe, Alberta |
| | 2. Mrs. Dorothy Oppewal De Jong, Calgary, Alberta |
| Eastern U.S.: | 1. Mrs. James Bosma, Silver Spring, Maryland |
| | 2. Mr. John Last, Sr., Wayne, New Jersey |
| Midwest U.S.: | 1. Mr. Gordon Kuik, Edgerton, Minnesota |
| | 2. Mr. Norman Vander Ark, Hull, Iowa |
| Far West U.S.: | 1. Dr. Harold De Jong, Ripon, California |
| | 2. Mr. John Franken, Edmonds, Washington |
| Central U.S.: | 1. *Mr. David Radius, Grand Rapids, Michigan |
| | 2. Mr. Robert Dykstra, Zeeland, Michigan |

*incumbent

B. Executive Committee Organization

The members of the executive committee normally serve on two sub-committees, both on an area committee and a business committee. There are three area committees: Africa, Asia, and Latin America, and the following administrative committees: Officers, Finance, Communications, Salary and Amenities, and Recruiting and Personnel. A Global Outreach or GO committee has been given the mandate of annual assessment of the positions and funding with respect to the personnel in existing fields and further to consider both current and possible field operation and expansion.

C. Missionary Personnel

Argentina

*Miss Lillian Berkompas
 Rev. and Mrs. Ramon Borrego
 Rev. and Mrs. Raymond Brinks
 Rev. and Mrs. W. Thomas De Vries
 Rev. and Mrs. John Hutt
 Rev. and Mrs. Jack Huttinga
 Miss Sylvia Kallemeyn
 *Miss Janet Lindemulder
 *Mr. and Mrs. William Renkema
 Dr. and Mrs. Sidney Rooy
 Rev. and Mrs. Harvey Stob
 Rev. and Mrs. Louis Wagenveld
 *Miss Virginia Walcott

Rev. and Mrs. Willem Dirksen
 Mr. and Mrs. Bernard Oldenkamp
 Rev. and Mrs. Charles Uken

Cuba

Cuba pastors

Guam

Rev. and Mrs. Henry Dykema
 Mr. and Mrs. Conrad Douma
 Mr. and Mrs. David Whitney

Honduras

Rev. and Mrs. G. Bernard Dokter
 Mr. and Mrs. Wayne De Young
 Mr. and Mrs. Ryan Veeneman

Brazil

Rev. and Mrs. Carl Bosma

Japan

Rev. and Mrs. Henry Bruinooge
 Rev. and Mrs. Michiel De Berdt
 Rev. and Mrs. Ronald W. Hempel
 Rev. and Mrs. Raymond Hommes
 Mr. and Mrs. Jack Jones
 Rev. and Mrs. Gerrit Koedoot
 Rev. and Mrs. Dick Kwantes
 Mr. and Mrs. Sidney Norman
 Dr. and Mrs. Harvey Smit
 Rev. and Mrs. William J. Stob
 Rev. and Mrs. Richard D. Sytsma
 Rev. and Mrs. Richard E. Sytsma
 Rev. and Mrs. Maas Vander Bilt
 *Mr. Gary Roest

Kenya

Dr. and Mrs. Peter Ipema

Liberia

Mr. and Mrs. Larry Vanderaa

Mexico

Rev. and Mrs. Paul Bergsma
 Mr. and Mrs. Bert Block
 Mr. and Mrs. John De Young
 Rev. and Mrs. David Doyle
 Miss Winabelle Gritter
 Rev. and Mrs. Orlin Hogan
 Mr. and Mrs. Nick Kroeze
 Rev. and Mrs. Donald Lagerwey
 Mr. and Mrs. Abe Marcus
 Rev. and Mrs. Gerald Nyenhuis
 Dr. and Mrs. Derk Oostendorp
 Rev. and Mrs. J. Larry Roberts
 Mr. and Mrs. Jack Roeda
 Rev. and Mrs. Robert Ruis
 Mrs. Rudolfo Silva
 Dr. and Mrs. Hans Weerstra

Nicaragua

Mr. and Mrs. Gary Teja
 Rev. and Mrs. John Van Der Borgh

Nigeria

Rev. and Mrs. Sidney Anderson
 Mr. and Mrs. LeRoy Baas
 Rev. and Mrs. Ralph Baker
 Rev. and Mrs. Willem Berends
 Mr. and Mrs. Albert Bierling
 Miss Peggy Blick***
 Dr. Harry R. Boer
 Rev. and Mrs. John Boer
 Mr. and Mrs. Ronald Bosserman
 Mr. and Mrs. Donald Bremer
 Mr. and Mrs. Gordon Brinks**
 Mr. and Mrs. Raymond Browneye
 Mr. and Mrs. Gordon Buys
 Dr. and Mrs. John Channer
 Miss Nancy Chapel
 Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Cok

Mr. and Mrs. Warren De Boer
 Miss Margrieta De Bruyn***
 Mr. and Mrs. John De Jager
 Mr. and Mrs. David Dykgraaf
 Mr. William Dykhuis
 Miss Margaret Dykstra
 Mr. and Mrs. Sy Ellens***
 Mr. and Mrs. William Evenhouse
 Mr. and Mrs. Harry Faber
 Mr. and Mrs. Fred Feikema
 Mr. and Mrs. Robert Geels***
 Dr. and Mrs. Peter Greidanus
 Mr. and Mrs. Stuart Greydanus***
 Mr. Mark Hoekman
 Miss Angie Hoolsema
 Mr. and Mrs. Andy Horlings***
 Miss Mary Kaldeway
 Miss Frances Karnemaat
 Rev. and Mrs. Harvey Kiekover
 Mr. and Mrs. David Koetje***
 Miss Margaret Kooiman
 Mr. and Mrs. Robert Koops
 Mr. and Mrs. Cornelius Korhorn
 Mr. and Mrs. Johannes Kotze
 Miss Alie Kuipers**
 Mr. and Mrs. William Lemcke
 Miss Mae Jerene Mast
 Dr. Giny Meinhardt
 Mr. and Mrs. Barry Meyer
 Dr. and Mrs. Dale Peerbolte
 Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Posthumus
 Dr. and Mrs. Ray Prins, Jr.
 Dr. and Mrs. Martinus Reedyk
 Mr. and Mrs. Louis Regnerus***
 Miss Christine Roos
 Mr. and Mrs. Otto Rouw
 Miss Ruth Salomons
 Mr. and Mrs. Dick Seinen
 Rev. and Mrs. George Spee
 Miss Dorothy Sytsma
 Mr. and Mrs. Willem Termorshuizen
 Mr. and Mrs. Paul Theule
 Mr. and Mrs. Arnold Tigchelaar***
 Mr. and Mrs. Engbert Ubels
 Miss Geraldine Vander Berg
 Dr. and Mrs. John Vander Kooy
 Miss Julie Vander Laan
 Miss Ruth Vander Meulen
 Mr. and Mrs. Dick Vander Steen
 Miss Frances Vander Zwaag
 Rev. and Mrs. Lester Van Essen
 Miss Leanne Van Leeuwen
 Miss Tina Van Staalduinen
 Mr. and Mrs. Case Van Wyk
 Mr. and Mrs. Larry Van Zee
 Miss Ruth Veltkamp
 Mr. and Mrs. Norman Viss
 Miss Anita Vissia
 Mr. and Mrs. Abe Vreeke
 Miss Betty Vreeman***

Philippines

Mr. and Mrs. Vicente Apostol
 Rev. and Mrs. Barry B. Blankers
 Rev. and Mrs. W. Keith Bulthuis
 Rev. and Mrs. Henry De Vries
 Rev. and Mrs. Robert De Vries
 Rev. and Mrs. David Stravers
 Rev. and Mrs. Edward Vander Berg

Rev. and Mrs. Arnold Rumph
 Rev. and Mrs. Ronald Sprik

Taiwan

Rev. and Mrs. Carl Afman
 Rev. and Mrs. Peter Tong
 Rev. and Mrs. Mike Vander Pol

*Seminary Interns and Volunteers

**Waiting for visas

***Associate Missionaries

Puerto Rico

Rev. and Mrs. Merle Den Bleyker
 Rev. and Mrs. Frank Pott

D. Office Personnel

Executive Secretary — Dr. Eugene Rubingh
 Africa Secretary — Rev. William Van Tol
 Asia Secretary — Rev. Edward Van Baak
 Latin America Secretary — Dr. Roger S. Greenway
 Business Secretary — Mr. Donald Zwier
 Communications Secretary — Mr. William Schultze
 Support Services Coordinator — Mr. Ellis Deters
 Media Materials Specialist — Mr. Frank Speyers
 Accountant — Mr. James Tamminga

The board approved a restructuring of the administrative set up and created the offices of Communications Secretary and Personnel Secretary. Through some realignment of the duties assigned to Mr. William Schultze, he will function in the office of Communications Secretary for a trial period. With the vastly increased demands in governmental and business relationships overseas and with the need for better structuring of home service periods for the missionaries, it was found necessary to create a Personnel Office. Thus in addition to the area secretaries there are now three departments which are enabling or facilitating departments. These are: Communications, Personnel and Finance. Our studies of other missionary agencies have confirmed the need for a full-time personnel and recruiting officer. With administrative costs set at six percent the board believes that its administrative set up is lean and muscular without unnecessary frills and paper handling. At the same time, increasing demands for full communication and effective administration must be heeded.

E. Representation at Synod

The board requests that its president, executive secretary, treasurer, and business secretary be permitted to represent the board on all matters relating to world missions.

F. Presentation of Missionaries

Synod has regularly extended its greetings to those missionaries on home service or under appointment. These missionaries are each year introduced to synod and greetings are brought from various fields. We would again request permission for this presentation so that synod may personally meet representatives of the missionary endeavor.

G. Staff Appointments and Resignations

The following missionaries were appointed to a full term of service during 1976: Mr. and Mrs. David Whitney, Mr. and Mrs. Ryan

Veeneman, Mr. and Mrs. Wayne De Young, Mr. and Mrs. Bert Block, Miss Winabelle Gritter, Rev. and Mrs. David Stravers, Miss Alie Kuipers, Mr. and Mrs. Barry Meyer, Miss Leanne Van Leeuwen, Mr. and Mrs. Norman Viss, Mr. William Dykhuis, Mr. and Mrs. John Sjaardema, Mr. and Mrs. Ronald Bosserman, Mr. and Mrs. Gordon Brinks.

Others left service with CRWM during 1976 and the names are noted here in order that we may gratefully recognize their labors in the missionary enterprise: Mr. and Mrs. Bruce Bode, Rev. and Mrs. Cornelius Persenaire, Mr. and Mrs. Norman Brouwer, Miss Nancy Friend, Mr. and Mrs. Frank Kass, Mr. and Mrs. Menno Kuiper, Mr. and Mrs. George Schutt, Miss Neva De Vries, Mr. and Mrs. Aldrich Evenhouse, Mr. and Mrs. Leonard Gabrielse, Mr. and Mrs. Nolan Vander Ark, Miss Marina Verdun, Dr. and Mrs. Donald Zeilenga, Mr. and Mrs. Ronald Zoet, Mr. and Mrs. Daniel Achtyes, Rev. and Mrs. Harold de Jong, Miss Jean Van Beek, Miss Marge Franz, Rev. and Mrs. Dennis Mulder, Miss Jean Zoet.

H. Reappointment of the Executive Secretary Dr. Eugene Rubingh

Dr. Eugene Rubingh was appointed by synod in 1975 to an initial two-year term as executive secretary. The board recommends that synod reappoint Dr. Eugene Rubingh as executive secretary for the Board for Christian Reformed World Missions for four years.

Section Two General Matters

A. Documents

It was necessary during 1976 to draw up for the board's consideration several basic documents in the effort to refine our missionary understanding and purpose. A Missionary Manual was drafted and approved which embodies directives and policy for the use of the missionary personnel. A General Field Mandate was adopted which embodied several basic statements of purpose in the carrying out of the missionary mandate together with a declaration of the basic principles which guide us in the performance of our task. Missionary preparation, assignment, methodology, and relationship to national churches were also set forth in this document. A further document was produced which embodies guidelines for the inter-dependence of the overseas mission and national churches with whom the mission bears relationships. As national churches achieve autonomy the lines of responsibility are in constant transition and it was necessary to provide guidelines for effective utilization of resources and personnel during this crucial period.

B. Relationships with the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee

During 1976, the board continued to assess the relationship between word and deed in the missionary endeavor. Warm appreciation was received from both the missionary staff and the office personnel for the emergency relief which CRWRC provides around the world. Concern was, however, expressed regarding a noticeably increasing tendency toward the separation of word and deed particularly in the arena of the

programmed or long-range benevolent activity. The CRWRC was repeatedly requested to return to the pattern of administration outlined in its constitution. Furthermore, the necessity of a single and united Christian Reformed Church identification must be given to the people being served overseas and to the national churches being nurtured.

Theologically the world and life view which is our heritage means that we present the sovereignty of God over all of creation. The compassionate deed should not therefore be divorced from the call to repentance and faith. Word and deed ministry are a unity. We are concerned that development schemes and long term benevolence should be placed in the context of the overall missionary strategy.

A more basic conviction is a theological one. A separation of nature and grace developed early in both Catholic and Lutheran theology, while it is the conviction of the Calvinist that the earth and all its fullness is the Lord's and that the salvation which God proffers is total and comprehensive. The Board for World Missions has no desire to lord it over any other agency. We are indeed constantly being schooled around the world in the lessons of servanthood. Yet even in 1962, when synod established the CRWRC constitution, it spoke definitely of these matters and the proper administration of the relief ministry.

The board suggests, therefore, that it is consistent with Reformed theology and missionary strategy that long term ministries be considered in terms of both deed and word. Salvation is understood as a body-soul totality and that describes our missionary parameters. We would simply plead that the relationship be that which the CRWRC constitution itself so clearly states: "The missionary conference shall administer permanent benevolent activities."

Therefore, the board in its recent meeting decided to request the Synod of 1977, to reaffirm the correlation of the word and deed ministry and the administration thereof as carried out by the Christian Reformed Church outside of the United States and Canada.

Grounds:

1. A single identification of the CRC to the people, to whom we minister is necessary to present a united purpose and strategy.
2. The basic Reformed commitment to the sovereignty of God over all of creation demands a demonstrably unified world and life view which embraces all of life.
3. The compassionate deed should not be divorced from the specific call to repentance and faith.
4. From a theological standpoint, the separation of nature and grace should be avoided in the development and practice of a Reformed missiology.
5. Salvation is a body-soul totality: a single field council should administer the word-deed ministry.

C. Delegations from World Mission Related Churches

The board seriously considered the extending of invitations to representatives of national churches to be present at synod and in our congregations. This is in line with the import of the newly adopted Mission

Order. Ultimately, however, it was the board's conviction that this should be a synodical matter and the board, therefore, requests synod to consider the extending of invitations to leaders and/or representatives from CRWM related national churches to be present at sessions of synod in the future.

D. *Mission Order Revision*

Article II, Section 12,D of the Mission Order states that ordinarily a member of the executive committee shall serve the full year of his appointment even though he moves to a new location. Experience has shown that the expertise and experience obtained by board members over a lengthy period of time is suddenly unavailable when they move to a new location. Particularly, the value of those members who have recently been on trips to the mission field could no longer be utilized when they accepted calls to churches in other classes. Therefore, the board requested that these executive committee members be permitted to serve the full year of their appointment even though they moved to another classis. It was, however, noted that this regulation might be construed to be in conflict with the synodical regulations noted in Article II, Section 3, which states that the board members shall consist of a nominee from each classis and members-at-large whose appointment and terms of service are regulated by synodical rules. The board decided, therefore, to request synod to delete Article Two, Section 12,D.

E. *Major World Languages Literature Study Committee*

The board further decided to propose to synod that a Major World Languages Literature Study Committee be appointed to bring recommendations to the Synod of 1978, regarding feasibility of forming a permanent committee to plan, organize and publish needed Reformed literature in major world languages.

Grounds:

1. The record of the Spanish Literature Committee demonstrates the value of such a program.
2. There are needs in other major languages for similar literature.
3. A unified literature program may be more efficient than splinter operations.
4. A denominational endeavor such as this goes beyond the mandate of an existing board or committee.

The task or mandate of such a study committee would be as follows:
 a. a study of possible languages to be covered and the order of their priority; b. needed staffing and budget; c. survey of present CRC activity in foreign language publication; and d. study structure and synodical relationships.

F. *Communications*

Communication plays an important role in the development of interest and concern for the outreach of the gospel to our global village. As the work expands it becomes more and more imperative to achieve adequate communication between the sending church and the sent ones.

As they were made aware of the rising costs of mission operation abroad, our churches responded by way of gifts, offerings and special missionary support during 1976 so that income from these sources reached an all-time high of approximately two million dollars. Several more churches throughout the denomination have become involved in planning and carrying out an annual period of emphasis on missions. The number of congregations which couple with this activity the faith promise giving program also increased. An outgrowth of this involvement has been the wider participation in the support of specific missionaries and expanded comprehension of the worldwide ministry of the Christian Reformed Church.

Nineteen seventy-six marked completion of twenty-five years of mission endeavor in Japan. To commemorate this anniversary, a 16mm film entitled "Every Knee Shall Bow," featuring the growth of the work in Japan, was released. The film has been used widely throughout the denomination and continues to be in demand for showings. Plans are being made to increase the number of visuals available for distribution in Canada and the United States.

As another means of sharing the development of the work in many places, brochures and folders focusing on specific fields and a general overview of all the fields have been produced and distributed. A "first" in the way of an annual report was completed in booklet form and is available to anyone desiring detailed information regarding our budget and programs. Additional pieces of descriptive literature are in various stages of development.

The spring and fall tours of the Women's Missionary Union meetings are annual and semi-annual events which contribute significantly to the communications program. Carried on in cooperation with the CRC Board of Home Missions, personnel from both agencies travel extensively to many places in North America, telling of what God is doing on the cutting edge of the church at home and abroad. The financial support provided by the unions is of special import and we are indeed grateful for it.

Section Three Africa

On January 15, 1977, the Second World Festival of Black and African Arts and Culture (FESTAC) opened in Lagos, Nigeria. Included in the displays was one which traced the roots of Christianity in Africa back to the sojourn of the infant Jesus in Egypt. Black Africa is concerned about its roots. Much of the historical and archeological study that is taking place will have a profound effect on the future shape of a continent that is being bombarded by alien ideologies and values. Traditional religions, still closely tied to African culture, are being reexamined against the impact of Christianity and Islam. The future of God's kingdom and church in Africa is assured by the rule of God himself but their form and shape may surprise or bewilder us.

Some African governments have ordered a merger of all churches into one state church, while others tolerate a confusing array of denominations many of which have ethnic aspirations. In some, such as Liberia and Nigeria, freedom of religion is a constitutional and practiced right, while in others, such as Uganda, Mozambique and the Muslim States, Christians live under constant fear of persecution. The struggle between black majorities and white minorities in Rhodesia and South Africa and the potential for foreign involvement in it may adversely affect the presence and work of thousands of missionaries.

Whatever the situation in a particular country, it is clear that missionaries today sorely need principles and methodology carefully refined by the Word of God in the context of the cultures and lives of African peoples. The rise of national churches with effective leadership and an increasing number of missionaries sensitive to their plans and direction gives hope for a coalition of power that will be used by God to double the number of Christians in this generation.

Islam-In-Africa Project

There is intensified concern for the evangelization of over 160 million Muslims in Africa. As General Advisor of the Islam-In-Africa Project, headquartered in Nairobi, Kenya, Dr. Peter Ipema has a strategic role in training and equipping African Christians for this task. The Project's goal is to stimulate and equip the churches for the witness of the Gospel among Muslims. Periodic courses are held in many of the countries that span the continent below the Sahara where Christianity and Islam meet each other among a variety of traditional religions.

Liberia

Mr. and Mrs. Larry Vanderaa are now living in Compound Two, a village located in the heart of Grand Bassa County, Liberia. Two houses and an office have been constructed under the supervision of volunteer builder, Mr. Herman Scholten.

Liberia, Africa's oldest independent republic, was founded by a colony of freed slaves from the United States. It was declared an independent republic in 1847. Liberia is about the size of Ohio and has a population of about 1.8 million. Most missions in Liberia are small and more active in medical and educational work than in church planting. Total communicant membership in Liberia is estimated to be less than 150,000. The almost impassable swamp area separating the interior and the coastal zone is symbolic of the obstacles which hinder evangelism and communication. A two-year survey was made to find an area which showed promise for the spread of the gospel in the interior.

A comprehensive challenge faces us in Bassaland. Good opportunities exist for evangelization, training of leaders of independent churches, literacy training and literature distribution. The government and people are expectantly aware of our presence and President Tolbert will be visiting our new location during the course of this year.

The Vanderaas continue to make progress in their study of the Bassa language. As Mr. Vanderaa learns Bassa, he is preparing language

study materials for missionaries who will follow. They also continue to establish contacts with the local population and with leaders of various independent churches. We continue to seek an ordained missionary to join them but regret to report that response so far can only be described as exploratory interest.

Nigeria

On October 1, 1975, the late General Mohammed, Head of State, announced a three stage political program for return to civilian rule by October, 1979. During the first stage, now completed, Nigeria was reorganized from twelve to nineteen states and a new constitution was drafted. Before this stage was completed General Mohammed was assassinated. His successor, General Obasanjo, continued his program. The second stage is now in progress with the reorganization of local government and the election of a Constituent Assembly to approve the new constitution. During the third stage in 1979, state and federal elections will be held.

The effect of this program on our mission and the churches we serve was immediate. The redivision of states places the NKST or Tiv Church and the EKAN Benue and Sardauna Church in separate states and this has enormously increased the complexity of mission administration. One of these states, Gongola State, immediately proceeded to take over all schools and hospitals owned by churches and missions. Local elections have taken place and tension between ethnic groups, especially in the Takum area, has risen. Alongside of this, the government has continued rapid development of industry, roads, transportation and social services. The effect of sudden affluence and urbanization for many people places them in new relationships with those thousands still poor and needy.

On the national level, the future of the Nigerian church is uncertain. The draft constitution maintains the freedom of religion but we do not know what events are in store as the political program evolves. The present tendency in Nigeria, especially in the south, is toward increasing proliferation of small independent denominations. The wave of independence has reached the north and is evident in the EKAN Benue and Sardauna Church schism. Attempts to foster reunion of EKAN Benue and Sardauna and the separated Christians in "EKAN Takum" have been hindered by political events. Nevertheless, the CRWM has, after careful consideration of recommendations from the field and communications from the two groups, made a statement on our relationship to both entities. The statement calls upon both groups to continue to seek reunion and offers our assistance towards that end. It maintains our official relationship with EKAN Benue and Sardauna and initiates plans to transfer additional mission ministries and property to them. It also approves continuation of limited assistance to "EKAN Takum." This position is taken in the hope that both groups will work toward eventual reunion or, if this does not eventuate, that they will decide to be separate churches with recognition of each other in the context of the Fellowship of Churches in Nigeria (TEKAN).

In the churches a serious struggle between evangelization and internalization is occurring. Inadequate finances and workers make it difficult to cope with the need of present church membership, let alone an effective program of evangelization. Some evangelists and pastors are being attracted to government teaching positions because of the need for hundreds of religious knowledge teachers and higher salaries offered. The rise of national mission boards has helped to alleviate this situation somewhat but there is mutual concern to build up the financial base of the churches and give encouragement to the task of evangelization.

The opportunity for Nigerian churches to be directly involved in the education of the nation's children appears to be waning. Most states have taken over schools and a request by EKAN Benue and Saradauna Church to begin a private Christian secondary school was denied. For the present, there is ample opportunity to place Christian teachers of all subjects including Bible in government schools. Both the churches and government strongly encourage us to do this. The CRWM has approved a plan to assist in the recruitment of teachers who work in Nigerian schools under government contract. These teachers are designated as Associate Missionaries and will have a significant Christian impact on the youth of the nation.

The churches and mission continue to operate rural health programs, Mkar Christian Hospital and the Benue Leprosy Settlement. The Rural Health work and Mkar Christian Hospital are now completely financed by fees and government grants, except for some capital expenditures and missionary salaries, but the Benue Leprosy Settlement is dependent on increasing amounts of money from our board. The field has been requested to reevaluate the entire leprosy ministry. The Gongola State Government took over the operation of Takum Christian Hospital on October 1, 1976, but the state has now offered to return the hospital to us. It appears that the federal government desires to maintain at least one voluntary agency or mission hospital in each state. Negotiations regarding the offer to return Takum Hospital to us are in progress.

With rapid technological and educational development, radio, television, literature and literacy are receiving increasing attention. There is much free time available to us on radio and television. The New Life For All radio and TV ministry, presently under the direction of missionary LeRoy Baas, is taking advantage of this. The literature and literacy programs are being transferred to the churches gradually but at the same time we must meet the rising challenge of providing Christian literature to a nation of readers.

A strong emphasis on leadership training continues at the Theological College of Northern Nigeria, Reformed Theological College of Nigeria, Veenstra Junior Seminary and the six Bible schools of the churches.

Historically, the mission has sought to plant and develop congregations, to prepare leadership, and to bear witness to God's kingdom through educational and medical ministries. As the churches develop, they have become increasingly involved in the ministries carried on by the mission. A state of interdependence has been reached in which the churches are rapidly assuming full administrative responsibility for the

work of the mission. Missionaries are engaged in a wide variety of work alongside thousands of Nigerian pastors, evangelists, teachers and medical personnel. Increasing numbers of missionaries are loaned to the churches under specific assignment according to guidelines for church and mission interdependence adopted by the CRWM.

We have reason to be grateful for continued growth of the church. For example, the town of Ibi, a community with strong Muslim influence where the Sudan United Mission had its early headquarters, resisted the gospel for over fifty years. In recent years, Rev. Ezekiel Nyajo's leadership has been blessed and the communicant membership of the church in Ibi has grown to 500. There were 149 adult baptisms in 1976.

Nevertheless, the struggle of Christians to relate to the church and her Lord in a meaningful way is real. Christians often find themselves hampered by the lack of indigenous models needed to cope with witchcraft and evil spirits and to provide the symbols, supporting social context and complete-life-religion that attracts others to Islam or traditional religions. The churches long for strong liturgical, ethical, educational and financial bases lest, as someone has observed, they disintegrate at the center while they are still expanding at the circumference. The urgent call of both the churches and mission is to meet the need at the center and increase the circumference until all of God's chosen among the more than two million people in the Benue Valley are embraced.

Section Four

Asia

A. Areas of Evangelism

The Philippines

On May 1976, the Christian Reformed Church of the Philippines was organized in impressive ceremonies which were held in the facilities of the Genevan Reformed Seminary of the Philippines near Bacolod City. Members of the Bacolod, Bago, and Pulupandan congregations, and many of their friends from the surrounding community, gathered to seek the blessing of God upon the plans and goals which the new denomination has for outreach in the Philippines. The Christian Reformed Churches of North America were represented by the president of the Board for World Missions, the Rev. Norman Meyer, and by the Asia Secretary, the Rev. Ed Van Baak.

On May 2, 1976, in separate worship services in each of the three congregations, elders and deacons were installed into office according to the stipulations of the Church Order which had been adopted by all of the congregations participating in the new denomination.

During 1976, the faculty of the Genevan Reformed Seminary also drew up a plan for the establishment of a Board of Trustees which includes the participation of members of the Christian Reformed Church of the Philippines and CRWM missionaries. The staff of the seminary is also seeking a suitable site for the permanent location of the Genevan

Reformed Seminary and for the establishment of a permanent faculty for the continuation of training of leaders.

One of the new areas of evangelism begun during 1976, is in the city of Iloilo on Panay Island, lying about twenty-five miles off the north-western coast of Negros Island and Bacolod City. Vicente and Lucy Apostol have begun the work in Iloilo, and are thus continuing the pioneer efforts which have characterized their ministry since they inaugurated the work of the Christian Reformed Church in the Philippines.

The work of the mission during 1977, will involve the completion of the purchase of property for the Genevan Reformed Seminary, intensive recruitment of students for the seminary, and the integration of new missionaries into the staff of workers already on the field. New areas of evangelism will be begun, and there will be a continuing definition of the shared responsibilities of missionaries working with the Philippine Christian Reformed Church.

Japan

During 1976, twenty-five years of fruitful relationships with the Reformed Church of Japan were commemorated by the mission, both in Japan and in the United States. Extensive showings of the film "Every Knee Shall Bow" in Canada and the United States were warmly received. Some of the churches mentioned in that film as having achieved a status independent of the mission and incorporation into the Eastern Presbytery of the Reformed Church of Japan, have now completed payments on their buildings. Some of the churches have also signed contracts to buy the land on which these buildings rest.

The mission continues to expand its evangelistic outreach. An addition was already made to the new chapel in Narita, and the Rev. and Mrs. William J. Stob are moving to that new location. The chapel in the city of Numazu was completed, and the inception of meetings was reported by the Rev. and Mrs. Richard D. Sytsma.

Plans were begun for a deeper involvement of the Reformed Church in Japan in the student center at Kunitachi, with the anticipation that neighborhood evangelism among families living in the *danchi* in that area will also participate in worship services being conducted in the student center. Further cooperation with the Reformed Church of Japan occurs in the literature ministry which is supervised by the Rev. Gerrit Koedoot, who has been assigned the development of Bible curriculum materials and study helps which will be used both by the mission and the churches of the RCJ.

The Japan Mission's contribution to Kobe Seminary continued in the part-time teaching of Dr. Harvey Smit and the special lectures of 1976, which were given by the Rev. Mr. Koedoot. Ministers of the Reformed Churches of Japan also participate in the radio ministry which is directed by the Rev. Henry Bruinooge.

Plans will be laid in 1977 for a new enterprise in cooperation between the Japan Mission and the RCJ. A plan for church/mission interdependence which was approved by the Board for Christian Reformed World Missions will be implemented in cooperation with one of the

congregations in the Eastern Presbytery in the Tokyo suburb of Kami-Fukuoka. This congregation, established by the Japan Mission under the leadership of the Rev. Henry Bruinooge eleven years ago, is now beginning its own evangelistic outreach in Sakado, where it is establishing a mission, supporting a missionary pastor, and contributing the resources of the congregation to the development of a church in this place. The mission looks upon Sakado as a granddaughter church.

Taiwan

There are two Presbyteries among the Reformed Churches in Taiwan, and among them the missionaries find congregations that have been established in cooperation with the missionaries and pastors who have worked and studied with the staff of the Christian Reformed Taiwan Mission during the past years. Missionaries have been invited to attend the meetings of both the presbyteries, and are anticipating a day of greater cooperation between the congregations in these areas in Taiwan.

The work of distribution of Christian literature in Taiwan, and from Taiwan throughout the greater area of Southeast Asia, is carried on by the Rev. Charles Chao, who is the director of Reformation Translation Fellowship. During a visit to the United States in 1976, the Rev. Mr. Chao expressed a desire for closer relationship with the Taiwan Mission.

A part of the work of the Taiwan Mission is the preparation of local broadcasts in facilities that are available in the city of Taipei and the distribution of tapes of these broadcasts to broadcasting companies with facilities on Taiwan and Manila. The Rev. Peter Tong prepares messages which are beamed outside of the Island of Taiwan, as well as being broadcast locally, and the Rev. Mike Vander Pol prepares programs which are used locally.

Guam

The ministry of the Hospitality House continued after the departure of Mr. and Mrs. Bruce Bode, with the substitution of new directors of the work when Mr. and Mrs. David Whitney were appointed to Guam. Under their direction, the work of the Hospitality House has reached out among the United States servicemen who are stationed on Guam, and in a more limited fashion continues the work among Micronesian students begun by Mr. and Mrs. Bode.

The bookstore continued to increase sales, and for the first time in history exceeded \$300,000 in gross receipts. The effect of highway construction at the very door of the bookstore is a matter of concern to those whose lives are committed to this ministry.

The congregation of the Faith Presbyterian Reformed Church on Guam is continuing its plans for relocation of its worship facility from the highway site, where parking is being further restricted, to a larger site which was purchased several years ago. During 1977, the Guam church will be seeking a pastor to replace the Rev. Henry Dykema, who has shepherded the congregation for the last twelve years of growth and progress in ministry and in numbers of those whose lives are touched by the witness on Guam.

B. *Issues in Asian Missions*

1. The development of national leadership in the churches.

Asian lands endure continued stress in leadership roles. Political uncertainties are particularly acute in Japan, Taiwan, China, Indonesia, India and several small countries in Asia. There is continued insurgency in the Philippines, charges of high-level corruption in several lands, and closer relationships with countries encouraging revolution in Africa and the Middle East. The death in China of Chou En-lai and Mao Tse Tung in 1976, alerted the churches in Asia to the need of developing leadership which will be stable and reliable in the years to come.

One of the presbyteries with which our missionaries work in Taiwan has begun exploring leadership training possibilities; the churches in the Philippines are contributing to the management of the new seminary in Bacolod City, and the Reformed Church in Japan continues to encourage the cooperation of the Japan Mission in sending men for short-term or part-time involvement in teaching and lecturing in the Kobe Reformed Seminary.

2. Missionary Personnel.

During the last decade, we have had little need to replace missionary personnel in Asian fields, resulting in a staff of experienced people whose cooperative teamwork increased as they learn to know each other and work together. While two families and one lady in our Asian Missions have more than twenty-five years experience in missions, there are seventeen families which have been on the field for more than ten years. Two of these families, the Dykemas from Guam and the Blankers from the Philippines will terminate their foreign service during 1977. We are entering an era of short-term missionaries, and significant accommodations may have to be made to our style of missions when a greater number of people have a lesser amount of experience.

3. Flexibility of policy.

Asia presents many patterns of *church growth* and many stages of church/mission development. The formation of a somewhat western-style church organization is entirely viable in Japan's western-veer society. The church/mission relations, however, are laced with many oriental overtones which require great skill in language and understanding by missionaries. We must beware that because the church looks western, we assume it thinks western.

The *seminaries* established in Asia are often expected to look like western seminaries and also produce products as European and American seminaries do. We sometimes mistakenly project a goal of large faculties of full-time professors, all properly departmentalized. The Asian seminaries, however, may well be Theological Education by Extension (TEE) oriented, or better still, develop discipleship programs in which prospective pastors and evangelists spend successive years in close association with pastors and missionaries who impart their skills through joint pastoral calling, sermon preparation, and assigned reading programs. Flexibility of approach is necessary in theological education.

The *goals* of mission need restatement in order to conform to vastly variegated situations. A "church planting" goal in Japan must be defined differently than in Afghanistan, where an institutional church (allowable in Japan) is illegal and unwanted. A mission can be thoroughly biblical and obedient with a goal of sowing seed (radio ministries) or reaching students or establishing single congregations.

4. Evangelism Opportunity.

There are portents of hope for the Christian mission throughout all of Asia. One encouraging event was the Chinese Congress on World Evangelization (CCOWE). During August, 1976, more than 16,000 Christians from twenty-seven parts of the world gathered to discuss strategies and areas of evangelistic concern. CCOWE provided an opportunity for dispersed Chinese Christians to meet each other and to share their problems and experiences. A major part of the discussion was devoted to "the task of evangelization" and "the task of overseas missions."

The China Graduate School of Theology (CGST), established in Hong Kong, was able to find a suitable location for its outreach and has enrolled scores of Chinese in various stages of theological preparation.

The outreach of radio broadcasting into all parts of Asia where Chinese are living, including those who are on the mainland, has given hope that they do not live in total isolation. The encouragement of broader cultural activities on the mainland has given rise to new hopes that there may be some small degree of freedom accorded to those who wish to express this religious faith.

The board presents synod with a recommendation for inception of evangelistic work in Bangladesh. There have been persistent requests and inquiries from churches and individuals regarding the verbal communication of the gospel in a land reported in the Christian press to be unusually open to the gospel. These reports require comparative evaluation, and the Board for World Missions inaugurated this evaluation in 1974.

There has been a thorough collation of printed materials and oral reports of missionaries to Bangladesh for three years. Furthermore, a board visiting committee visited Bangladesh in 1976, and provided an enthusiastic recommendation regarding the inception of work. There has been a close contact with Christian Reformed persons employed in Bangladesh both with CRWRC and other organizations, as well as with the CRWRC office in Grand Rapids. Their encouragement has been appreciated.

There are some men who are interested in Bangladesh service to the point of making application for service upon learning of synod's approval of the field, and provision of funds.

The board decided to request synod to open Bangladesh as a mission field and thereupon to recruit two ordained missionaries for this field in 1978.

Grounds:

1. The CRWRC already has three workers in Bangladesh, and the

preaching/teaching ministry should be present where doors are open.
2. There is a great need for the gospel in this land which now has only 140 missionaries serving 76 million inhabitants.

Another recommendation that the board presents to synod is the result of several inquiries from Australia's Reformed Churches: a. that the request from churches in Australia for Christian Reformed Church ministers to be called by these churches be honored; b. that synod supply \$5,000 annually per ministerial family to cover social security, pension, health insurance, and travel; c. that synod designate the channeling agency.

The background for these requests has been the deeply appreciated ministries of several Christian Reformed ministers in pastoral work and evangelism during the last decade.

The Board for World Missions commends the letters of petition from the consistories and Home Mission Committee of Australia to synod's consideration, with greater elaboration of the matter available to the synod and advisory committees. Specifically synod will have to decide whether ministerial personnel can be spared for service to other Reformed churches; whether the supplementary funds (for continuing North American expenses) are available, and which agency of synod should process the technical details involved in overseas residence.

Exploration will also be made during 1977 into the possibility of a word ministry to Jordan, similar to that which was conducted by the Rev. and Mrs. Ed Van Baak in Afghanistan for two months at the end of 1976. In the international congregations that exist in Muslim lands there are a large number of Christians who come into daily contact with Muslims. In the Islamic countries there is a curiosity regarding the Christian faith, and many are now experiencing for the first time an opportunity to learn something about the Christian gospel and the nature of the church of Jesus Christ.

Section Five Latin America

The hour has come for the evangelization of Latin America. That is the candid opinion of almost everyone who has examined the present situation. There is a climate of change, expectancy and a longing for better things. The traditional religion, Roman Catholicism, itself is undergoing major alterations and a new openness to Protestant teaching is found almost everywhere.

National churches, most of them of a Pentecostal nature, are growing rapidly and are assuming greater responsibility in Latin America. Missionary visas are generally easy to obtain, and with the exception of Mexico, missionaries can carry on their work openly without difficulty. Evangelism, church establishment, literature distribution and leadership training are the principal tasks of Christian Reformed missionaries to Latin America. The continent is reached by radio in Spanish and Portuguese through the facilities of *The Back to God Hour*, and a great number of new contacts are gained by our missionaries in this way.

The Christian Reformed World Relief Committee sends agriculturalists, social workers, and literacy experts to areas of particular need and good liaison is maintained between their workers and CRWM missionaries. Our denomination's Spanish Literature Committee provides at least part of the literature needed to develop the faith and understanding of new Christians and church leaders, and new churches are being established which are Reformed in doctrine and outlook.

Two areas of particular concern this year have been the recruitment and training of new missionaries for more effective penetration of Latin America with the gospel. We are not satisfied simply to recruit dedicated people and turn them loose on the field without further training. With this in mind, beginning this year we hope to do much more on-the-field orientation and training of new personnel in the actual work of evangelism and church establishment.

The second main area of concern is the supportive and pastoral supervision of field missionaries. In order to stimulate more careful stewardship of mission resources, a new policy of supervision called *Latin America Mission Analysis and Projection* (LAMAP) has been developed and approved by the board. Modeled after the program of the Board of Home Missions, LAMAP aims at providing more orderly and effective supervision of the CRWM fields in Latin America, encouragement to the missionaries, and the increased involvement of the national churches in mission analysis and planning.

A mutually supportive relation of the mission to the national church remains one of the great challenge areas in missions, and Latin America is no exception. In some instances, missionaries feel frustrated because their close connection to the national church seems to slow down the growth of the work. They complain that too much of their time is spent performing the church duties assigned them by the national church, with the result that little time is available for direct evangelism. In other places, the national church wants to be freed from dependence on the mission. Mission money still is needed and wanted, but in all other ways the church wants to have full control of its own affairs and maintain as loose a relationship to the mission as possible. Church-mission relations are most relaxed in places like Central America and Puerto Rico where our missionaries are planting churches where Reformed churches do not exist. In such places the members of the new denominations formed as a result of our mission work generally choose to translate and adopt for themselves the name of the church whose mission brought them into existence. Consequently, *Iglesias Cristiana Reformadas* are springing up in many places in Latin America, and our distinctive denominational seal appears on more churches than we ever envisioned.

Argentina

Our missionary staff in Buenos Aires consists of Dr. and Mrs. Sidney Rooy, assigned to leadership training in Buenos Aires, and the Rev. and Mrs. Louis Wagenveld who are engaged in evangelism in that same city. Until last month, Miss Sylvia Kallemeyn was also located in

Buenos Aires and she was assigned to secretarial work in the office of the Latin American Theological Fraternity. Miss Kallemeyn has fulfilled her two-year appointment and returned to the United States.

About an hour's drive eastward from Buenos Aires is the growing university city of La Plata, where the Rev. and Mrs. Ramon Borrego and the Rev. and Mrs. Harvey Stob, assisted by two-year volunteer Miss Virginia Walcott, work among the poorer classes. They combine word and deed ministries in a way that has produced four new congregations in the past few years. The mission also maintains a Christian bookstore in La Plata.

South of La Plata stands the city of Chascomus, where the Rev. and Mrs. Thomas De Vries are in charge of an organized congregation. Seminary intern Mr. William Renkema and his wife have been stationed in Chascomus this year and the Renkemas bore the main responsibility of the work during the time when the De Vries family was on home service.

In the resort city of Mar del Plata, on the Atlantic coast, the Rev. and Mrs. John Hutt carry on their church-related evangelistic ministry. The Rev. Mr. Hutt had the privilege of seeing his congregation officially organized this past year, and he was asked to remain there for one more term in order to prepare the members thoroughly in the faith and pave the way for a national pastor. Miss Janet Lindemulder, a volunteer, has worked with the Huttts this year and her services in the barrios are much appreciated.

More inland than these other places is the city of Olavarria, where two missionary families, the Rev. and Mrs. Ray Brinks and the Rev. and Mrs. Jack Huttinga are at work in church planting and development. They have been helped this year by another two-year volunteer, Miss Lillian Berkompas, who is Mrs. Huttinga's sister.

Politically, Argentina has had another troubled year, but the situation appears to be stabilizing and better days may lie ahead. The military now controls the government, and left-leaning groups have been vigorously repressed. There have been bombings near some of our missionary residences, and at one point one of our missionaries was caught in cross-fire on the open street. But we are thankful that none of our missionaries has been injured or abducted, and their work has gone on undaunted.

Brazil

Brazil is the largest Roman Catholic country, yet it has a Protestant president and more Protestant missionaries than any other country. Brazil is also the largest country in Latin America, with 105 million people and a vast land area rich in natural resources.

The Christian Reformed Church has been working in Brazil since 1934 when the Rev. and Mrs. William V. Muller first went to Brazil to serve as pastor and missionary for the Dutch immigrant churches. Today, the Rev. and Mrs. Simon Wolfert are ministering to these same Dutch churches, and in a sense they represent a line of continuity be-

tween the early stage of Christian Reformed work in Brazil and the later stage of mission involvement.

In the city of Aracatuba, the Rev. and Mrs. Charles Uken have been working in direct evangelism and church development. There are four centers of worship in Aracatuba, one of which will soon be organized and turned over to the Presbytery. The plan of the mission is to withdraw our personnel from the Aracatuba area within the next two years. The work can be left in the hands of the Presbytery for we feel that it has developed to the stage that the Brazilians themselves can handle it. Farther west, in the Andradina-Pereira Barreto-Ilha Solteira area, this same kind of transfer to the Presbytery is taking place. The services of Mr. and Mrs. Bernard Oldenkamp here were tragically terminated by Mrs. Oldenkamp's death on February 25. The continuation of the work in these places must now be left to the national church.

Farther to the South, two missionary families are laboring in unique ministries. The Rev. and Mrs. Willem Dirksen are living in the city of Blumenau in the State of Santa Catarina. The Rev. Mr. Dirksen itinerates widely, teaching in various churches and missions and placing special focus on building strong covenantal homes. After completing language study at the beginning of the year, the Rev. and Mrs. Carl Bosma joined the Dirksens in the South and are working closely with national leaders in the city of Camboriu. The Rev. Mr. Bosma is scheduled to teach on the faculty of the Presbyterian Seminary in Campinas, but the Brazilian Presbyterian Church requires that before joining the faculty a man must be involved in pastoral work for at least two years.

Brazil unquestionably represents one of the major target areas of Christian missions today. The Brazilian people are generally receptive to the gospel, churches are growing, and the society as a whole shows signs of progress, unity, and peace. The National Presbyterian Church with which we labor numbers over 200,000 members. We have experienced some delay in obtaining missionary visas, but on the whole the country remains open to missionary presence.

Central America

By Central America is meant the area between Mexico and the northern tip of South America. This area includes six small countries, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, and Panama. Sometimes these countries are disparagingly called "Banana Republics," because they export great quantities of bananas and do not represent great industrial or military strength. But from the Christian standpoint they are important countries because they contain people who need to learn God's Word and today they are more ready to hear that message than ever before.

Our board presently has missionaries assigned to two Central American countries, Honduras and Nicaragua. The Rev. and Mrs. G. Bernard Dokter labor in Honduras' capital, Tegucigalpa, and they will soon be joined by Mr. and Mrs. Ryan Veeneman and Mr. and Mrs. Wayne De Young. Both of these couples are presently in language study in Mexico

City. Mr. De Young expects to be ordained to the gospel ministry in August, and after that he and his wife will take up their work in Honduras.

In Nicaragua, Mr. and Mrs. Gary Teja have been working for several years and the Lord has richly blessed their evangelistic labors. Four congregations are growing in number and strength. The Tejas were joined this year by the Rev. and Mrs. John Van Der Borgh and their children, and the board hopes to appoint a third missionary family to Nicaragua in the near future.

The need to expand our missionary outreach in Central America has so impressed the board that at its annual meeting it decided to ask synod to allow our missionaries to extend their work into all the countries in this area so that they can respond to opportunities for witness and service as they arise. At the present time the board has received a request from a Protestant university in Guatemala, the *Universidad Mariano Galvez*, asking that we supply one or more theological professors for the new school of theology opened in February of this year by the university. This school is unique in that it is one of the very few Protestant universities in Latin America. It is recognized by the Guatemalan government and has good academic credentials, and the rector of the divinity school is thoroughly committed to Reformed theology and outlook.

As a further challenge in Central America, *The Back to God Hour* has supplied our missionaries with 4,600 names and addresses of current listeners to the Spanish broadcast who have written in from Central America asking for information and instruction. From past experience in other parts of Latin America we know how valuable these contacts can be. Our work in Honduras began six years ago through contacts made initially by *The Back to God Hour* Spanish broadcast. In order to meet this challenge our missionaries in Nicaragua are now establishing a communications office in Managua. This office will follow-up the contacts we have in all six Central American countries by sending Reformed literature and arranging personal visits.

A number of long range plans are being made for the growth and expansion of our work in Central America. These countries are open to Protestant missions, visas are easily obtained, and the people are receptive to the gospel. Except for Guatemala and the northern part of Honduras where there are a considerable number of Presbyterians there are no Reformed or Presbyterian churches in Central America. Therefore our goal is to establish national churches in each country which will each take the name *Iglesia Cristiana Reformada* but will not be affiliated ecclesiastically with the Christian Reformed Church in North America. Eventually these churches may decide to form one Central American classis or synod of their own. Our emphasis in mission work will be on establishing a sound base for the Reformed faith in Central America. Latin America needs precisely what the Reformed faith has to offer and we feel it is worth the effort to expand our witness in Central America and establish churches which we trust will be lighthouses of Christ's kingdom.

Therefore, *the board has decided to ask synod to enlarge the Central America field to include Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama.*

Grounds:

1. These countries have a great deal of cultural homogeneity and affinity in language.
2. There is openness to the gospel in these countries.
3. There is little of the much-needed Reformed witness in these countries.
4. Treating these countries as a single field gives the board the room to deploy missionary forces where and when needed.

Cuba

All reports from Cuba indicate that the twelve congregations which bear the name Christian Reformed on the island are continuing to hold worship services, witness, and grow. They are served by eight pastors, all of them Cubans, and some contact is maintained with these men by the Board for World Missions.

With the possible improvement of political relations between the United States and Cuba, the board hopes in the near future to be able to send personal representatives to Cuba to visit the pastors and congregations and renew old ties. A considerable amount of Reformed literature was mailed to Cuba by the board this past year, and though not all of it arrived, at least some books were received and are proving to be a blessing.

When the doors to Cuba open to us again, and we believe they will soon, it will be a great revelation to us all to see how Reformed churches have survived and grown under Communist domination. We will have an obligation to our Cuban brothers to share with them afresh Reformed insights and vision. And they will minister to us also, testifying to their faith and perseverance, and perhaps teaching us more than we can teach them.

Mexico

Geographically, Mexico is a big country, and Christian Reformed missionaries have been laboring in widely separated areas. Far to the southeast, in the Yucatan Peninsula, the Rev. and Mrs. Larry Roberts and more recently, Mr. and Mrs. Bert Block, are engaged in teaching and evangelistic ministry among people who are mainly Maya Indians. At the extreme opposite side of Mexico, the northwest corner, four Christian Reformed families are working to plant churches and reach the burgeoning population of Baja California with the gospel. These four families are Mr. and Mrs. John De Young, the Rev. and Mrs. Orlin Hogan, Mr. and Mrs. Abe Marcus, and the Rev. and Mrs. Robert Ruis.

In south-central Mexico, in and around Mexico City, the greatest concentration of missionary families is found. The Rev. and Mrs. David Doyle, Dr. and Mrs. Derk Oostendorp, and the Rev. and Mrs. Gerald Nyenhuis teach at the Juan Calvino Seminary. Miss Winabelle

Gritter also lives in Mexico City and is engaged in teaching and writing materials for the extension program. The extension program is designed to train church leaders in theology and evangelism without dislocating them from their normal place of work and service, nor requiring that they give up their regular employment in order to go to school. More than 150 persons are enrolled in this program.

Three other important ministries in Mexico City are church establishment in the crowded urban barrios, film and literature outreach in the downtown area, and the Christian School for missionary children. Rev. and Mrs. Donald Lagerwey are involved in an extensive urban church-planting program by means of numerous centers of worship and training located throughout Mexico City. Mr. and Mrs. Jack Roeda work in the literature and film ministry which includes eight attractive and well-stocked Christian bookstores. Their evangelistic film ministry is being used to confront thousands with the gospel who would not come to hear the message in a Protestant church. The Christian School for missionary children has been under the supervision of Mrs. Cathy Silva this past year, and was staffed by Mr. Nick Kroeze and volunteer teachers.

For fifteen years, our board has worked in Mexico in cooperation with the Independent Presbyterian Church. (See Acts of Synod 1964, p. 196 for the Statement of Agreement with the IPC of Mexico.) When our board entered into a working agreement with the IPC, that denomination had only seven pastors, all of them of retirement age, and its seminary had its name, the "Seminario Juan Calvino," a constitution and a school song, but only a few part-time students and no organized faculty. After fifteen years of missionary teaching at the seminary and various forms of assistance from our mission, the IPC now has twenty-two ministers, with others soon to be ordained. As a denomination it is able and ready to assume the responsibility of directing its own program of theological education and internal affairs.

At a meeting of the Central Presbytery earlier this year, IPC leaders indicated that they desired to redefine their relation with the mission and take over many of the duties which missionaries had been performing. This development is evidence that the IPC has now entered a new day of maturity and responsibility. What the implications will be as far as the deployment of our missionary personnel is concerned cannot yet be determined. But there are many areas of Mexico which still need to be evangelized, and these will be investigated as new plans are made.

Puerto Rico

Our missionary staff in Puerto Rico now stands at five families. The Rev. and Mrs. Arnold Rumph and the Rev. and Mrs. Merle Den Bleyker are living and working in the San Juan area, where both men teach at the Evangelical Reformed Seminary established two years ago by our mission. The newest additions to the Puerto Rico staff, the Rev. and Mrs. Arie Leder, are presently in language school in Costa Rica. They too will be assigned to the seminary faculty.

The Rev. and Mrs. Ronald Sprik and the Rev. and Mrs. Frank Pott are engaged in church-planting evangelism. The Potts work in the

Greater San Juan district and the Spriks are located on the eastern end of the island, in the city of Fajardo.

As a result of our mission's efforts, three churches have been organized in Puerto Rico and several additional congregations are being formed. The goal is to dot the island with *Iglesias Cristiana Reformadas*, and at the same time train an adequate leadership for these churches.

The question of statehood for Puerto Rico was raised with fresh vigor this past year. Should this occur sometime in the future, the churches begun by our mission in all likelihood would become part of the Christian Reformed Church in the United States and Canada. The fact that we are developing a first-rate Reformed seminary in the Spanish language in Puerto Rico suggests a number of interesting possibilities. In view of the rapid growth of the Spanish population on the North American mainland, a school such as this could serve our denomination well.

Spanish Literature Committee

The mandate of the Spanish Literature Committee is to prepare and publish Reformed literature in Spanish in response to the needs of Christian Reformed home and foreign missionaries and pastors and congregations that use the Spanish language. Consequently, the committee cooperates with both domestic and overseas workers and denominational agencies such as the Back to God Hour which have Spanish language ministries.

The composition of the Spanish Literature Committee reflects the inter-agency and international character of its work. The Rev. Peter Borgdorff represents the Home Mission Board and the Spanish language churches of the CRC in this country. The Rev. Juan Boonstra, himself a native of Argentina, represents the Back to God Hour and its Spanish ministry. Professor William Hendricks, Professor of Education at Calvin College, represents the Board of Publications and the Education Committee. Professor Elsa Cortina of the Spanish department of Calvin College is a member-at-large, as is also Mr. Herman Baker, president of Baker Book House and the committee's chief adviser on various publication questions. Dr. Roger Greenway represents the Board for World Missions and serves as general coordinator of the committee's work. The Rev. Jerry Pott, veteran missionary to Argentina and Mexico, is employed part time as the committee's editorial supervisor.

As for output, this has been the greatest year so far for the Spanish Literature Committee. The committee has published an average of nearly one book a month, and projects an even better average by the end of 1977. Though it operates with minimal staff and overhead, the committee feels that the program is going well. Goals are clearly defined, committee members are committed to the program and bring to the meetings a high level of expertise, and the need for Reformed literature at home and overseas continues to inspire broader vision and expanded output.

In its choice of books to be published, the committee gives priority to Reformed works written by people of our own denomination. For exam-

ple, several of the works of Dr. Anthony Hoekema have been translated and published, and one of the committee's current major projects is the translation of Dr. William Hendriksen's New Testament commentaries. Professor William Hendrick's book, *God's Temples*, came off the press in Spanish this past year, as well as several other works published by the National Union of Christian Schools. Synod's Report on Pentecostalism has also been translated by the committee and will be available in Spanish by the end of the year.

The printing of this Spanish material has all been done at our denominational printing plant. Distribution has been mainly through The Evangelical Literature League, popularly known as TELL. Last year, in conjunction with TELL, the committee sponsored a trip through Latin America by missionary Jack Roeda for the purpose of expanding distribution and keeping in touch with the needs and requirements of the literature market. The trip was highly successful and a similar trip is planned for later this year.

The members of the Spanish Literature Committee have been struggling with the question of possibly asking synod to expand the committee's mandate to include other languages. Needs exist in other major languages for the same books which the committee publishes in Spanish, and perhaps good stewardship and efficiency would call for a global strategy for Reformed literature and an expanded committee mandate. All this is still at the discussion stage and no recommendation is being presented by the committee at this time.

The budgetary needs of the Spanish Literature Committee are increasing as the program grows, and therefore the committee comes to synod with the request that quota support be increased from fifty cents per family to one dollar in 1978. The grounds for this request are as follows: 1) The number of books being translated and published has steadily increased over the past two years, though quota support has remained at fifty cents. The committee will not be able to meet its obligations in 1978 unless the quota support is increased. 2) The Spanish Literature Committee does not solicit offerings or private contributions over and above the synodical quota, and therefore depends entirely on the quota for the cost of its operation. 3) Due to inflation, production costs are rising, and our printing estimates on books presently being translated probably will be greater in 1978 than anticipated. 4) The Hendriksen commentary series is a major undertaking and the first volumes will be ready in 1977. 5) The committee needs to make certain expenditures in order to provide better channels of distribution overseas, such as the trips this year and last of Mr. Roeda to Latin America.

It should be pointed out also that the committee makes its publications available on the Latin American market at below-cost prices so that the people who need the books can afford to buy them.

The committee thanks synod for the privilege of serving the denomination and particularly the Spanish-speaking churches in this way, and for the quota support which the people of the Christian Reformed Church so faithfully provide.

Section Six
Financial Matters

A. Treasurer's Report

The following are summary statements of balance sheets and receipts and disbursements of the general fund at the close of September 30, 1976, as prepared by our auditor. A detailed account of all transactions, as of December 31, 1976, will be presented to the budget committee of synod.

BOARD FOR CHRISTIAN REFORMED WORLD MISSIONS
BALANCE SHEET (WITHOUT AUDIT)
OPERATING FUND
SEPTEMBER 30, 1976

ASSETS

Operating funds (Page 2)		\$ 219
Funds on field and advances to field (Page 2)		600,225
Accounts receivable - missionaries		22,509
Account receivable - Spanish Literature Committee		1,058
Notes receivable		5,000
Investments		10,650
Land contract receivable		13,494
Reserved cash for special projects (Page 2)		134,561
Other assets - Nigeria		
Accounts receivable	\$239,080	
Transfers - other institutions	1,604	
Loans receivable	85,433	
Inventories	365,364	691,481
TOTAL ASSETS		<u>\$1,479,197</u>

LIABILITIES, RESERVES, AND FUND BALANCES

Accounts payable - missionaries		\$ 68,358
Accounts payable - other		38,177
Accrued salaries		3,200
Accounts payable - Nigeria		25,532
Reserves - Nigeria		492,400
Restricted fund balance		
Reserve for special projects (Page 3)	\$123,041	
Reserve for Cuba missions funds (Page 3)	11,520	134,561
Unrestricted fund balance (Page 4)		716,969
TOTAL LIABILITIES, RESERVES, AND FUND BALANCES		<u>\$1,479,197</u>

BOARD FOR CHRISTIAN REFORMED WORLD MISSIONS
STATEMENT OF REVENUES AND EXPENDITURES (WITHOUT AUDIT)
OPERATING FUND
NINE MONTHS ENDED SEPTEMBER 30, 1976

REVENUES		
Classical quotas (Page 6)		\$1,532,641
Missionary support		858,807
Gifts and offerings		
Designated gifts	\$ 143,038	
Non-designated gifts	43,950	
General missions	107,465	
Legacies	101,732	
Above quota offerings	119,751	
Second Protestant Reformed Church receipts	231	516,167
Field receipts		2,170,280
Other operating revenue		3,970
Interest and dividends		20,409
Proceeds - sale of assets		83,341
TOTAL REVENUES		\$5,185,615
EXPENDITURES		
Operating expenditures	\$4,727,522	
Capital expenditures	238,401	4,965,923
EXCESS OF REVENUES OVER EXPENDITURES		\$ 219,692

B. Budget for 1978

A complete list of budget requests for 1978 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 1978

Expenditures

Administration	\$ 400,250
Promotion	190,000
Field Operations:	
Salaries	\$2,147,083
Missionary Services	239,500
Field Expense	1,567,256
Medical Expenses	76,750
Travel and Freight	290,830

Total Field Operations	\$4,321,419	
Capital Expenditures	468,995	
Field Expansion	<u>170,000</u>	
Total Expenditures		<u>\$5,550,664</u>
Estimated Income		
Quota Receipts	\$2,700,000	
Missionary Support/Gifts and Offerings	2,700,000	
Field Receipts (Other than Nigeria)	100,000	
Interest, Dividends, Sale of Assets	<u>50,664</u>	
Total Estimated Income for 1978		<u>\$5,550,664</u>

C. Request for Special Offerings

We are requesting approval of a \$5,550,664 budget for 1978 and a quota amounting to \$2,700,00. The balance of \$2,850,664 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 Board for Christian Reformed World Missions be recommended for one or more special offerings. Therefore, we respectfully request that synod continue the CRWM on the list of denominational causes for one or more offerings during 1978.

D. The board is asking for approval of a quota of \$45.75 per family for 1978.

Section Seven

Summary of Items Requiring Synodical Action

1. Approval of board members and alternates, Section One A.
2. Election of members-at-large, Section One, A.
3. Reappointment of Executive Secretary, Section One, H.
4. Representation at synod, Section One, E.
5. Presentation of missionaries, Section One, F.
6. Relationships with CRWRC, Section Two, B.
7. Delegations from Abroad, Section Two, C.
8. Mission Order Revision, Section Two, D.
9. Major World Languages Study Committee, Section Two, E.
10. Bangladesh, Section Four, B,4.
11. Australia, Section Four, B,4.
12. Central America Field, Section Five.
13. Quota, Spanish Literature Committee, Section Five.
14. Financial Matters, Budget for 1978, Section Six, B.
15. Financial Matters, Request for Special Offerings, Section Six, C.
16. Financial Matters, Request for Quota, Section Six, D.

Board for Christian Reformed World Missions
Eugene Rubingh, Executive Secretary

REPORT 3-A
BOARD FOR CHRISTIAN REFORMED WORLD MISSIONS
(Arts. 25, 56)

The Board for Christian Reformed World Missions presents the following as a supplement to its report to the Synod of 1977.

1. *Statistical Information*

In accord with a synodical decision (Article 48, 1974) the Board of World Missions presents on the following pages a large amount of data compiled on the fields in which our missionaries serve. In an increasing number of cases it is difficult to gather accurate information from indigenous churches. In a few cases it was necessary to repeat information from a previous year. Nevertheless, the statistics do indicate that the work of our missionaries and the national churches with whom we are affiliated abroad continue to bear fruit.

2. *Proposed CRWRC Constitution Revision*

Recommendation F of the CRWRC Report to synod requests the deletion of the words "emergency" and "disaster" from certain articles of the CRWRC Constitution. Through such a deletion, the aid given under these articles of the constitution may thereby obtain a long-term or permanent character. The validation of long-termed programmed relief not integrated with a comprehensive word and deed missionary approach raises questions which call for serious consideration.

The Board for World Missions well understands that in emergency or disaster situations the response of the church must be immediate, and cannot always involve a comprehensive address to the needs of the whole person. CRWM, however, continues to feel that the programmed or permanent benevolent assistance of the Christian Reformed Churches should address man as a totality in a ministry which combines word and deed and should, therefore, be carried out by means of a unified mission strategy. When synod originally approved the CRWRC Constitution, it took great care to insist on the coordination of the relief and missionary ministries. It is this coordination indeed that manifests a theme central to our Reformed heritage namely the sovereignty of God over all of life. The Board for World Missions, therefore, asks synod not to adopt a suggestion to revise the CRWRC Constitution in such a manner as to validate any separation between word and deed in the ministry of the Christian Reformed Church.

3. *Proposed United Mission Sunday*

The Board for World Missions together with the Back to God Hour, the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee, and the Board of Home Missions has received a proposal for a denomination-wide mission Sunday to be held during September 1977. The proposal was mutually discussed at great length and later drawn up in some detail by Advertising Marketing Group, Inc. as a mutual fund-raising possibility. Synod will

CRWM ANNUAL STATISTICAL REPORT
January 1, 1977

CHURCH

COUNTRIES	National Church Membership			Organization			Ministry			Growth			
	Communicants	Baptized	Total Attenders	Organized Churches	Unorganized Churches	Consistory Members	Ordained Ministers	Unordained Workers	Seminarians	Adult Baptisms 1976	Infant Baptisms 1976	New Worship Centers begun by missionaries	New Worship Centers begun
AFRICA													
Liberia (a)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Nigeria (b)	21,726	NA	201,324	55	1614	NA	77	328	NA	1990	3425	0	NA
ASIA													
Guam	40	21	160	1	1	6	1	0	0	NA	NA	0	0
Japan (e)	1518	560	2078	28	11	NA	32	5	22	55	69	1	1
Philippines (f)	390	374	764	3	7	28	0	6	11	129	154	2	0
Taiwan (g)	615	NA	1300	5	4	32	8	1	0	43	NA	1	0
LATIN AMERICA													
Argentina (h)	882	852	2110	11	14	84	7	4	0	NA	NA	2	NA
Brazil (h)	293	254	920	0	17	0	0	4	0	33	19		1
Cuba (h)	(500)	NA	1111	13	NA	NA	8	0	0	NA	NA	NA	NA
Honduras	90	72	670	2	5	16	1	5	2	37	28		
Mexico	2280	2255	5490	16	92	86	20	50	52	135	125	0	14
Nicaragua	50	20	500	0	6	0	0	4	7	21	20	1	0
Puerto Rico	140	70	340	3	3	21	2	2	3	15	24	0	0
Dominican Republic	70	80	150	1	0	3	1	0	0	NA	NA	0	0

- a. This field was approved by Synod of 1975. The first missionary couple is now on the scene, learning the Bassa language.
- b. It should be noted that the Nigeria statistics are for the Tiv Church (NKST) only. The former EKAS Benue Church, which changed its name to EKAN Benue-Sardauna and then to The Christian Reformed Church of Nigeria, did not make its statistics available.
- c. Not mission-owned, but supported with personnel and/or funding.
- d. The mission is proprietor of five.

MISSION																		
Programs				Mission Personnel														
Seminaries/Bible Institutes	General Education Institutions	Bookstores/Media Centers	Hospitals/Clinics	Ordained Evangelists	Lay Evangelists	Medical Doctors	Nurses/Technicians	Aviation/Administration	Builders/Support	Linguists/Translators	Seminary/Bible Institute	Other Teachers	Radio/Literature Specialists	Total Ordained	Total Unordained	Missionary Wives	Total Regular Missionaries	Volunteers/Short Term
0	0	0	0	3	1	8	15	10	6	2	7	18	3	9	63	46	118	5
8 ^c	10 ^c	9	35 ^d															
0	0	1	0	1	0								1	1	2	3	6	0
1	0	2	0	10								2	1	11	2	13	26	1
1	0	0	0	6	1									6	1	7	14	1
0	0	1	0	2									2	4		4	8	
		1	2	8							1			8		8	16	4
				1	2								3	1	4	4	4	
1				2							1			2		4	8	
5	1	8		5	5						6	2	2	9	5	13	27	
1				1	1									1	1	2	4	
1											2			4		4	8	

- e. These statistics combine the CRC Japan Mission's unorganized churches with the Reformed Church of Japan Eastern Presbytery's statistics, for that part of the Presbytery with which we are working.
- f. Because information on "church" statistics was not received on time, this section has been repeated from 1976.
- g. The Reformed Presbyterian Church of Taiwan has not made these statistics available to us. This section has been repeated from 1976.
- h. Statistics apply to the areas where our missionaries are working, rather than to the entire denomination.

NA - Not Available

apparently be requested to give its blessing to this concept and to the choice of date. CRWM appreciates the opportunity to work in concert with our fellow denominational agencies, and has given the plan serious consideration. The following decision was thereupon taken and forwarded to synod:

It was decided to accept the proposal for a united mission Sunday on which a combined promotional thrust may be made. CRWM judges that early March 1978 would be the most propitious time for this Sunday, and that the commitment made be for one year only. Thorough analysis must be made to determine a possible subsequent participation, and this analysis will take into consideration the cost involved, the immediate return and the impact on total returns for the year. Concern was expressed, however, that the right of the individual giver to give to the cause of his choice be preserved and not be swallowed up in a general mission appeal. The specific mandates of each agency should not be lost in a common drive which might by its size and control eventually pre-empt distinctive appeals.

In addition to the qualifications mentioned above, CRWM expresses dissent with the concept of a pledged giving program spread out over a period of time and cannot participate if the pledge system is used. The entire program is based on the thrust of a single Sunday devoted to giving for missions. This project, therefore, should not be designed around the pledge system or around long-term faith-promise giving, but ought to be a one-time cash offering for the mission enterprise.

In summary, CRWM expresses its commitment to cooperative ventures in mission and its willingness to participate in the proposal with the qualifications mentioned above.

Board for Christian Reformed World Missions,
Eugene Rubingh, Executive Secretary

REPORT 4

CHRISTIAN REFORMED BOARD OF HOME MISSIONS

(Arts. 22, 29)

I. INTRODUCTION

“The Lord reigns, let the earth rejoice” (Psalm 97:1). The truth of God’s sovereign rule provides both the foundation and the context for the work of Home Missions. This foundation is solid and the context is reassuring. Knowing we live in the days of the coming of God’s kingdom, we celebrate as we work. This celebration includes singing before God and proclaiming to other people. “Sing to the Lord, bless his name; tell of his salvation from day to day. Declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous works among all the peoples!” (Psalm 96:2, 3).

The Board of Home Missions has been mandated by synod to give leadership to the denomination in its task of proclaiming salvation to the various people of Canada and the United States. These two leading nations of the Western world historically have had much contact with Christianity, include within their boundaries thousands of Christian people in many good churches, yet both nations reflect many distressing developments. Public and private virtue have declined and there are many indications of moral breakdown in our society. There continue to be forms of godliness, but the power is generally lacking. There are certain signs of spiritual revival, yet it is obvious that there is little realization of the glorious truth that God has conquered sin in his Son and now there is abundant life for human beings who by God’s grace become citizens of his kingdom, which kingdom is a present reality, is increasing and someday will be complete. The kingdom is coming and the King is coming again.

The responsibility of communicating this gospel of the kingdom to a society which is superficially Christian and living in a confused religious scene, is a difficult one. The challenge for our denomination with its Reformed heritage is to give clear articulation to the Gospel message and authentic expression to the kingdom.

Home Missions is seeking to give leadership in this task in a two-fold way. Through its evangelism function, the board offers assistance to all the congregations of the denomination in meeting their responsibility to proclaim the gospel to the non-Christians in their own communities. Efforts are made to stimulate interest and provide training to the churches. The evangelism task of Home Missions is narrow in its focus, but it extends to the entire denomination.

On home mission fields, the board has a mission task which is a more intensive responsibility than evangelism. Mission involves all that God sends his people into the world to do. The field activity of the board can be divided into two basic categories. These are 1) church or congregation planting and 2) specialized ministries. Situations vary and the people among whom the missionaries work are of various backgrounds

and nations, but in each place the goal is to clearly articulate and appropriately demonstrate the truth of the kingdom of God.

The board at its February meeting considered a comprehensive planning report titled "SEED 1977." This report, which was prepared by the staff and Regional Home Missionaries, identifies various areas of concern and things that need attention. It then outlines steps that can be taken to address these needs. The SEED Report provides a framework in which the board members make their decisions. It provides a way in which the board may set directions as well as monitor the progress that is made in a given year. In the SEED process there is opportunity for input from Home Missions personnel. A copy of the SEED Report is available to anyone in the denomination upon request, and comments are welcome.

Home Missions with its many people and its sizable budget is a big operation. Its organizational relationships with committees, classes, consistories, boards and agencies are complex. Its operation at times is quite complicated. This report reflects something of the organization and its outreach and is intended to give the denomination an overview. The report, however, does not do justice to the many significant things that are happening where the church in its mission is meeting the world. People are being loved, sinners are being converted, believers are being obedient, the church is being built, the kingdom is coming and God is being glorified. Nor does this report show the depths of personal problems, the disappointments and the struggles which are so much a part of the struggle against the powers of the darkness and which are daily reminders of our need of God's grace.

II. THE BOARD

The board which consists of a delegate from each of the 38 classes plus 11 board members-at-large, met February 22-24, 1977. The executive committee meets each month.

A. *Officers of the Board*

Rev. Edward J. Knott, president
 Rev. Herman Hoekstra, vice-president
 Rev. John G. Van Ryn, executive secretary
 Rev. Roger G. Timmerman, assistant secretary
 Mr. Gerard J. Borst, treasurer
 Mr. Jack Van Eerden, assistant treasurer

B. *Sub-Committees of the Executive Committee*

Administration Committee: Rev. E. Knott, Rev. H. Hoekstra, Rev. R. Timmerman, Mr. J. Van Eerden
 Evangelism Committee: Rev. R. Hartwell, Rev. E. Cooke, Rev. P. Kranenburg, Rev. A. Machiela, Mr. H. Nieman
 Finance Committee: Mr. J. Van Eerden, Mr. R. DeVos, Mr. E. Berends, Mr. M. VanDellen
 Fields Committee 1 (Indian): Rev. T. Verseput, Rev. B. Mulder, Rev. E. Knott, Miss G. VanderArk

Fields Committee 2 (Minorities & Youth): Rev. J. Ebbers, Rev. W. VandenBosch, Rev. R. Timmerman, Mr. G. VanderBie

Fields Committee 3 (Regular): Rev. H. Hoekstra, Rev. G. Rozenboom, Rev. W. Swets

Personnel Committee: The Administrative Staff

III. STAFF

A. Personnel

Executive Secretary, Rev. John G. Van Ryn

Minister of Evangelism, Rev. Wesley Smedes

Treasurer, Mr. Gerard J. Borst

Fields Secretary, Rev. Peter Borgdorff

Personnel Secretary, Rev. Duane E. VanderBrug

Church Relations, Mr. Stanley Koning

Associate Minister of Evangelism, Rev. Henry De Rooy

Accountant, Mr. Howard Meyers

Special Assignment - Evangelism, Rev. Milton Doornbos

B. Team

For several years the office staff was involved in transition which included realignment in responsibility and changes in personnel. Now for two years there has been opportunity to come to understand the inter-relationships and to grow into a team. This has resulted in a more efficient operation, which benefits the churches and the Home Mission fields.

While not actually a member of the staff, the Rev. Milton Doornbos has been working out of the Grand Rapids office and developing a program for congregational evangelism training. He expects to complete his assignment in 1978, when the responsibility for the program will be turned over to the Minister of Evangelism.

In 1975 synod appointed the Rev. Peter Borgdorff as Fields Secretary and the Rev. Duane VanderBrug as Personnel Secretary. These men have both served well. Evaluations of their work were done by the Administration Committee and the board now requests that synod reappoint them.

C. Reappointments

1. The board recommends that synod reappoint Peter Borgdorff as Fields Secretary for the Board of Home Missions. (He is completing an initial two-year term and is now eligible for a second term of four years.)

2. The board recommends that synod reappoint Duane VanderBrug as Personnel Secretary for the Board of Home Missions. (He is completing an initial two-year term and is now eligible for a second term of four years.)

IV. FIELDS

A. General Information

All ministries which receive support from the Board of Home Missions are classified as fields. These are divided into two categories:

popularly called either Board of Home Mission fields or Grant-In-Aid fields. The scope of the ministry involved ranges from new congregations in the cities, suburbs, and reservations to specialized ministries in schools, Servicemen's Homes, and harbors.

These ministries are performed in 135 different locations, involving 225 full-time personnel. By means of visits, reports, and reviews, these ministries are supervised by the Board of Home Missions and the Classical Home Missions Committees in their respective classes.

B. Regional Home Missionaries

Immediate supervision and consultation is provided by the Regional Home Missionaries through the coordination of the Field Secretary. The present Regional Home Missionaries are:

Rocky Mountain	Rev. Dirk Aardsma of Denver, Colorado
Mid-East	Rev. Paul Vermaire of Kalamazoo, Michigan
Canada	Rev. John Van Til of London, Ontario
East	Rev. Ron Peterson of Hawthorne, New Jersey
West	Rev. John Rozeboom of Newark, California
Southwest	Rev. Earl Dykema of Gallup, New Mexico

C. Listing of Present Fields and Staff

1. Church Planting:

Albuquerque, NM - Valley	Rev. A. Veltkamp
Anchorage, AK	Rev. D. Recker
Atlanta, GA	Rev. F. MacLeod
Bakersfield, CA	Rev. N. VanderZee
Boulder, CO	Rev. R. Westenbroek
Brigham City, UT	Rev. E. Boer, Mrs. L. Steve
Cedar Rapids, IA	(vacant)
Champaign, IL (and campus)	Rev. A. Menninga
Chicago, IL - Amer. Indian	Mr. H. Bielema
Chicago, IL - Hyde Park	Rev. P. Han
Church Rock, NM	Rev. A. Begay
Cochrane, ON	Rev. J. Binnema
Corvallis, OR	Rev. H. Spaan
Crownpoint, NM	Rev. G. Stuit, Mr. H. Begay
- San Antone	Mr. A. Becenti
- Toyee	
- Whitehorse Lake	
Davenport, IA	Rev. S. VanderJagt
Dayton, OH	Rev. J. Hollebeek
Denver, CO - Evangelical Concern	(vacant)
Detroit, MI	Rev. J. Steigenga, Mr. R. Ballard
East Grand Forks, MN	Rev. L. Slings
East Islip, NY	Rev. A. Likkel
El Paso, TX	Rev. J. Berends
Farmington, NM	Rev. S. Yazzie, Mr. G. Verhulst
Flagstaff, AZ	Rev. S. DeVries
Flanders Valley, NJ	Rev. J. Vander Ark
Fort Collins, CO	Rev. L. VanEssen
Fort McMurray, AB	Rev. W. Smit
Fort Wayne, IN	Rev. E. Holkeboer
Fort Wingate, NM	(vacant), Mr. W. Matthyse
Fredericton, NB	Rev. A. VandenEnde
Fresno, CA	Rev. J. Vigh

- Gallup, NM
 Greeley, CO
 Hoboken, NJ
 Honolulu, HI (& Hospitality Hs.)
 Indian Harbour Beach, FL
 Iowa City, IA
 Jacksonville, FL
 Kamloops, BC
 LaCrosse, WI
 Los Angeles, CA - Anaheim
 Los Angeles - Crenshaw
 Mason City, IA
 Meadowvale, ON
 Miami, FL - Good Samaritan
 Naschitti, NM
 Navajo, NM
 New Glasgow, NS
 Norfolk, VA (& servicemen's hm.)
 Ogdon, UT
 Olympia, WA
 Red Rock, AZ
 Rehoboth, NM
 Riverside, CA
 St. Louis, MO
 Salt Lake City, UT (and Bible Academy)
 Salt Lake City, UT - Indian
 San Francisco, CA - Friendship Hs.
 San Francisco, CA - Golden Gate
 Sanostee, NM
 Shiprock, NM
 South Windsor, CT
 Springfield/Northern Virginia
 Syracuse, NY
 Teec Nos Pos, AZ
 Terre Haute, IN
 Toadlena, NM
 Tohatchi, NM
 Tohlakai, NM
 Tri-Cities, WA
 Tucson, AZ
 Wappingers Falls, NY
 Washington, PA
 Webster, NY
 Window Rock, AZ
 Windsor, ON
 Yakima, WA
 Zuni, NM (and school)
- Rev. A. Mulder, Miss E. Vos
 Rev. D. VanOyen
 (vacant)
 (vacant); Rev. G. Boerfyn
 (vacant)
 Rev. A. Helder
 Rev. H. Karsten
 Rev. D. Tigchelaar
 Rev. J. Oosterhouse
 Rev. C. Nyenhuis
 Mr. S. Jung, Dr. D. Yu
 Rev. M. DeYoung
 Rev. H. Lunshof
 Rev. F. Diemer, Mrs. S. Menchaca
 (vacant), Mr. A. Henry
 Mr. S. Siebersma
 Rev. A. Dreise
 Rev. J. Rickers, Mr. R. Klunder
 Rev. W. Heersink, Mr. T. Koeman
 Rev. S. Workman, Rev. H. DeJong
 Mr. B. Garnanez
 Rev. R. Veenstra
 (vacant)
 Rev. W. Stroo
 Rev. A. Kuiper, Mr. A. Sprik
 Mr. N. Jonkman
 Rev. D. Klompeen, Mr. W. Greenfield,
 Mr. P. Goudzwaard
 Rev. P. Yang
 Mr. F. Curley
 Rev. A. Koolhaas, Mr. C. J. Brummel,
 Mr. B. Benally
 Rev. P. Mans
 Rev. W. Ribbens
 Rev. W. DeVries
 Rev. P. Redhouse, Mr. J. Talley
 Rev. P. Brink
 Mr. G. Klumpenhower, Mr. F. Frank
 Rev. E. Henry, Mr. H. Redhouse
 Mr. M. Harberts
 Rev. H. Bouma, Miss L. Engelsman
 Rev. O. Buus
 Rev. B. Mensink
 Rev. A. VanWyhe
 Dr. J. VanderLaan
 Mr. C. Grey
 Rev. P. Hogeterp
 Rev. A. DeVries
 Rev. R. Posthuma, Mr. R. Chimoni
 Mr. G. Bruxvoort, Mr. G. DeVries,
 Mr. J. Kamps, Miss W. VanKlomp-
 enberg, Mrs. L. VanVoorthuisjen, Mr.
 T. VanVoorthuisjen
 Rev. T. Limburg
 Rev. S. VerHeul
 Rev. E. Lewis
 Rev. J. Natelborg
 Rev. J. Chen
 Rev. W. Dykstra
2. Specialized Ministries:
 Appalachia (with CRWRC)
 Boulder, CO - campus
 Columbus, OH - campus
 Detroit, MI - campus
 Iowa City, IA - campus
 Kingston, ON - campus

Lafayette, IN - campus
 London, ON - campus
 Los Angeles, CA - campus
 Madison, WI - campus
 Minneapolis, MN - campus
 Paterson, NJ - campus
 Phoenix, AZ - Cook Chr.
 Training School
 Rehoboth, NM - Religious Ed.
 Rehoboth, NM - school

Rev. T. Van't Land
 Rev. J. Westerhof
 Rev. H. DeYoung
 Rev. R. Palsrok
 Rev. B. Becksvoot
 Rev. K. VanderWall

(vacant)

Mr. T. Weeda, Miss H. Nyhof
Houseparents: Mr. and Mrs. M. Apol,
 Miss J. Ensink, Mr. & Mrs. R.
 Kamps, Mr. & Mrs. S. Gonzales, Mr.
 & Mrs. J. Lee, Mr. & Mrs. R. Sieb-
 ersma

Dining & Kitchen staff: Mr. W.
 Hoekstra, Miss N. DeKlein, Mr. R.
 Kerr

Educational staff: Mr. K. Kuipers,
 Mr. R. Polinder, Mrs. A. Boyd, Miss
 E. Begay, Mr. T. Charles, Mr. J. De-
 Korne, Mr. K. Faber, Miss M. Feyen,
 Miss L. Helland, Mr. J. Jaspere, Mr.
 C. Kloosterman, Mr. R. Onderlinde,
 Mr. S. Pikaart, Mr. W. Vander
 Hoven, Mr. M. VanderSluis, Miss R.
 Vander Woude, Mr. E. Yazzie

Custodian: Mr. J. Stevens

Industrial staff: Mr. E. Oppenhuizen,
 Mr. T. Tibboel, Mr. J. DenBleyker,
 Mr. A. Bosscher, Mr. J. Harkema,
 Mr. W. Benally, Mrs. V. Henry

Mr. D. Rottenberg

Rev. M. Nieboer

Rev. J. Veenstra

Dr. R. Kooistra

San Diego, CA - Servicemen's Home
 Tempe, AZ - campus
 Toronto, ON - campus
 Waterloo/Guelph, ON - campus

D. 1976 in Review

Three new ministries were initiated during the year: Fort McMurray, Alberta; Kamloops, British Columbia; and Meadowvale (Toronto), Ontario. All have made an excellent beginning. In 1976 it was decided to open Navajo, New Mexico. Work in this developing Indian community was begun in 1977. Our church in Hayward, California, graduated to Stage Four and is no longer under the Board of Home Missions.

The existing ministries too have been blessed. The following statistical summary provides an overview of these blessings.

Number of families in Home Mission churches (denominational fields only)	1,611
Non-member families attending	circa 400
Member and non-member individuals attending	circa 600
Infant baptisms	171
Adult baptisms	39
Professions of faith	119
Reaffirmations of faith and transfers from other denominations	145

Note: These statistics do not include information on GIA fields, since these have been counted, in many cases, in the statistics of the sponsoring church. Neither does this table reflect the estimated 1200-1500 attendees at campus ministry services each week.

E. *New Fields*

At its annual meeting in February the board was asked to begin work in a number of places. It approved the following:

1. Boise, Idaho: The capital of Idaho is a city of nearly 150,000 people. Several families have indicated an interest in beginning a ministry there. For almost a decade, our denomination has explored the possibility of planting a church here. Now seems to be the time to begin.
2. Chinatown/Los Angeles, California: The Home Missions church of Crenshaw has been working with refugees from South Viet Nam. Many of these people have responded to the gospel and a new congregation has been started. These Chinese-speaking people are now meeting in Chinatown where they hope to minister to people of similar cultural backgrounds, believing that God will add to his church there.
3. Columbia, Missouri: Located between Kansas City and St. Louis, this field has been under consideration for several years. A number of families have indicated an interest in beginning a Christian Reformed Church. The population of the city is presently 65,000 and it is rapidly growing. It provides a good opportunity to do mission work.
4. Fairfield, California: Located about 50 miles northeast of San Francisco, this city is strategically located. Work will begin here as soon as funds are available.
5. Guelph, Ontario: Formerly Dr. Remkes Kooistra conducted a campus ministry in Waterloo and Guelph. The response to his efforts has been such that it is no longer possible for him to serve both areas. He will continue to work in Waterloo while another campus pastor will be sought for the University of Guelph, an agricultural school.
6. First Christian Reformed Church, Los Angeles, California: The consistory of First Church requested that it become a Home Missions church in order to more adequately address itself to the needs of its changing community. The board accepted this challenge. A five-year time limit was agreed upon as an adequate period for testing the ministry of reaching that area. Continuing involvement will be evaluated at that time.

F. *Nardin Park - Union Church Request*

The Community Christian Reformed Church of Detroit and the Nardin Park Reformed Church have been worshipping and working together during the past year. The Rev. John Steigenga, one of our Home Missionaries, has been serving as the minister. They meet in the building of the Nardin Park Reformed Church. These two congregations now desire to become a single congregation with membership in both the Reformed and the Christian Reformed Denominations. The Reformed Church of America allows such union churches. The request of Nardin Park has been endorsed by Classis Lake Erie and was sent to the Board of Home Missions. Though the Christian Reformed group there is under the supervision of our board, we are not in any position to approve this request since there are no provisions for such under the Church Order and synod has never addressed itself to this. We hereby request synod to

address itself to the question of union churches by referring the question to an appropriate study committee. We make this request since a local church desires to enter into a union church and a classis has endorsed the concept.

G. Grants-In-Aid: Recommendations for July 1, 1977 - June 30, 1978.

Synod is requested to approve the following Grants-In-Aid:

1. Committee 1

Renewals:

Denver/Chr. Indian Center.....	\$ 8,700
Winnipeg/Indian.....	\$ 500

2. Committee 2

Renewals:

Ames, IA.....	\$ 3,500
Bellingham, WA.....	\$ 5,000-(1)
B.C. Harbor Ministry.....	\$ 4,500-(2)
Chicago/Lawndale.....	\$ 9,000
Chicago/Pullman.....	\$ 8,500
Denver/Sun Valley.....	\$ 7,750-(3)
Edmonton, AB (campus).....	\$ 8,000
Hamilton, ON (campus).....	\$ 5,000
Montreal Harbor Ministry.....	\$ 4,500
Mount Pleasant, MI.....	\$ 5,500
Muskegon/East.....	\$ 6,000 (\$7,000 if ordained)
Paterson/Madison Ave.....	\$10,500-(4)
Paterson/Northside.....	\$10,000-(5)
Roseland Chr. Ministries Center.....	\$10,000
Sacramento, CA.....	\$10,500-(6)
Toronto Lighthouse.....	\$ 9,000
Vermillion, SD.....	\$ 5,500
Youth Evangelism Services.....	\$ 2,500

New Requests:

Denver/Evangelical Concern.....	\$11,000
Orange Korean.....	\$10,000-(7)

NOTES:

1. With the provision that the Bellingham church and Classis Pacific Northwest be encouraged to assume a greater share of the ministry expense in subsequent years.

2. Five hundred dollars of this is for a summer student.

3. With the understanding that in subsequent years every effort be made to obtain classical support.

4. With the understanding that the Eastern Home Mission Board will be requested to increase its financial participation in the ministry.

5. With the understanding that the Eastern Home Mission Board will be requested to participate financially in this ministry.

6. This Grant-In-Aid is not to be used simultaneously with an intern.

7. Subject to favorable action relative to this request and the church as a whole by Classis California South.

3. Committee 3

Renewals:

Adrian, MI.....	\$ 8,000
Appleton, WI.....	\$ 6,000
Cape Coral, FL.....	\$ 3,000-(1)
Colorado Springs, CO.....	\$ 7,650
Dallas, TX.....	\$ 8,500

Kalamazoo/Lexington Green.....	\$ 3,000
Owego, NY.....	\$ 7,000
Richfield Springs, NY.....	\$10,750
Riverdrive Park, ON.....	\$ 2,500-(2)
St. Cloud, MN.....	\$ 7,000
Vanastra, ON.....	\$ 3,600
Winter Haven, FL.....	\$ 6,000

New Requests:

Gaylord, MI.....	\$ 7,500-(3)
Salem, OR.....	\$ 4,000-(4)
Toronto/Rehoboth, ON.....	\$ 6,600
Visalia, CA.....	\$ 5,000-(5)
Winnipeg/Hope.....	\$ 6,000-(6)

NOTES:

1. If the Cape Coral CRC becomes organized and receives support from FNC, no GIA funds will be expended.
2. As per decreasing scale decided by Synod of 1974.
3. With the understanding that this be phased out over five years at a rate of \$1,500 per year.
5. With the understanding that this be a four-year phase out.
6. With the understanding that this be a five-year phase out.

V. PERSONNEL

Christian mission is for people and by people for the sake of Jesus Christ. Two hundred thirty-five persons and their families are sustained in their mission to people by the financial gifts and prayers of God's people. Eighty percent of the Home Mission budget is for direct labor.

For its personnel, the board seeks persons uniquely gifted for the work of mission, who are able to keep a Reformed mission vision, and who have insight to translate the gospel into the stuff of real life.

The board also has been willing to provide resources by which its personnel can retain and grow in their mission competence. Both in the securing and continual training of personnel, mission fields are taken seriously. The field must initially state its expectations of the missionary it is seeking. Once the missionary is on a field, the field must endorse all training the missionary receives.

FIVE MAJOR PERSONNEL CONCERNS of the board are as follows:

A. FIELD STAFFING—*giving adequate counsel to vacant fields in the search for a (new) missionary.*

To achieve this, various instruments in a booklet entitled "Search" were developed and are being field-tested. The booklet contains detailed outlines of procedures and responsibilities for the calling/selecting process.

B. PERSONNEL RECRUITING—*seeking competent, committed personnel for Home Missions.*

With the assistance of written materials and many personal contacts by the staff, Regional Home Missionaries, and some board members, many choice personnel have begun with board programs this year.

Recognizing the special need of recruiting minority persons for mission service, the board has authorized the recruiting of minority per-

sonnel for work-study positions. The purpose of these positions is to provide mutual opportunity to become acquainted with each other in a working ministry relationship. These positions will be for initial six-month periods and the persons will work closely with qualified ministers who will supervise their work and study.

- C. *PERSONNEL ASSESSMENT*—*increasing effectiveness of missionaries by providing periodic assessments of the missionary's personal and professional growth.*

During the past four years nearly all Home Missions personnel have gone through the process of assessment. The "Personnel Assessment Policy" approved by synod in 1976 is now being used. Results have been overwhelmingly positive with many people greatly benefited.

- D. *PERSONNEL TRAINING*—*providing training in mission skills and effectiveness.*

Regional conferences on the teaching ministry were held in cooperation with Calvin Theological Seminary. Board employees have one week per year along with a small amount of financial support to obtain training that is individualized to their remedial or enrichment needs. For a new person who accepts a call/appointment to a field, orientation training is provided should the person need additional skills in beginning the work.

- E. *VOLUNTEER PERSONNEL*—*encouraging and promoting volunteer service by denominational laity.*

Approximately twenty persons were placed in the Long-Term Volunteer Program this past year. With the assistance of a volunteer, a preliminary proposal is being drafted for a joint committee called "VISION" (Volunteers Information, Service, Interests, Opportunities, and Needs). By means of this committee, for which a fall 1977 operational date is projected, it is hoped that many more volunteers with a variety of skills will be challenged to offer their service in the cause of mission.

VI. EVANGELISM

Evangelism is an indispensable aspect of the mission of the church. By the mission of the church we mean the total ministry the church has been mandated to carry on in the world toward the establishment of the kingdom of God in every area of human life.

Evangelism itself is the telling of the good news concerning Jesus Christ in order to build God's kingdom.

- . . . The good news has been revealed to us in Holy Scripture, God's inspired, infallible Word.
- . . . The good news is the story of God's gracious and mighty works to save sinners.
- . . . The good news is God's good news concerning Jesus Christ, his Son, who made atonement for our sins through his death on the cross, who was buried and who arose again the third day for our justification.
- . . . The good news calls upon sinners to repent and to believe in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord and to unite with the church,

the community of God's people, to be taught to live as obedient citizens of the kingdom of God.

The telling of God's good news is to be done in the power of the Holy Spirit.

The telling of God's good news is to be done in the context of a demonstration of the gospel's power in the lives and through the community of believers.

The telling of God's good news is done with the confidence that God's Word is effective and that God will indeed bring to Christ all who are his own.

The telling of God's good news is the task of the church, each member using the gifts God has given in this redemptive work.

The Board of Home Missions, having the mandate to assist our churches and their members in the task of telling the good news, does this by providing education, training, materials, consultation and research. The following is a sample of some of these activities. More information about these is available through the Minister of Evangelism.

A. *Education*

1. Seminars on the Growing Church, designed for church leaders, were conducted in twenty-five regions and more are being planned. The seminars center on what the church ought to "expect," "be" or "do" in order to grow.
2. REACH, a bimonthly newsletter with practical ideas, is sent to all pastors and evangelism committees.
3. Three issues of HOME MISSIONS NEWS/EVANGELISM IN NORTH AMERICA were distributed to all families of the denomination during the past year. The purpose of this newspaper is to report what is being done in our churches and on Home Mission fields to proclaim the good news.

B. *Training*

Evangelism Committee Workshops are designed to provide workable, transferable program ideas for evangelism committees and concerned leaders.

1. Assistance was provided classes in two areas during the past year.
2. "Witnessing Where You Are Conferences" are designed for the total membership of the church focusing on the privilege of every Christian identifying himself with Jesus Christ, in a natural way, wherever he is. Four were conducted in response to requests.
3. "Congregational Evangelism Training" is on-the-job training in evangelism, enabling persons to present the good news of Jesus Christ effectively to others. The program provides an intensive one-week seminar for pastors and laity along with assistance to begin the training program in the local churches of those who attend. In 1976 training was provided for forty-four churches, with five churches receiving additional training. Two SWIM teams were also trained. Plans are in progress to establish training centers in four areas of the country to better serve the denomination.

4. A program of "Leadership Training" is being developed in cooperation with CRWRC and the Education Committee to provide training for elders and deacons both in better understanding the office and in the skills that are necessary to function in the office, scheduled for release in September, 1977.
5. "Coffee-Break Evangelism" is an inductive evangelistic Bible study program to minister especially to women of the community. Nearly one-half of our churches have requested information and materials about this. Six workshops to train leaders in Coffee-Break Evangelism have been conducted.
6. "Summer Workshop in Ministry" (SWIM), a well-known program to train youth in ministry, is coordinated by Home Missions and the Young Calvinist Federation. During 1976, over 400 young people served in eighty-one churches and Home Mission fields. Fourteen seminarians and eight teacher volunteers were involved. Over seventy-five churches and Home Mission fields have applied for SWIM teams for the summer of 1977.
7. Letters were sent to all consistories encouraging them to provide time and financial assistance for continuing education for their pastors, especially in the areas of evangelism and church growth. Information was provided regarding some effective seminars which are available.
8. "Preparing for Church Growth": The evangelism staff worked with the World Home Bible League to field-test a new program that the league has developed with an evangelistic slide presentation and evangelistic booklets.
Twelve of our churches attended the seminar in Harvey, Illinois. Evaluation will be made of the program as churches use the materials.

C. *Materials*

1. NEIGHBORS is published monthly and issues of THE WAY are published for Christmas and Easter. These are designed to enable churches to contact people.
2. Study materials published by Home Missions, such as the DISCIPLESHIP SERIES, the FAITH BUILDER SERIES, TOGETHER WE GROW, THE GROWING CHURCH, are used extensively. The ASSURANCE booklet has been in especially great demand. A new booklet has been added to the DISCIPLESHIP SERIES entitled THE GIFTED CHURCH.
3. Approximately 200 titles are in our cassette library and have been used by individuals and ministers of our churches. Circulation during the past year totaled approximately 1,000.
4. Copies of HIS, a magazine produced by Inter-Varsity to help students on the secular campuses, were mailed to 770 Christian Reformed students at secular colleges and universities.
5. Two slide presentations on effective evangelism programs that are used in our churches ("Congregational Evangelism Training" and

“Coffee-Break”) were produced. These are available to our churches and evangelism committees.

6. A new title has been added to the IDEA SERIES, it is A CHURCH PRE-SCHOOL.

7. Providing effective materials and program ideas to aid our churches in their witness to the Jews is a continuing concern. The Cottage Grove Church in South Holland is pilot testing a mailing ministry to the Jews, using materials prepared by Mr. Albert Huisjen. Other churches in the Chicago area have been encouraged to begin this kind of witness. It is too early to evaluate the effectiveness of this program. Efforts will be made in the coming year to study the ways which our churches can effectively reach the Jews.

D. Consultation

1. Advice was requested and given to many churches regarding their program of evangelism.

2. Mission Analysis and Projection (MAP) is a process by which a church, with the assistance of consultants, can evaluate its life and program in relationship to its responsibility to bring the gospel to its community. Having proved of real value to our Home Mission fields, this service is now offered to churches of our denomination. Several tools have been developed, such as Congregational Questionnaires, Consistory Questionnaires, Group Questionnaires, etc., to aid the churches in this evaluation. The MAP team serves as an enabler to the church in the evaluation process.

E. Research

Some growing Christian Reformed Churches are being studied. An effort is being made to find helpful insights. As these are discovered, they will be made available to the denomination. New effort will be directed to the question of what it means to be Reformed in evangelism.

VII. FINANCE

Again in 1976 we have enjoyed abundant provision for meeting the needs of our missionaries and all the related program costs. If the financial support of Home Missions by the families and churches of our denomination is 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 1976, it appears that what began in 1971 as an upward trend continued again during 1976. It is gratifying to note that the general level of receipts in 1976 was higher than in 1975 in all categories.

1. Income from quotas increased from 90.0% in 1975 to 91.8% in 1976. During 1976 the percentage of quotas received from United States churches remained the same as 1975, whereas the percentage of quotas received from Canadian churches increased 4%. The percentage of quotas received over the last ten years is as follows:

	Total	U.S.	Canada
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%
1973	86.1%	96.2%	52.4%
1974	88.4%	96.3%	62.6%
1975	90.9%	97.3%	70.3%
1976	91.8%	97.3%	74.2%

2. Income from salary support continued to increase in 1976 as follows:

	Amount	% Increase
1967	\$261,299	14.2
1968	\$256,633	(1.8)
1969	\$278,631	8.6
1970	\$295,353	6.0
1971	\$311,023	5.3
1972	\$354,446	11.1
1973	\$388,750	9.7
1974	\$416,821	7.2
1975	\$497,107	19.3
1976	\$558,138	12.3

Two hundred forty-six churches participated in the salary support program during 1976. Of this number 231 were United States churches and fifteen were Canadian churches. In addition, five classes gave salary support to a home missionary. At the end of 1976, there were twenty-six home missionaries without any supporting church. Only one missionary has his salary fully subscribed.

3. Income from above-quota sources reflected a general increase during 1976 as follows:

	Total	General	Armed Forces
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
1973	\$253,818	\$218,616	\$35,202
1974	\$281,385	\$252,959	\$28,426
1975	\$275,370	\$246,140	\$29,230
1976	\$295,443	\$261,763	\$33,680

An analysis of the number of churches taking offerings for above-quota needs and the Armed Forces discloses the following:

	Total		Above Quota		Armed Forces	
	1976	1975	1976	1975	1976	1975
U.S. Churches						
Number	571	556	332	314	114	135
Percent	100	100	58	56	20	24
Canadian Churches						
Number	158	158	35	34	2	0
Percent	100	100	22	22	1	0
Total						
Number	729	714	367	348	116	135
Percent	100	100	50	49	16	19

The above comparison indicates that there was an increase in the number of churches involved in supporting Home Missions' above-quota needs. We have anticipated that this trend will continue during 1977 and 1978 in projecting our budgeted above-quota receipts.

4. Building Programs

Activity on-field in building programs has increased during 1976 due to the fact that certain new fields have been opened in recent years. The following list reflects the 1976 building program activity:

Fields with Site Selection Completed

LaCrosse, Wisconsin
Windsor, Ontario
Meadowvale, Ontario

Fields with Site Selection in Progress

Northern Virginia
Atlanta, Georgia
Kamloops, British Columbia
Navajo, New Mexico

B. Church Relations

In both Canada and the United States, many congregations increased their activity of support for Home Missionaries above the quota level. Forty-one churches initiated support projects for their first experience in this cause during 1976 (including the first two months of 1977). This involves a combined total of fifty-one Home Missionaries. Eighteen churches who were already supporting Home Missionaries added a total of twenty-three more in the same period.

Although currently there are twenty-six workers in the Home Missions field who do not yet have prayer and salary support relationships with any congregation, it is encouraging to note that in the thirteen and one-half months indicated above, thirty-six missionaries began to receive support who previously had received none. This figure includes new missionaries who "inherited" the support given to their predecessors or to other missionaries.

Increasingly churches are setting aside days each year to focus on missions. Sometimes this is referred to as Mission Emphasis Week. Such times are valuable since increased awareness by the people results in increased prayer for the missionaries. Frequently the days are climaxed by the presentation of a faith offering. Displays, materials and speakers are available for these occasions.

The eight-page tabloid newsletter, HOME MISSIONS NEWS, was published and distributed to all families of the denomination in February, May and November. The response has been gratifying. A general appeal by mail was made in the spring, fall, and winter of 1976; the annual Memorial Day appeal to support the Armed Forces Fund was sent in May.

Home Missionaries, men and women, toured various sectors of the denomination in the spring and fall series of the missionary tours which are conducted in cooperation with the Board of World Missions. Numerous other appearances of Home Missionaries, especially to their calling and supporting churches, were arranged.

There is increased awareness of the need for adequate staff to keep pace with the ever growing demand for information through the media of publications, speakers, exhibits and displays, audio-visual programs, and films. Ways to effect greater awareness of Home Missionaries, Home Mission churches, and opportunities for mission service are being explored.

C. *Financial Report*

The audited financial report for the year ending December 31, 1976 is too lengthy to include here. It is being given to the finance committee of synod and is available to consistories and classes that request it.

D. *Proposed Budget for 1978*

During the past several years the board, with the encouragement of the finance committee of synod, has been using funds from its cash balance for use in the subsequent years' operation. This cash carry-over will be used up in 1977 and 1978 and is no longer available for operations. It also should be noted that our quota request over the last eight years has been substantially less than the increase in the cost of living during the same period. We now must seek increases in both quota and above-quota income. The proposed budget for 1978 is summarized below. A more detailed list of budget requests for 1978 will be submitted to the finance committee of the synod. On the basis of this proposed budget, the Board of Home Missions requests the synod for a per-family quota of \$55 for 1978.

1978 PROPOSED BUDGET

Estimated Receipts		
Quota Payments	\$3,290,000	
Salary Support	680,000	
Above-Quota Gifts	360,000	
Indian Field Revenue	20,000	
Real Estate Repayments	125,000	
Other Income	75,000	
From Cash Balance	110,000	
TOTAL ESTIMATED RECEIPTS		\$4,660,000
Budget Disbursements		
Operating		
Administrative and Promotions	\$ 437,900	
Personnel	232,750	
Evangelism	166,800	
Regular Fields	1,233,850	
Minority & Youth Fields	845,600	
Indian Fields	1,458,100	
TOTAL OPERATING		\$4,375,000
Real Estate and Capital		
Regular and Minority & Youth Fields	\$210,000	
Indian Fields	70,000	
Equipment	5,000	
TOTAL REAL ESTATE & CAPITAL		\$ 285,000
TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS		\$4,660,000

VII. MATTERS FOR SYNODICAL ACTION

A. The board respectfully requests synod to grant the privilege of the floor to its president, executive secretary and treasurer when matters pertaining to Home Missions are discussed.

B. The board recommends that synod reappoint the Rev. Peter Borgdorff as Fields Secretary of the Board of Home Missions for a four-year term (section 3, C of this report).

C. The board recommends that synod reappoint the Rev. Duane VanderBrug as Personnel Secretary of the Board of Home Missions for a four-year term (section 3, C of this report).

D. The board requests that synod approve the Grant-In-Aid recommendations as presented in section 4, G of this report.

E. The board requests that synod address itself to the question of union churches by referring this to a committee for study and recommendation.

F. The board requests synod to approve the Armed Forces Fund for one or more offerings from the churches.

G. The board urgently requests synod to place the Board of Home Missions on the list of denominational causes recommended for one or more offerings.

H. The board requests that synod approve a quota of \$55 per family for the year 1978.

I. The board requests synod to receive and act upon the following nominations for board members-at-large:

1. Member-at-large, Rocky Mountain
Mr. Wilfred G. Bowman
Mr. Herbert R. Thomas, Jr.
2. Alternate member-at-large, Rocky Mountain
Mr. Benjamin J. Hogue
Nominee not elected as regular delegate.
3. Member-at-large, Central
Mr. Roger Rottschaffer
Mr. Harold Soper
4. Alternate member-at-large, Central
Mr. Joseph Daverman
Nominee not elected as regular delegate.

Christian Reformed Board of Home Missions
John Van Ryn, Executive Secretary

REPORT 4-A

CHRISTIAN REFORMED BOARD OF HOME MISSIONS

(Art. 61)

The Board of Home Missions presents the following as a supplement to its report to the Synod of 1977:

I. BOARD MEMBERS-AT-LARGE

Information regarding those who have been nominated for positions of Board Member-At-Large has been forwarded to synod for processing by the Advisory Committee on Appointments.

II. PRESENTATION OF HOME MISSIONS' PERSONNEL AT SYNOD

Each year Home Mission personnel who are present at synod are introduced and one or two address the synod. We request that this year we again be given the opportunity. It is our intention to have Peter Borgdorff, Fields Secretary, and Duane VanderBrug, the Personnel Secretary, speak briefly. These men are members of our Grand Rapids staff and both of them are recommended for reappointment by synod.

III. MISSION PRINCIPLES REPORT

The Board of Home Missions' Executive Committee in session on May 26, 1977 discussed Report 42, Mission Principles, and went on record expressing its strong disapproval of the recommendation of the committee which requests that a plan be prepared which will restructure SIC and the Interagency Advisory Council into becoming an Interagency Council for Coordination and Planning (Report 42, IV, C, 1). Whereas there is need for a forum for mutual counsel and the Board of Home Missions is desirous of finding ways of planning together with others, it is contrary to both the decision of Synod of 1976 as well as Reformed church polity to assign such a body the responsibility to "determine priorities in the total church program."

To place the responsibility of determining priorities in the total program of the church into the hands of the proposed Interagency Council for Coordination and Planning is to insert a new level of administration into the present denominational structure. The Synod of 1976 decided that: "The Synodical Interim Committee shall be responsible for *promoting* the planning, coordination and setting of priorities of program by each of the synodical agencies and by all of them together in keeping with synodical guidelines . . ." (Acts of Synod 1976, p. 50). Please note the word "*promoting*." This is a significant word. The recommendation of Report 42, speaks of "determining priorities" which is essentially different from "*promoting* the planning, coordinating . . ."

The organization called Interagency Advisory Council has the following statement of purpose: "The Interagency Advisory Council, consisting of the executive heads of all the denominational boards and agencies, will meet periodically to provide a forum for exchanging ideas, enhancing long-range functional relationships among all boards and agencies, and

assessing the potential for and effectiveness of cooperation among all agencies." It is hoped that meetings of this organization will prove to be increasingly valuable in terms of this stated goal.

To combine the Interagency Advisory Council and SIC into a decision-making body is not proper. To have this new organization determine priorities in the denominational program or recommend such priorities to synod is to insert a new level of administration above the boards which are now directly responsible to synod.

The combination of the Interagency Advisory Council and SIC would also result in a strange hybrid. SIC consists of synodically-elected members, as do the other boards. The Interagency Advisory Council consists of staff people. To combine such persons into a decision-making body results in a confusion of roles. Staff persons work under the administration of their respective boards.

The Board of Home Missions is of the opinion that the boards and agencies are developing closer working relationships. There are ways of providing a forum for increasing coordination and planning together. SIC can play an important role in enabling this. However, we feel that our denomination should not move in the direction of placing something above its major boards and agencies and giving to that body the responsibility of determining priorities. Such authority should not be assigned to a small group of people. It belongs to synod itself.

Christian Reformed Board of Home Missions
John Van Ryn, Executive Secretary

REPORT 5**THE CHRISTIAN REFORMED BOARD OF PUBLICATIONS**

(Arts. 27, 63)

The Board of Publications continues to operate under the mandate of synod which authorizes it to produce, implement, and supervise the educational program of the church and denominational publications. During the past year the board has sought to carry out the responsibilities assigned by synod through the education and periodicals committees and through the annual meeting of the board on February 15 and 16. This report describes major board activities during the past year and presents various matters for synod's consideration and action.

The Board of Publications is composed of delegates elected from each classis and approved by the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church. The board meets once each year, ordinarily in the month of February. At our 1977 annual board meeting all the classes were represented.

Officers of the board are: president, (until September 1, 1977) Rev. Clarence Boomsma; president, (after September 1, 1977) Dr. Sidney Dykstra; vice-president, Mr. Raymond Holwerda; secretary, Rev. Willard De Vries; treasurer, Rev. Willard Van Antwerpen.

SECTION ONE**THE STRUCTURE OF THE BOARD OF PUBLICATIONS OF
THE CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH AND
ITS COMMITTEES**

The executive committee presents the following report containing its recommendations for the structures and responsibilities of the Board of Publications and its committees. With minor changes it embodies the structures and mandates of the Synod of 1968 and the tentative restructuring approved by the board in 1972 as well as the practices we have developed in actuality as we have functioned during the past several years. Synod previously granted the board "permission to realign the structure and duties of its working committees" (Acts of Synod 1972, Art. 29, II, B, 2, p. 35). Approval of synod will be sought later when the board also reports on the organization of staffs and provides job descriptions for staff members who are synodical appointees.

I. THE BOARD OF PUBLICATIONS**A. Organization**

1. The membership of the Board of Publications is composed of one delegate from each classis of the Christian Reformed Church, elected by the classis and approved by the synod, in accordance with the established synodical rules.
2. The board shall elect a president, vice-president, secretary, and treasurer annually to serve beginning in September of each year.
3. To carry out its responsibilities the board shall elect an executive

committee, an education committee and a periodicals committee as prescribed below.

B. Responsibilities

1. The task of the Board of Publications is to supervise the denomination's consolidated program of education and publication, as mandated and directed by synod.
2. The board meets annually to elect its officers, the members of the executive committee, and the members of the education and periodicals committees, subject to synodical approval and in accordance with the established synodical rules.
3. The board shall receive annual reports from its committees and approve their work, set policies and initiate programs, make an annual report of its activities to synod, set the annual budgets and forward them to synod, and transact such business as it deems necessary.

II. COMMITTEES OF THE BOARD

A. The Executive Committee

Organization

1. The executive committee is composed of thirteen members: nine board members (four of whom are the officers of the board) and four additional members having special competence in matters of business and finance (two from each area) who also serve on the education and periodicals committees. Members are to be conveniently located for monthly meetings of the executive committee.
2. The officers of the board also serve as the officers of the executive committee.
3. The president of the board serves *ex officio* on all the committees. Of the remaining eight board members serving on the executive committee, four shall serve as members of the education committee and four as members of the periodicals committee as assigned by the executive committee.
4. The board shall elect the nine members of the board to the executive committee at each annual meeting. The four "business members" shall be chosen ordinarily for three-year terms by the board in such a way as to insure continuity for the business and financial aspects of our operations. The executive committee shall present nominations to the board, and the board, having the right to add to the nominations, shall elect the "business members" from these nominations and shall submit such names to synod for approval, all this in accordance with the established synodical rules governing appointments.

Responsibilities

1. The executive committee functions on behalf of the board between the annual sessions of the board, is responsible to the board, with its authority prescribed by the board, in performing such unfinished and pressing business as is necessary on behalf of the board.
2. The executive committee representing the board shall receive monthly reports from the education and periodicals committees for information and for action when deemed necessary by the executive

committee. Since the education committee and periodicals committee operate within budgets adopted by the Board of Publications, projected expenses going beyond the adopted budgets that require immediate action shall be submitted to the executive committee for approval.

3. Responsibilities not assigned to either the education or periodicals committees shall be the direct responsibility of the executive committee.

4. The four "business members" shall function as an executive business committee in matters relating to business and finance under the supervision of and responsible to the executive committee. The executive committee shall appoint the chairman of this committee.

5. The executive committee shall make all necessary arrangements for the annual meetings of the board.

6. The executive committee shall regularly report to all board members by way of its minutes on the activities of our committees and the work of our staffs.

B. The Education Committee

Organization

1. The education committee is composed of thirteen members appointed by the Board of Publications, four of whom are board members also serving as members of the executive committee, two of whom are members with special competence in business and finance who also serve on the executive committee, and seven of whom represent specialized competencies: three in education, two in evangelism, one in journalism and one in theology. Members are to be conveniently located for monthly meetings of the committee.

2. In filling vacancies in its membership, or when terms of service in the committee expire, the education committee shall present nominations to the board, and the board, having the right to add to the nominations, shall elect committee members from these nominations and shall submit such names to synod for approval, all this in accordance with the established synodical rules governing appointments.

3. The education committee shall annually elect its own officers in September.

4. The education committee, recognizing the need of a division of labors in carrying out its mandate, may appoint whatever subcommittees it deems necessary for implementing its specified mandates.

Responsibilities

1. The education committee is mandated to produce church school materials together with related ecclesiastical educational materials, as generated by this committee, or as ordered by synod or requested by other denominational agencies, and authorized by the board or its executive committee. Its task includes rendering such additional educational services as will support the educational ministry of the church.

2. The education committee normally shall hold regularly scheduled monthly meetings, issue regular reports to the executive committee, and prepare an annual report for presentation to the meeting of the board and for inclusion in the board's report to synod.

C. The Periodicals Committee

Organization

1. The periodicals committee is composed of eight members, four of whom are board members also serving as members of the executive committee, two of whom are members with special competence in business and finance who also serve on the executive committee, and two of whom represent specialized competencies: one in journalism and one in theology. Members are to be conveniently located for monthly meetings of the committee.
2. In filling vacancies in its membership, or when terms of service in the committee expire, the periodicals committee shall present nominations to the board, and the board, having the right to add to these nominations, shall elect committee members from these nominations and shall submit such names to synod for approval, all this in accordance with the established synodical ruling governing such appointments.
3. The periodicals committee shall annually elect its own officers in September.
4. The periodicals committee may appoint whatever subcommittees it deems necessary for implementing its specified mandate.

Responsibilities

1. The periodicals committee shall be given the mandate to supervise the publication of *The Banner* and *De Wachter*.
2. The periodicals committee normally shall hold regularly scheduled monthly meetings, issue regular reports to the executive committee, and prepare an annual report for presentation to the meeting of the board and for inclusion in the board's report to synod.

SECTION TWO

MATTERS RELATING TO THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

I. PERSONNEL COMMITTEE'S REPORT

A. Term of Office

The appointment of editors will normally begin with two-year terms, and may be renewed for additional terms of two years. After one or more two-year terms, appointees may be considered for four-year terms, but not longer than four years in length. This policy is consistent with the procedure followed by most synodical appointments.

B. Education Staff

1. Theological Editor

Information and evaluation is given concerning several candidates who applied for the position of theological editor. Dr. Harvey Smit is singled out as possessing in good measure the qualifications sought by the personnel committee. The personnel committee, with the concurrence of the education committee, judged that in fairness to the denomination the single nomination of Dr. Harvey Smit by the board be presented to synod. A motion carried to interview Dr. Harvey Smit in Japan by

way of satellite telephone conversation. The interview was heard by the entire board. The Board of Publications then unanimously passed a motion to recommend to the Synod of 1977 Dr. Harvey Smit to be appointed to the position of Theological Editor for an appointment of two years.

2. Pedagogical Editor

The board requests synod to extend to Mr. Robert Rozema a four-year term as Pedagogical Editor. The extended length of this term is consistent with existing policy.

3. Journalistic Editor

The board requests synod to extend to Mrs. Ruth Vander Hart a two-year term as Journalistic Editor. This title reflects the original staff model approved by Synod of 1969 and is consistent with existing policy.

4. Art Editor

The board requests synod to extend to Mr. Paul Stoub a two-year term as Art Editor. The title, "Art Editor," more accurately reflects the work done by Mr. Stoub. The appointment is consistent with existing policy.

5. Director of Education

The board requests synod to extend to Mr. A. James Heynen a two-year term as Director of Education, thus returning the education department staff to its original 1969 model. The appointment is consistent with existing policy.

Mr. Heynen joined our staff in August 1974, first as managing editor and since March 1976, as acting director and acting theological editor. He has filled these positions with marked distinction. Mr. Heynen is a young man with outstanding competencies and possesses an unusual fitness for the position of Director of Education in keeping with the qualifications set forth by the Synod of 1969 (Acts of Synod, pp. 303-305).

C. *Job Descriptions*

Upon the recommendation of the personnel committee, the board adopted the following education department staff job descriptions to be received as information by synod.

1. DIRECTOR

Responsibility: The Director is responsible for the work of the education department of the Board of Publications. In meeting this responsibility, the Director shall:

Develop and maintain schedules for the planning and preparation of all materials produced by the education department.

Participate in the planning and supervise the development of all curriculum produced by the education department.

Propose and explain annual budgets, and exercise control over expenditures for the department, together with the Business Manager of the Board of Publications.

Supervise services performed through the department, such as

teacher training, leadership development, and consultancies to local congregations.

Supervise promotion, marketing and customer accounts for the education department, together with the Business Manager of the Board of Publications.

Administer personnel policies and practices within the department: Supervise all contractual relationships with authors, artists and others rendering services to the education department.

Promote and maintain helpful relationships between the education department and other agencies, denominations and organizations.

Explain the work and goals of the education department to the churches, in order to stimulate deeper interest in church education and greater confidence in the materials produced by the department.

Report regularly on the work of the education department (monthly to the education and executive committees, annually to the Board of Publications and synod).

Accountability: The Director is accountable to the education committee and to the Board of Publications of the Christian Reformed Church.

2. THEOLOGICAL EDITOR

Responsibility: The Theological Editor is responsible for the theological quality of curriculum materials produced by the education department of the Board of Publications. In meeting this responsibility, the Theological Editor shall:

Edit and, when necessary, write biblical and confessional studies for use at preschool through young adult levels in cooperation with the other editors.

Review and, when assigned, edit materials produced for adult church education use.

Participate in the planning of all curriculum materials produced by the education department.

Participate in the evaluation, revision and correction of materials published by the education department.

Recommend authors and other resource people to work with materials to be produced.

Assist other staff members in their work as it relates to the content of materials and programs offered by the department.

Explain the work and goals of the education department to the churches, in order to stimulate deeper interest in church education and greater confidence in the materials produced by the department.

Accountability: The Theological Editor is accountable to the Director of Education.

3. ADULT EDUCATION EDITOR

Responsibility: The Adult Education Editor is responsible for the development of educational resources for use with adults in the church. In meeting this responsibility, the Adult Education Editor shall:

Coordinate the planning of all adult education materials.

Edit and, when necessary, write materials for adult church education in cooperation with the other editors.

Actively monitor current — and project future — adult church education needs at the congregational level, so that appropriate resources can be developed.

Review and critique materials produced by the education department or by other agencies with a view to the continuing usefulness of these materials in the churches.

Recommend authors and other resource people to work on the adult church education program.

Recommend and participate in joint efforts for adult church education with other denominational agencies.

Present the work and the goals of the education department in the area of adult education to the churches, in order to stimulate deeper interest in this phase of church education.

Accountability: The Editor for Adult Education is accountable to the Director of Education.

II. REPORT OF ACTING DIRECTOR AND THEOLOGICAL EDITOR, MR. A. JAMES HEYNEN

A. *Introduction*

In 1968 the CRC Board of Publications was founded, making it the newest of the so-called "major boards" in the denomination, a merger of the previous publications committee and education committee.

Many hours during 1976 were given to looking at continuing separations in church education and considering new options for the future. As staff and committee members bent over planning tables to discuss teacher training, market expansions and missions, high school curriculum, and adult education, old questions became important and demanded new answers. 1976 was a year of planning, but it was also a year when we worked to have less sloganeering and more genuine dialogue between those of us who develop church education programs and those of us who use them. The 30-minute sight-sound program, "The Teaching Church," explained the development, philosophy, and materials of the BIBLE WAY curriculum to more than a hundred congregations, and staff members paid visits to dozens more. Each quarter, a full-page ad in *The Banner* told parents what their children would be studying during the coming thirteen weeks. If 1976 was the Year of the Evangelical, at the education department it was also the Year of the Questionnaire. We asked for, and received, more advice about our work than ever before. Letters of complaint to the education committee fell to about half a dozen for the entire year, and letters of praise far outnumbered those of lament.

Mainly 1976 was a year when committees and staff people simply went about their work faithfully, as a rule, but not spectacularly. We made some mistakes and claimed a few victories. Some years from now, we'll be better able to judge the importance of it all.

B. Personnel

Our director and theological editor, Andrew Kuyvenhoven, left us in the spring. He first taught at Calvin Seminary and then became pastor in the Clarkson CRC in Ontario. Not only our memories but also our curriculum will show his stamp for many years to come. Since Kuyvenhoven's departure, Managing Editor Heynen has been Acting Director.

In March Cecilia Mereness joined us to become Coordinator of Teacher Training. The results of her work are apparent in the Teacher Training report which follows.

Dr. Edwin Walhout joined us during July as the Adult Education Editor; his presence has stirred us from many years of conversation and reports about adult education to the level of serious planning.

Mrs. Alida Arnoys continues to be called "secretary" for our department but does much more than that title suggests. Mr. Robert Rozema (pedagogical editor), Mrs. Ruth Vander Hart (journalistic editor), and Mr. Paul Stoub (artist) all bring creative and uniquely Christian insights to their respective duties. Since September we have profited from the services of the board's new proofreader, Miss Dorothy Kuperus.

C. Curriculum Materials Produced

During the past year we completed BIBLE FOOTPRINTS (pre-school) and BIBLE CROSSROADS (junior high) for the first time. That means we had eight quarters, or two years, produced. Now we are revising these courses based on the advice from churches. Sometimes revisions are as hard as — or harder than — the first attempt. BIBLE STEPS (grades 1 and 2), BIBLE TRAILS (grades 3 and 4), and BIBLE GUIDE (grades 5 and 6) are all being "corrected" for mistakes. This process is more time-consuming than difficult.

We are now entering the thirteenth year of producing BIBLE STUDIES for adults, an eight-page weekly paper containing four articles and representing a lot of editorial time. Last spring we asked the 7,000 readers of this product whether they would like to change from a weekly paper to a quarterly booklet. In no uncertain terms they told us to leave the format alone, they'd rather "fight than switch." So the format will remain that of a weekly paper. But we do plan, next fall, to stop shipping BIBLE STUDIES biweekly, and send thirteen issues at a time to all subscribers.

The biggest splash of the year was our "3's" course, an over-sized three-ring binder containing 52 Bible stories and everything needed to teach them to three year olds. We began by making 500 copies and hoped to unload those over the course of the year. But we had to make another 500 in a hurry when the orders started coming in. Reactions to this course have been amazingly positive.

In August we began producing the REVELATION SERIES, book-by-book Bible study guides for use in adult groups. We sent a review copy of *Ephesians* (by Frank Breisch) to every CRC pastor; *Romans* (by Andrew Kuyvenhoven) was released in September, and a study

of John's Gospel (by David Holwerda) was finished in early 1977. Bible studies almost always prove popular.

"No More Strangers" is a course for inquirers written by the Rev. Paul Brink and jointly produced by the education department and SCORR. It was released in August, and is aimed especially at the non-traditional Christian Reformed parish: inner-city, home mission churches, etc.

D. Plans

Last year, the board approved guidelines for development of a new course on the Heidelberg Catechism for grades nine and ten. During the summer months the Rev. Neal Plantinga (on leave of absence while pursuing his doctorate at Princeton) wrote a superb prospectus for that course. Four authors have been writing lessons: Rev. Frank Breisch (Calgary), Dr. James De Jong (Dordt College), Rev. Jack Vos (Scarborough), and Dr. Louis Vos (Calvin College). The course will be ready for use by fall, 1977. (See Appendix One.)

For years we have been trying to produce something for officebearers. There have been conferences and committees and special grants. In October (1976) the education and executive committees authorized development of an "Officebearers Resource and Training Manual." This manual will contain an annotated version of the Church Order in loose-leaf form, with decisions of synod regarding various articles outlined and explained. As synodical actions change the Church Order or its interpretation, new sections of this manual will be provided to the churches (with the Acts of Synod mailing each August). A denominational/congregational planning calendar will also be provided annually to fit into this manual. The manual will include tabs and space for officebearers to insert classical minutes, consistory reports, financial information, and congregational listings. In the training section of the manual, brief (30-45 minute) training units will be provided on topics such as church discipline, home visiting, and the work of various officebearers. Additional resources will be appended in the back of the manual and updated annually. The Stated Clerk, the Rev. William P. Brink, and Dr. Richard DeRidder of Calvin Seminary are coauthoring the annotated Church Order section; a multiple-agency committee is planning the training segments. Additional planning reports are provided below.

E. Promotion

Last spring we sent our new, full-color catalog (designed and finished by Artist Stoub) to all congregations in the Reformed Church in America, all NAPARC denominations, and all Christian Reformed congregations.

Three other items are worthy of mention here, although they are not strictly "promotional":

1. *Curriculum Overview*: This description of each course in the BIBLE WAY curriculum (including narrative descriptions, goals, content, and sequence) helps both those who are evaluating the

curriculum for the first time and those churches already using it. We give it free to all who ask for it.

2. *Memorization Schedule*: For some time people were spreading the myth that the BIBLE WAY curriculum was shy on memory work. The "Memorization Schedule" lists, in biblical sequence, the more-than-500 passages which are recommended for minimal memorization in this curriculum. It has helped greatly to end the criticism regarding memory work.

3. *Superintendent's Newsletter*: Technically a part of the teacher training program, the *Superintendent's Newsletter* is also a major vehicle of information about our curriculum for all who use it. Each quarter a new issue of this *Newsletter* is shipped along with the materials to each church. The first issue focused on teacher's meetings, and other issues dealt with topics like homework and parent-contact. We've made a flop out of several earlier newsletter attempts, but this one seems to have caught on. Maybe superintendents are a hungry audience and will devour anything. Or maybe it's the first time we wrote a newsletter worth reading.

F. *Relationship With Other Agencies and Churches*

During 1976 the education department developed a contract for shared resources with YES (Youth Evangelism Services); jointly sponsored or produced materials with the Board of Home Missions, CRWRC, and SCORR; provided educational materials for use as models in almost every field of World Missions; and appreciated the work of six different seminary professors who served as authors, consultants, and committee members.

Our relationship to the Reformed Church in America is cordial and mutually beneficial. BIBLE WAY resources are being used in hundreds of RCA congregations; they are grateful for the "Reformed alternative" to other materials, and we are grateful for their confidence in our work. At a staff level, RCA personnel keeps us informed on developments such as "JED" (Joint Educational Development — a curriculum development project sponsored by major denominations including the RCA). Our staff members keep the RCA informed about curriculum plans and areas in which CRC and RCA curriculum resources might be very similar. We have recently begun planning joint CRC-RCA teacher training in areas where congregations from both denominations are using BIBLE WAY materials. The relationship here is somewhat informal — there are no contracts — but it is also very important.

G. *Schedules and Shipments*

The past year was significant for two major advances in terms of production and distribution of our materials. First, through the hard work of authors, editors, the artist, and several personnel in the plant, we "caught up" to our schedule for production. The continual frustration of being ten days too late has been reduced to the occasional frustration of being ten days too late. It is a relief.

Second, Business Manager Meeuwse and his crew enabled us to start shipping our materials in "single packages" this past fall. No longer do churches receive as many as seventeen different packages every thirteen weeks; now we put as much into a box as the shippers will let us. The churches have responded to this change with considerable joy, and so have we.

III. YOUNG ADULT CURRICULUM PLANNING REPORT

In the "Young Adult Curriculum Planning Report," special attention is drawn to the section, "Relationship between Church Education and Profession of Faith." It is observed that "Church Education" does not end with profession of faith, but such profession must be seen as a mark of continuing growth; fuller participation in the church and Christian discipleship are additional goals. The board approved the report and forwards the same to synod for its approval (cf. Appendix One).

IV. EXPANDED MISSION

Having considered extensively the historical background and current arguments favoring and opposing an expanded ministry beyond the Christian Reformed Church, the Board of Publications adopted the following policy statement for approval by Synod 1977:

RESOLVED, that the Board of Publications of the Christian Reformed Church, through its Education Department, is committed to an expanded ministry in the distribution of Reformed church education materials beyond the Christian Reformed Church.

In regard to the above resolution the board instructed the education committee to initiate studies to answer the following questions as promptly and completely as possible.

1. What are realistic estimates of the number and kind of congregations who might be attracted to a Reformed church education curriculum? What are the bases for such estimates?
2. What personnel or systems changes would be advisable or required to further expand our ministry beyond the Christian Reformed Church? At what costs or savings would such savings be made?
3. What are reasonable goals, in terms of number of congregations served, for the coming five years? Ten years?
4. Should there be a price variation between Christian Reformed and non-Christian Reformed users of curriculum? On what grounds is such a variation justified or denied?
5. What changes in material availability, if any, are required? Should curriculum materials be available through bookstores? On what terms? Should we continue direct sales? On what terms?
6. Should we provide full services (teacher training, for example) to all congregations buying Christian Reformed church curriculum materials? On what terms?
7. How do the "mission goals" of the Board of Publications' Education Committee fit with those of the Christian Reformed Boards of World

and Home Missions? Are there new areas of possible joint service? Are there specific ways we ought to serve these boards?

8. Should the education committee (or, Board of Publications) adopt a goal of self-sustaining ministry without quota support? What justifies our continuing quota support apart from financial need?

9. What are the legal questions and involvements in an "expanded mission" which might affect our tax exempt status?

V. TEACHER TRAINING

The Board of Publications approved and presents the "Report on Teacher Training: 1977-1978" to synod for information (cf. Appendix Two).

SECTION THREE

MATTERS RELATING TO PERIODICALS AND PUBLICATIONS

I. REPORT OF THE PERIODICALS COMMITTEE

The Periodicals Committee, through its secretary, the Rev. Marvin Beelen, presents the following information:

A. The periodicals committee met on the first Thursday of each month (except for March and July).

B. Some of the highlights of the work of the periodicals committee in the year 1976 are:

1. The periodicals committee conducted a "Banner Survey." Mr. Jack Brouwer worked with Mr. Kenneth Housekamp (who has expertise in market research) and a group of Calvin College students in market research. The questionnaires were sent to:

a. 4000 current Banner subscribers.

b. 3000 non-subscribers who are members of the Christian Reformed Church.

c. 640 pastors in the Christian Reformed Church.

This report on The Banner survey was received in the August meeting of the periodicals committee. In the November meeting of the committee, Mr. Jack Brouwer submitted seven recommendations for increasing Banner subscriptions. Some of the seven recommendations received responses from The Banner staff and the periodicals committee in the December meeting.

2. The Rev. William Haverkamp continues to serve as editor of De Wachter. Synod of 1976 approved the reappointment of Mr. Haverkamp as editor for a two-year term - September, 1976 to September, 1978. Subscriptions to De Wachter remain constant at 2,500.

3. Dr. Lester De Koster was reappointed editor of The Banner for a four-year term by the Synod of 1976. With the completion of this new four-year term Mr. De Koster will reach retirement age. Mr. De Koster meets monthly with the periodicals committee, submits reports, listens to the advice of the periodicals committee and acts graciously on the instruction of the committee. The periodicals com-

mittee and the entire Banner staff have a warm and cordial relationship.

4. Subscriptions to The Banner remain rather constant. On December 1, 1975 subscriptions numbered 42,878; on December 1, 1976 subscriptions totaled 43,415. Periodic subscription campaigns bear some fruit; however, these campaigns have not served to greatly increase the *total* subscription number.

5. A quick survey of the minutes of the monthly periodicals committee meetings indicate that an on-going task of Editor De Koster is the soliciting of writers for manuscripts for publication in The Banner. This dimension of editorship is frequently overlooked by the casual reader but is so necessary for a vital and relevant publication.

6. The year 1976 was the bi-centennial year of the United States of America and the centennial year of Calvin College and Seminary. The Banner recognized both of these centennial celebrations - a special Calvin College issue in March of 1976 and a special 48-page issue of The Banner in July of 1976 underscoring the United States bi-centennial. Historic cover photos were run on all of the 50 issues of The Banner in 1976.

7. A joint issue of The Banner and The Church Herald was published on October 29, 1976.

8. One of the writers of one of the departments of The Banner, Mr. Henry Velzen, was taken from us by accidental death in November of 1976. Condolence was sent to the Velzen family by Editor De Koster and the secretary of the executive committee.

9. One hundred sixty-seven local congregations are participating in the *Every Family Plan* of The Banner.

II. COMMITTEE ON EDITORSHIP OF THE BANNER

After lengthy discussion about the future editorship of The Banner, the Board of Publications appointed a special study committee and gave the following mandate:

A. The Mandate: To *consider* whether, in order to do full justice to the diversity in the Christian Reformed Church, The Banner should be under multiple editorship or possibly some other option.

B. Further Instruction: The study committee should make a progress report at every other scheduled meeting of the periodicals committee.

C. Committee members are: Donald Postema, chairman; Karen De Vos, secretary; Marlin Van Elderen; Andrew Kuyvenhoven; Marvin Beelen; Gary De Velder; Lester De Koster, *ex officio*.

SECTION FOUR FINANCIAL MATTERS

A thorough financial presentation was given to the Board of Publications and is available to anyone at synod desiring a complete picture through the answers available from our finance personnel who will be at synod.

BALANCE SHEET

BOARD OF PUBLICATIONS OF THE CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH

GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN

As of August 31, 1976

ASSETS

CURRENT

Cash on hand and on deposit (Note A)		\$159,210
Accounts receivable		200,210
Land contract receivable		6,679
Inventories		219,862
Prepaid Expenses and other		15,244
	TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	<u>\$601,205</u>

EQUIPMENT

Machinery & equipment, office furniture & fixtures, and truck	\$733,938	
Less accumulated depreciation	<u>347,099</u>	\$386,839
	TOTAL ASSETS	<u>\$988,044</u>

LIABILITIES AND EQUITY

CURRENT

Accounts payable	\$ 27,282	
Accrued expenses	26,909	
Current portion of long-term debt	<u>30,000</u>	
	TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES	\$ 84,191

DEFERRED INCOME

\$136,555

EQUITY

767,298

TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY

\$988,044

Note A - COMMITMENTS AND ANTICIPATED EXPENDITURES

At August 31, 1976, the Board had unpaid commitments for the purchase of equipment in the amount of \$31,000. In addition, the Board anticipates additional equipment expenditures aggregating approximately \$135,000.

STATEMENT OF INCOME
 BOARD OF PUBLICATIONS OF THE CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH
 GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN
 Year ended August 31, 1976

INCOME		
Subscriptions and sales		\$1,313,986
COSTS		
Material	\$547,332	
Direct Labor	147,373	
Artwork	37,214	
Manufacturing Expenses	168,647	
Writers	27,960	
Mailing Costs	<u>71,199</u>	<u>999,725</u>
GROSS MARGIN		\$ 314,261
GENERAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE		
Direct (clerical-editorial-managerial)	\$297,586	
Indirect (depreciation-insurance- office supplies-postage etc.)	<u>84,413</u>	<u>\$ 381,999</u>
OPERATING INCOME (LOSS)		\$(67,738)
OTHER INCOME - NET *		<u>\$ 311,706</u>
NET INCOME		<u>\$ 243,968</u>

* INCLUDES \$295,277 QUOTAS FOR:

Banner	\$73,242
De Wachter	29,323
Unified Church School Curriculum	<u>192,712</u>
	<u>\$295,277</u>

A. Revised budget

The revised budget projection for the year ended August 31, 1976 anticipated total income of \$1,556,000 and net income of \$93,800. Actual results, as indicated above, were considerably greater than budgeted amounts due to several factors: greater than anticipated sales of church school materials, increased printing for other denominational agencies, increased postage income, lower materials costs and less than anticipated administrative salaries, wages and other expenses.

The board anticipates that substantial working capital demands will be experienced in the near future resulting from equipment requirements, rising costs, staff additions and the newly recognized need for greater efforts to expand its mission beyond the borders of the denomination.

B. *Quotas for the Board of Publications*

The board is pleased that operating results for the year ended August 31, 1976 were more favorable than anticipated and looks forward to a continuation of certain of the factors which contributed to that result. However, the budget which the board adopted for its year ending August 31, 1978 also recognizes increasing costs and expenses and the need for continuing quota support. Accordingly, the board is requesting synod to grant a \$4.00 quota for 1978. The \$4.00 quota per family represents a 33⅓% reduction from the \$6.00 quota granted for 1977.

SECTION FIVE GENERAL MATTERS

I. CANADIAN DISTRIBUTION CENTER

Through the joint efforts of the executive business committee of the Board of Publications and Classis Chatham, a plan was presented and approved by the board for a Canadian Distribution Center. The plan is being implemented. We rejoice! The board refers this information to synod, noting that the center will provide a more efficient distribution of materials in Canada.

II. THE CLASSIS CHATHAM APPEAL

A. In June 1976, Classis Chatham appealed to synod to retract the decision of the Board of Publications re the increase of the subscription price for *The Banner* for Canadian subscribers and gave grounds.

B. The Board of Publications (1977) decided by motion, to abide by the decision of 1976 and report this as our answer to both Classis Chatham and Synod 1977. The Board of Publications based its decision on the following considerations:

1. The high cost of postage to Canadian subscribers.
2. Subscriptions to Canada have actually increased by 755, in spite of the increase in price. Objections from subscribers to the increase have been minimal.

III. ELECTIONS

A. *Periodicals Committee*

Dr. John Timmerman is elected to a three-year term and his name is referred to synod for approval.

B. *Education Committee*

Dr. William Hendricks is elected to a three-year term and his name is referred to synod for approval.

C. *Business men on the education and periodicals committee to also serve on the executive committee.*

A motion carries to allow the executive committee to make the necessary appointments and refer the same to synod in a supplemental report.

IV. THE PSALTER HYMNAL

The board adopted a proposal that "the executive committee be instructed to seek the cooperation of both the Liturgical and the Psalter

Hymnal Supplement Committee in the appointment of an *ad hoc* committee representative of the three committees for the purpose of evaluating and making recommendations on the advisability of asking synod to revise the present Psalter Hymnal. Such an *ad hoc* committee should report to our next annual board meeting, as well as to both the Liturgical and Psalter Hymnal Supplement Committees."

V. 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 Rev. Clarence Boomsma, president of the board; the Rev. Willard H. DeVries, secretary of the board; Mr. A. James Heynen, Acting Director of Education and Theological Editor (in all matters pertaining to the Education Department); Mr. Peter Meeuwesen, Business Manager (in all matters pertaining to the business aspects of the board's operation); and the editors, Dr. Lester De Koster and the Rev. William Haverkamp (in all matters pertaining to their respective periodicals).

SECTION SIX

SUMMARY OF MATTERS REQUIRING SYNODICAL ACTION

- A. Approval of board representation at synod (Section Five, V).
- B. Appointment of Education Department Staff (Section Two, B).
 1. Dr. Harvey Smit as Theological Editor for two years.
 2. Mr. Robert Rozema as Pedagogical Editor for four years.
 3. Mrs. Ruth Vander Hart as Journalistic Editor for two years.
 4. Mr. Paul Stoub as Art Editor for two years.
 5. Mr. A. James Heynen as Director for Education for two years.
- C. Approval of EXPANDED MISSION (Section Two, IV).
- D. Approval of the \$4.00 quota request by the Board of Publications. This is a \$2.00 reduction from the 1977 quota (Section Four, B).
- E. Approval of the board reply to Classis Chatham (Section Five, II, B).
- F. Approval of election of Dr. John Timmerman and Professor William Hendricks to the Periodicals Committee and Education Committee (respectively) for three-year terms (Section Five, III, A, B).
- G. Approval of Young Adults Curriculum Planning Report (Appendix One).

Board of Publications
of the Christian Reformed Church
Willard De Vries, secretary

APPENDIX ONE

YOUNG ADULT CURRICULUM PLANNING REPORT

I. BACKGROUND STATEMENT

A. *Mandate*

On September 2, 1976, the education committee (Board of Publications) appointed a curriculum planning committee "whose mandate shall be the proposal of a curriculum plan for the equivalent of grades 9-13, year round, with the proposal submitted to the education committee not later than January 1977" (education committee minutes, September 2, 1976, Art. VI. E.).

B. *Observations*1. *Division of the Range: Grades 9-10, Young Adults*

In planning the curriculum divisions for this level, the committee made a break between grades 9-10 and the "young adult" level which constitutes the following three years. In this, the committee followed the guidelines regarding curriculum division previously adopted by the Board of Publications, that "the close parallel to the academic structure of grade levels should end after grade-level ten" (Acts of Synod 1976, p. 267).

The effect of this division is that materials developed for grades nine and ten will be written specifically to that age range, whereas materials developed for the "young adult" level will not be specifically graded or aimed at a single age-level.

2. *Relationship between Church Education and Public Profession of Faith*

Throughout Reformed church history there has been an intimate relationship between the process of church education and the event of public profession of faith. Development of the catechisms and the catechism tradition, adoption of *The Compendium of the Christian Religion*, formulation of Church Order articles concerning church education — all show how securely we have tied the educational process to the event of public profession of faith.

Consider, for example, the predominant view that church education has as its major purpose to enable a person to make public profession of faith.

Wherever this view is held, church education is of great importance for those who have *not* made public profession of faith. Conversely, church education will have essentially no value for those who have already done so. If a church holds this view, her young people will likely continue in church education until they make public profession of faith . . . and take their leave as quickly thereafter as possible. In such a church the "profession of faith interview" with the consistory becomes the final test of church education — "orals" — and the public profession of faith becomes the graduation ceremony.

The belief that church education exists primarily to enable public profession of faith produces a malnourished idea of both church edu-

cation and public profession of faith. It suggests that a child is like an empty jar which, through the process of church education, becomes filled with truth; and when the child is full, the profession of faith cap is tightly screwed on to keep everything in.

An alternative view of the relationship between church education and public profession of faith is this: The major purpose of church education is to enable a person to engage in the work of ministry.¹ Does this view differ substantially from the former view? We believe it does.

First, where the purpose of church education is to enable a person to engage in his or her ministry, church education is equally appropriate for all ages. The methodology and content of that education will vary according to the ages, abilities and needs of the students. But those who have made a public profession of their faith will profit as completely as those who have not. Church education so conceived has no final test (save God's judgment) and no graduation ceremony, at least in this life. As the Christian's call to ministry is lifelong, so — from this viewpoint — church education must be lifelong. The relationship between church education and public profession of faith, therefore, is broader when seen this way: Public profession of faith is not the *only* goal of church education.

Additionally, this view gives new meaning and importance to public profession of faith. The event of the public profession is not so much a "joining of the church" (the Reformed faith teaches that the baptized child already is a member of the church) as it is the assumption of a new relationship between the professing person and the church. It is the professing person's announcement that he/she wishes to assume responsibility for his/her own ministry within the ministry of the church. And it is the church's announcement that she extends to the professing person "all the privileges" which she extends to all her ministers. Among those privileges should be the continuation of church education, enabling the person to develop an articulate and appropriate and growing ministry.

All within the church recognize that we are continually — at least in some senses — "objects of the church's ministry." We receive the full communion of fellowship, of sacraments, of preaching, of belonging . . . and of learning. But as we grow within the church, we increasingly move from being an "object" to becoming an "*agent* of the church's ministry." The purpose of church education at *all* levels, then, is not simply to fill an object with truth, but to enable agents of truth to minister in the name of Christ. This is true for the oldest and for the youngest members; it is true for those who have professed their faith and for those who have not.

¹ The purpose of teaching in the church, according to Ephesians 4, is "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 fullness of Christ" (vs. 12, 13).

What has all this to do with a curriculum for young adults? Several things.

First, the committee recognizes the enormous importance which the church must place on having a young person (indeed, all people) make a personal commitment to Christ and to his church. The event-character of that commitment is *not* unrelated to church education, anymore than it is unrelated, say, to preaching. But neither, we believe, can we attempt to "program" such an event or even predict its exact time or place or expression. We can only affirm the importance of commitment — commitment which is public, personal, and strong — and then structure a curriculum which meets, as completely as possible, the needs both of those who have and those who have not (yet) made such a commitment. Therefore, the recommended goal statement (Section II) concerning a "meaningful profession of faith" is intended with utter seriousness and offered with prayer.

Second, while public profession of faith is an enormously important step in each pilgrim's progress, it must not be viewed as some kind of graduation ceremony for young adults who have completed a curriculum. The curriculum must aim at much more than simply the (very important!) public profession of faith; it should strive to meet the whole goal as outlined in Section II of this report. Similarly, profession of faith must be more than some test of the young adult curriculum; it should be the time when a young person indicates that he/she *understands* the ministry of the church, is *motivated* to engage in that ministry, and is *enabled* (by skills and knowledge) to become an agent of the church's ministry.

Third, the curriculum designed for this level should help a child in the church become a participating adult within the church. Like the child, a young adult is a recipient of the church's ministry (an "object") who must gain a deeper understanding of his/her own ministry. Like the adult, a young adult is urged to actively engage in ministry (become an "agent"). To a great extent, the goal set for this level of the curriculum is the same goal set for other levels, and a search for absolutely unique "young adult goals" will be futile.

What is unique at this level is the learner and the learner's situation. Unlike little children, young people of high school age and beyond have or do become *responsible* for their own decisions, behaviors, and commitments. Our fathers called it "The age of discretion," an altogether fine term. The learner is in a period of rapid change — the head-spinning transition from childhood to adulthood which occurs in the span of these few years. Above all else, it is this phenomenon which colors the curriculum for young adults and sets it off from all other levels.

3. *Young Adult Curriculum and Growth*

The goal of the curriculum at this level is stated below. In a word, the goal is *growth in the covenant*, a process begun in childhood and continuing through all the stages of adulthood. We seek growth in the

student's relationship to Jesus Christ. During this period a student should — based on his/her own study and analysis — believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, accept the Scriptures as normative for living under his lordship, and accept the creeds/confessions as meaningful reformulations of the central teachings of the Bible.

We seek growth in the student's relationship to Christ's church. During this period a student should indicate a personal knowledge of Christ, an informed commitment to his church, and a willing acceptance of the confessions as summary teachings of Scripture. Nothing less than a public profession of faith is desired, but such profession must be seen as a mark of continuing growth, not its conclusion.

We seek growth in the student's ability to make a meaningful profession of faith before the world. This requires that a student be able to communicate his/her faith in relationship to the world. A student must be able to distinguish the "central teachings of Scripture" from the teaching of the world, and should be able to account for his/her own identity as a Christian. The student should know the "isms" of the day, and should have practice in confronting major challenges to the faith.

We seek growth in the student's maturity as exhibited in a life of personal devotion. Skills in Bible study and prayer must be applied not only to public settings but also to the quiet moments of personal growth, so that each person is continually conformed more to the image of Christ and, fully trained, will be like the Master.

We seek growth in the student's assumption of ministry *now*, so that the responsible young adult is equipped through study and practice to offer a ministry in keeping with the gifts entrusted by the Spirit to him/her. Students will, then, through study and practice:

a. Develop such gifts as helpers, administrators, teachers, evangelists; serving, exhorting, contributing, giving aid, and doing acts of mercy. In this regard, the church must not only accept, but eagerly foster the ministries and avenues of ministry which are appropriate to young Christian adults.

b. Self-consciously join others in God's mighty mission (*missio Dei*) in this world. In this regard, students will go out into the world with a sense of identity as Reformed Christians, recognizing various callings within God's mission, and applying all that has been learned to the advancement of his kingdom.

II. RECOMMENDED GOAL STATEMENT FOR GRADES 9-10 AND YOUNG ADULTS

The goal of the curriculum at this level is to nurture within the life of each student a relationship to Jesus Christ as Savior and as Lord, shown by:

- A. A meaningful profession of faith.
- B. Full participation in the life and work of the church.
- C. A broader expression of Christian discipleship in the service of God and man in every area of life.

YOUNG ADULT CURRICULUM PLAN CHART (Page 1)

GRADES 9 and 10 — LANDMARKS

I. HEIDELBERG CATECHISM*

- A. Year One (30 sessions)
- B. Year Two (30 sessions)

Note: Churches wanting additional courses for these grade levels should choose from the following:

II. RELATIONSHIPS (18 sessions)

- A. Understanding Self (9 sessions)
Provides biblical/confessional answers to questions of self-identity and the relationship of self to God and others.
- B. Understanding Prayer (9 sessions)
Teaches the what, why, and how of prayer, to develop a stronger relationship to God.

Note: Above units include material from the Catechism, whenever appropriate.

III. THE CHRISTIAN AND . . . (18 sessions)

Offers Christian perspectives on areas of much interest to students: music; film; TV; work; school, etc.

* Indicates *Foundational* units; such units contain material which should be familiar to students before taking up other units within this series. If students clearly demonstrate familiarity with material labelled *Foundational*, there is no need to repeat that material in your church education program.

GRADES 11 through 13

SCRIPTURE

I. WHAT IS THE BIBLE* (13 sessions)

Focuses on the forms of God's Revelation to man, on the uniqueness of the Bible (inspiration, historicity, preservation, unity, power), and on the form of the Scriptures (canon, translation, paraphrase).

II. HOW TO READ THE BIBLE* (16-17 sessions)

Teaches basic hermeneutics through a study of eight *types* of biblical literature. For each type, students first discuss its author, audience, purpose, and theological perspective. Then students (in following lesson) apply these principles to a representative passage.

III. APPLIED BIBLE STUDIES (24-36 sessions)

Provides practice in applying principles learned in Foundational Units I and II, above.

A. Chapter by chapter (12-24 sessions)

In-depth study of at least two of the following: Mark, James, Galatians, Jonah.

B. The Bible and Justice (6 sessions)

Highlights of biblical teachings on justice; enables students to reach conclusions based on comprehensive study of biblical givens on a particular topic or issue.

C. Personal Devotions (6 sessions)

Practical aids to the students' day-by-day Bible reading.

YOUNG ADULT CURRICULUM PLAN CHART (Page 2)

GRADES 11 through 13

CONFESSIONS

I. THIS WE CONFESS* (10 sessions)

Provides a brief overview of ecumenical and Reformed creeds, including historical content and primary doctrinal issue. First lesson examines nature of creed, confessional church.

II. REFORMED DOCTRINE* (18 sessions)

Using appropriate confessional statements, this unit examines the doctrines of God (Father, Son, Holy Spirit), man, Christ, Holy Spirit, salvation, church, and last things. Approach is experiential; first asking key questions about God, man, etc., then helping students find answers in the creeds.

III. THE MISSION OF GOD (10 sessions)

Broadens students' ideas of mission and evangelism, evaluates contemporary mission strategies, and promotes involvement in mission.

IV. CHURCH LIFE (9 sessions)

Works toward understanding of CRC activities through actual observation and participation. Topics: pastor; council; church order; denominational agencies; synod; etc.

GRADES 11 through 13

CHRISTIAN RESPONSES

I. CHRISTIAN ETHICS* (13 sessions)

Teaches students to apply moral principles to such ethical problems as: world hunger; poverty; abortion; ecology; self-abuse; racism. Promotes student involvement in the solution of such problems.

II. CHRISTIAN APOLOGETICS* (13 sessions)

Enables students to recognize and deal with various modern "attacks" on our faith. Organized around a series of "I don't believe" . . . statements, including:

- . . . there is a God.
- . . . God is good.
- . . . Jesus is God.
- . . . the Bible is God's Word.

III. SEMINARS (at least 25 sessions)

Assumes a classroom in which a relatively small group of mature students freely work and interact, with teacher as "facilitator."

Topics:

- A. Profession of Faith (7-8 sessions)
Prepares students to understand the meaning of Public Profession of Faith
- B. Marriage
- C. Vocation
- D. C. S. Lewis: Mere Christianity
- E. Major World Religions

EXPLANATION OF CHART OF RECOMMENDED CURRICULUM

A. SERIES

Please note that there are four distinct series outlined on the chart:

1. The **LANDMARKS** series: The Heidelberg Catechism and the courses which complement it (Relationships; The Christian And . . .) are specifically addressed to the ninth and tenth grades and ought to be taught at those levels.
2. The **SCRIPTURE** series features material for one full year for grades eleven through thirteen.
3. The **CONFESSIONS** series features material for one full year for grades eleven through thirteen.
4. The **CHRISTIAN RESPONSES** series features materials for one full year for grades eleven through thirteen.

We recommend that a church offer at least two units within the **SCRIPTURE**, **CONFESSIONS**, and **CHRISTIAN RESPONSES** series, before moving on to a new series.

B. FOUNDATIONAL

Some of the units within each **SERIES** have been marked with an asterisk(*). This indicates **FOUNDATIONAL** units, that is, units containing material which should be familiar to students before taking up other units within that **SERIES**. If students clearly demonstrate familiarity with material labeled **FOUNDATIONAL**, there is no need to repeat such material in your church education program.

C. CURRICULUM CHOICES

Keeping the above recommendations in mind, churches ought to choose freely from the curriculum offerings, selecting materials to meet their own distinct needs. Many factors affect curriculum choices: number of students; availability of teachers and classrooms; background of the students (Christian school experience or not?); number of class sessions per year; interests and needs of the students, etc. We believe the curriculum offerings are sufficiently diverse to allow churches to take these factors, and others, into consideration, selecting **SERIES** and units accordingly.

YOUNG ADULT CURRICULUM TENTATIVE COURSE OUTLINES

GRADES 9 and 10 — LANDMARKS

I. Heidelberg Catechism (60 sessions)

In sixty sessions this course takes students through the catechism, sequentially, question by question. Emphasis is on the catechism text itself, rather than on a supplemental text or paper or workbook. The course teaches not only the content of the catechism, but also its progressive structure, its historical contexts, and its confessional nature.

Pedagogy of this course is typical **BIBLE WAY**: explicit, step-by-step teacher instruction and attractive student materials for use in and out of the classroom. For the first time, however, the pedagogy focuses on the document of the catechism, rather than on the Scriptures.

Use patterns of the catechism course will vary, no doubt. Probably most typical will be Year One at the ninth grade level (30 sessions), and Year Two at the tenth grade level (30 sessions). Churches seeking material for year-around or nine-month use will be urged to make their selection from the courses listed below. Such courses will be designed for ninth and tenth grade use, and will attempt, as much as possible, to relate to previous catechism studies.

II. *Relationships* (18 sessions)

A. Understanding Self (9 sessions)

The intent of this unit is to help students find biblical confessional answers to questions of self-identity, and the relationship of self to God and others. The lessons will be organized around questions which ninth and tenth graders often ask of themselves. When possible, the lessons will be related to previous catechism studies.

1. Am I Alone?

There is no understanding of self unless we see ourselves in relationship to God. This basic relationship determines our relationship with others. Q. and A. 1: "I am not my own, but belong body and soul, in life and in death, to my faithful Savior Jesus Christ."

2. Can God Love Me?

If God really knows what kind of person I am — and he does — how is it possible for him to love me? Q. and A. 56 — forgiveness in Christ.

3. Can Others Love Me?

Lesson affirms the worth of each individual in God's family. Q. and A. 55 — "all share in Christ's treasures and gifts."

4. Can I Love Others?

Meaning of love; Q. and A. 55 — "to use his gifts readily and cheerfully for the service of other members . . ." Also Q. and A. 91.

5. Am I Responsible?

To whom am I responsible? To God first . . . but also "honor thy father and mother." Q. and A. 4, 84.

6. Am I Responsible?

For what will I be held accountable? For whom am I responsible? Q. and A. 4, 10, 22.

7. Am I Free?

What freedom is and isn't. Q. and A. 34 — "He has set us free from sin . . ."

8. Am I Free?

How free persons behave; degrees of freedom enjoyed by peers, parents.

9. Who is My Family?

Introducing the church as family of God, and the importance of being part of that family. Q. and A. 54.

B. Understanding Prayer (9 sessions)

The intent of this unit is to help students develop a stronger relationship with God through the practice of frequent and effective prayer,

both in and out of the classroom. The unit will teach the what, why, and how of prayer, dealing with such practical questions as:

- Does prayer make any real difference?
- Should I pray for things I want but don't need?
- Why hasn't God answered my prayer?
- How can I concentrate when I pray?
- Should I pray at regular times each day?
- Should I tell God how I really feel?
- Are Christians expected to pray in public?
- Should I say "Thee" or "You"?

Students will study model prayers and compose prayers of their own. The unit will, of course, draw heavily from the catechism's treatment of prayer, especially Q. and A. 116-118.

III. *The Christian And . . .* (18 sessions)

This series of lessons is intended to increase student awareness of Christian perspectives on matters which typically capture his/her interests and consume his/her time. If the church has taken specific stands on the issue (i.e.: film, music), such statements will be used in the study.

Sample topics:

1. Music
2. Film
3. TV
4. Sports
5. Work and leisure
6. School
7. Dating and sexuality
8. Open — to be selected by students and discussed according to general guidelines given in teacher's material.

GRADES 11 thru 13

SCRIPTURE

I. *What is the Bible?* (13 sessions)

Intent of the unit is to help the students recognize the nature of God's revelation and the unique character of the Scriptures — such knowledge leading to a deep respect for the Word and a renewed faith in its message.

Its purpose — knowing God through the Word:

1. Created

How God revealed himself in the beginning. General Revelation. Creation through the Word and power of God.

2. Incarnate

Word become flesh. The Supreme Revelation.

3. Empowered

Pentecost and after. People empowered with Word and Spirit.

4. Inscribed

Special Revelation — only way to salvation. Purpose of Bible. Not a science book; not history book; but . . . revelation.

Its uniqueness

5. Inspiration

Scriptures are the product of the Spirit of God. The writers of Scripture preserved God's purpose without error. Inspiration means

6. Historicity

Only the Scriptures offer a chronology of God's dealings with man. Scriptures are reliable, trustworthy. Role of archaeology. Perhaps a brief contrast with other "holy writings" with respect to historicity.

7. Preservation

Under God's providence, the Scriptures have been preserved — essentially unchanged — from the days of Moses. Ancient manuscripts. Dead Sea Scrolls.

8. Unity

Single message. Christocentric.

9. Power

How the Word—through the testimony of the Spirit—has been sustaining and changing lives from Philip and the Ethiopian to Cleaver and Colson. Bible as missionary tool.

10. Superiority (to other "holy writings")

The Bible as compared to writings of Islam or Book of Mormon. Comparative excerpts. Reference to criteria developed in 5-10.

Its forms

11. The Canon.

Why and when and how our present Bible was accepted.

12. Translations

Reasons for, principles of, examples. How different from paraphrases.

13. Paraphrases

Comparisons of several paraphrases. "Slant" (theological) in paraphrasing.

II. How to Read the Bible (16-17 sessions)

Intent of this unit is to help students read Scripture accurately, within the boundaries of Reformed tradition and responsible scholarship.

In the first of two lessons we'll focus on a type of biblical literature, exploring its purpose, its style, its audience, its theological perspective, and its author. In the subsequent lesson, lesson two, we'll help the students apply these hermeneutics to a representative passage from the particular section of Scripture being studied. Students will interpret the passage, applying the hermeneutical insights gained in the preceding lesson, and sometimes deciding which interpretation among several seems best.

The eight types of literature with which we will be working are the traditional divisions of the canon, as follows:

A. The Pentateuch

B. The Former Prophets (Joshua to Esther)

C. Wisdom Literature (Job to Song of Solomon)

D. The Later Prophets (Isaiah to Malachi)

E. The Gospels

F. History (Acts)

G. The Epistles

H. Apocalypse (Revelation)

Each of the above will be followed by an "applicatory" or "practice" lesson, making a total of 16 sessions. The quarter could close with a special lesson providing students with selected passages for their interpretation.

III. *Applied Bible Studies* (24-36 sessions)

A. Chapter-by-chapter (12-24 sessions)

An in-depth, chapter-by-chapter study of individual books of the Bible, giving students an opportunity to apply the insights and hermeneutical principles learned in Units I and II, above. Representative books of the Old and New Testament to be selected.

B. The Bible and Justice (6 sessions)

Examines highlights of the biblical teachings on justice, from Genesis 3 to the Pauline Epistles. Intent of the unit is to enable students to trace a theme or issue throughout the Bible, reaching conclusions based on a comprehensive study of biblical givens.

C. Personal Devotions (6 sessions)

Like the unit on prayer, this unit intends to help the student develop a closer personal relationship with God. The student will learn how to:

- select versions of the Bible for personal devotions.
- structure his/her devotions in a systematic, meaningful way.
- ask certain key questions, designed to get at the meaning of the passage and to apply that meaning in a personal way.
- determine which passages to memorize.
- determine which times and places are most conducive to his/her personal Bible study.

CONFESSIONS

I. *This We Confess* (10 sessions)

The unit is intended to enable students to identify the three ecumenical creeds and the three Reformed confessions, providing basic historical facts (authors, dates, historical context) about each creed. Students should be able to identify a major doctrinal issue dealt with in the ecumenical creeds and a second such issue dealt with in the Reformed creeds. The course is also intended to encourage the student to make the confessions his/her own profession of faith.

We envision an introductory lesson, in which the nature of the confessing church is explored, followed by one lesson on each creed and two on each of the forms of unity.

II. *Reformed Doctrine* (18 sessions)

The Heidelberg Catechism gave the students one theological survey of the faith; this course is intended to provide a second survey, giving the students new "handles" for understanding and expressing their faith, and demonstrating that the creeds answer life's most significant questions.

Students will study the doctrines of God (Father, Son, Holy Spirit); man; Christ; salvation; church; and last things.

The approach to these doctrines will be experiential, asking those questions about God, man, etc. that are significant to young adults; then helping students find answers to those questions in the Scriptures and creeds. Alternate views of God, man, Christ, etc., (existentialist; scientific; etc.) will be included when appropriate.

III. *The Mission of God* (10 sessions)

The intent of this unit is to broaden students' ideas of "mission" and "evangelism," to help them evaluate contemporary mission strategies in view of the goal of God's mission, and to promote their own involvement in that mission.

Pedagogy will make use of the case study method and mission strategy sessions. Role play and direct practice will be used to help students learn to articulate their faith to others.

Tentative course outline:

A. Missions and you

Through case studies the students examine three reactions of their age group to missions. The three reactions to be examined are:

1. indifference — "Let others do it"
2. mission limited to verbal testimony only
3. mission limited to "letting others see in my life that Jesus lives"

B. What is the mission of God?

Two lessons which help the students develop a biblical concept of the mission of God. The case studies in the first lesson will be reevaluated in light of what the Bible teaches about missions.

C. How mission is done—by sects

How groups like Jehovah Witnesses do mission and how their methods are determined by their theory of mission.

D. How mission is done — by fundamentalists

What we can learn from the fundamentalist view of mission and methods of mission.

E. How mission is done — by humanitarians

What we can learn from the humanitarian view of mission and method of mission.

F. How mission is done — by us

Drawing on what they've learned in the first six lessons, students will arrive at several principles governing how we do mission.

G. How mission is done — by my congregation

A look at how the local congregation organizes for mission; the young adult's part in that mission.

H. Articulating my faith — to friends

Session will focus on enabling students to give the person sitting next to them in class "a reason for the faith that is within me." The time, place, and value of giving one's testimony will be considered.

I. Articulating my faith — to the world

How to use the Bible to lead someone to Christ. Importance of individualizing the approach. Role play.

IV. *Church Life* (9 sessions)

Intent of the unit is to help students gain an understanding of church activities through observations and participation; to encourage them to move toward becoming active and responsible church members.

Lessons would first focus on the local congregation, examining the work of the pastor, the officebearers, and the various committees (education, evangelism, music, etc.) active in the church. Church government would be examined. Students would be encouraged to visit various groups (Bible study, young adults, church school, etc.).

Emphasis would then shift to local church's involvement in denominational activities and agencies: classis; synod; World Missions; Home Missions; Education; CRWRC; higher education, etc.

As much as possible, the students will learn by doing: interviewing the pastor; visiting the council; accompanying an elder on a sick call; sitting in on a teacher's meeting; going to classis; etc.

The course would be aimed almost exclusively at CRC congregations.

CHRISTIAN RESPONSES

I. *Christian Ethics* (13 sessions)

Intent of the unit is to help students recognize the scope of God's mission in the world, to teach them to think as Christians, and to motivate them to become involved in the solution of social and personal "ethical" problems. Sample "life issues" to be discussed:

- world hunger
- world poverty
- abortion
- euthanasia
- war
- ecology
- truthfulness
- self-abuse
- racism

Students will discover certain moral principles common to all or most of the above issues; they will learn to apply these principles to the issues under discussion.

II. *Christian Apologetics* (12 sessions)

Intent of the unit is to help students recognize and deal with various modern "attackers" of the faith — for them to be able to, in effect, say: "Look, I'm not a fool for believing this. Here are my reasons . . ." Complementing this apologetic approach will be a recognition of the value of simply testifying, "I just believe it!" Sample lesson topics:

- I don't believe . . . there is a God.
- I don't believe . . . God is good.
- I don't believe . . . Jesus is God.

- I don't believe . . . the Bible is God's Word.
- I don't believe . . . in miracles.
- I don't believe . . . in life after death.

For each of these areas, students will learn: 1) the nature and rationale of the attack, 2) our answer to it, and 3) how to actually defend against it (role play; written defenses). We're thinking of at least two lessons on each topic area.

III. *Seminars* (at least 25 sessions)

A "seminar" implies an informal classroom setting in which a relatively small group of mature students freely work and interact. Typically, the students would do some form of "research" before engaging in discussion; they might, for example, listen to a speaker, visit teacher-assembled learning centers, work in the church or school library, or read assigned materials. In this setting, the teacher's role is that of "facilitator" or "enabler."

Suggestions for Seminars:

A. Profession of Faith (7-8 sessions)

Not a crash course for the nervous would-be professor of faith, but a look at profession of faith as a Christian response to the church. This seminar would include a close look at the vows made in profession of faith; an introduction to membership responsibilities and privileges; an answering of pertinent questions *re* beliefs of the church, forms of the church, church at worship, etc.

B. Marriage

This seminar would discuss such questions as: What is the biblical view of marriage? Of divorce? Should I marry or remain single?

C. Vocation

A seminar to help students determine God's will for their lives, including vocation, avocations, time use, life style.

D. C. S. Lewis: Mere Christianity

E. Major World Religions

F. Other . . .

APPENDIX TWO

TEACHER TRAINING: 1977-1978

A. *Overview*

We propose to establish tentative training regions across Canada and the United States within which we will select and train one or more professional teacher trainers. These trainers will be outfitted to train pastors, superintendents and teachers in local congregations within their regions. They will be paid, but not handsomely, for their services to local congregations; normally, congregations soliciting training will be expected to pay for it. The education department staff will increasingly move into the role of coordinating teacher training and out of the role of doing teacher training.

B. 1977 Offerings

The training program to be offered churches during 1977 is organized as a three-part menu from which churches may select one or many items. Although additional development is expected in each area, the following categories are being planned:

1. BASIC LESSON PLANNING (Recommended time: 8 hours)

The purpose of this unit is to enable teachers to more effectively prepare BIBLE WAY lessons for teaching. This unit will include:

a. *Concepts*

Teachers will learn how lesson truths originate and how they can be used. Ideas about clustering, narrowing, and child abilities (to deal with concrete and abstract concepts) will be covered here.

b. *Objectives*

Teachers will learn what objectives are, how they are formulated and used. Types of aims (general and specific, cognitive and affective) will be distinguished and critiqued. Teachers will be enabled to evaluate their own teaching performance more effectively by using objectives.

c. *Strategies*

Teachers will learn basic approaches to teaching strategies, including inductive and deductive teaching. Teachers will assess the advantages and weaknesses of various strategies, and will learn how and when to use new strategies in the classroom.

d. *Demonstration Lesson*

Teachers will observe live teaching demonstrations utilizing methods taught during training sessions.

2. PROGRAM PLANNING AND EVALUATION

(Recommended Time: 8 hours)

The purpose of this unit is to enable participants to develop a comprehensive plan for and evaluation of their congregation's church education program. The unit will give teachers a valuable perspective on the total curriculum taught in their church school, including rationale and content. The unit will help superintendents, pastors, education committee members, etc. to plan, evaluate, and implement the educational program of their church. The unit will include:

a. *Perspectives*

Participants will survey major historical trends in church education, evaluate various types of goals, examine biblical and confessional approaches, and identify necessary components for a unified church education program.

b. *Curriculum*

Participants will review the rationale and materials of the Unified Church School ("BIBLE WAY") Curriculum, and will explore the relationship between method (process) and material (content).

c. *Program Development*

Participants will design a "model" church education program for their local congregations, detailing all major program components

(curriculum materials, other resources, staff, organization, facility, schedule, training, cost-income, etc.) in a written proposal.

d. *Evaluation*

Participants will develop strategies for annual evaluation of their congregation's education program. Methods for implementing changes will be reviewed.

3. SKILLS TRAINING

(Time requirements vary: most segments 1-2 hours)

The purpose of this unit is to enable teachers to work more effectively within the classroom. Churches are urged to select those topics most appropriate to their needs. Note that some topics are especially recommended for supervisors.

a. *Accounting for Differences*

How to teach children of varying ethnic and religious backgrounds—in a single classroom.

b. *Classroom Management*

How to help children who are disruptive, withdrawn, slow learners, exceptionally gifted, etc.

c. *Crafts*

How to make effective use of crafts and craft-activities in the traditional classroom.

d. *Drama*

How to use drama and dramatic devices to facilitate learning.

e. *Evaluating Student Performance*

How to prepare effective review material, tests, quizzes; how to design student "report cards."

f. *Human Development*

How to identify (and structure teaching to) developmental levels of students, using schemes like those of Erikson, Kohlberg, Piaget.

g. *Interaction*

How to listen, question, praise, encourage; use of the Flander's system; how to communicate personal Christian experience.

h. *Learning Centers*

How to develop and utilize learning centers.

i. *Media*

How to make displays, use visuals, films, recordings, and other media.

j. *Memory Work*

How to help the children memorize and how to use memorization more effectively in the classroom.

k. *Music*

How to teach songs and how to use songs in teaching, especially with younger children.

l. *Parental Involvement*

How, when, and why to involve parents in church education.

m. *Recruitment* (especially recommended for supervisors)

How to recruit and support potentially gifted teachers.

n. *Story Telling*

How to tell stories effectively.

o. *Teacher's Meeting* (especially recommended for supervisors)

How to organize and conduct effective teacher's meetings.

p. *Team Teaching*

How to develop, use, and evaluate team teaching in the traditional classroom.

C. *Sequence of Units*

Congregations will be urged to provide training Units One and Two *before* or *with* items from Unit Three.

D. *Certificates*

A certificate of achievement will be awarded to all participants who:

1. Complete Unit One, *or*
2. Complete Unit Two, *or*
3. Complete at least eight hours of Unit Three.

A special diploma will be given to all participants who complete, 1, 2, and 3 as described above.

E. *Selecting Trainers*

The key to successful training has more to do with who provides the training, we are convinced, than with what subject areas are covered. The selection of regional trainers is probably the most important step in our process.

During the coming year we propose to select and train twenty people from twelve regions covering Canada and the United States. The basic outline of the regions is described together with the number of trainers for each region. Within the regions described, trainers will be responsible to provide training to all users of the BIBLE WAY curriculum, at the request of local congregations.

Some regions may ultimately prove to be too large and others too small, some may need more trainers and some less, and so forth. But the divisions seem adequate for a start. We limited our number of trainers to twenty for the first year because (1) we can reasonably expect to find, recruit and train twenty people, (2) the cost of training and supporting twenty people is respectable, (3) by limiting the number of trainers we can reasonably expect they will all be used, and (4) this will provide a substantial base for future growth.

In selecting trainers we will look for applicants who:

1. Are committed Christians characterized as active, professing members of congregations and have a special desire to serve.
2. Hold the equivalent of an A.B. Degree, usually with a teaching certificate.
3. Have experience and proven competence as teachers.
4. Have experience in church education.
5. Are able to work with others in a supervisory capacity.

6. Are sensitive to differences in people and congregations.
7. Demonstrate certain competencies which can be further developed:
 - a. Basic knowledge of human growth and development.
 - b. Essential ability to articulate the Reformed faith.
 - c. Group process and communication skills.

F. *Training Trainers*

We propose to conduct the first (annual) training conference for teacher trainers during August, 1977. The conference will require five days of active participation on the part of all trainers and will be provided free of charge. Education Department staff members will organize and help lead this conference; experts in various categories will provide specific training units.

The core of "trainers' training" will be those units which are to be offered to the churches in 1977. Trainers will be expected to complete home study in several categories before the conference so that conference time can be devoted especially to learning training techniques.

In addition to learning the training modules themselves, trainers will receive additional information about and experience with:

1. New trends in church education and church education resources, including JED (Joint Education Development), NTEP (National Teacher Education Project), ETTA (Evangelical Teacher Training Association), etc.
2. Promotional materials describing training available and regional teacher trainers. These materials will already have been circulated to the churches by August.
3. A regular fee structure and policies regarding fees for training. The guidelines regarding self-sufficiency will be respected as completely as possible.
4. Evaluate techniques to assess specific training needs in congregations and to measure the success of training which is provided.
5. Plans for future curriculum development.
6. Additional resources available.

REPORT 6
CHRISTIAN REFORMED WORLD RELIEF COMMITTEE
(Arts 43, 45, 56)

I. INTRODUCTION

Conditions of increasing world population, decreasing food reserves, inflation, and the spiraling cost of energy has led to increased realization of human needs. At the same time natural disasters continue to occur at unexpected times and in unexpected places. World sensitivity to these needs is also increasing. A decade ago CRWRC was a novice in the field of relief associations. Since that time many others—some secular and some church-related—have entered the field.

Our denomination has once again given most generously as its expression of love and concern for the needy. Our program grew in numbers and in the quality of our outreach. It was truly a year of answered prayers. Particularly encouraging was a measure of recognition of the diaconal responsibility by national churches in countries where we carry on a team ministry with our missionary colleagues. As churches were established and grew in Nigeria, Honduras, and the Philippines, the role of diaconal responsibility was included as a component of the churches' responsibility.

II. THE BOARD

Our annual February meeting of the board drew representation from all parts of the denomination. A busy schedule of executive committee meetings and subcommittee meetings responded to a variety of needs with dispatch.

The officers serving the board this year are: Dr. Daniel De Vries, president; John Vander Ploeg, vice-president; James Tuinstra, secretary; Donald Pruis, treasurer; Kenneth Terpstra, vice-secretary/treasurer.

During the course of recent years it became increasingly evident that support from our churches in Canada was very substantial and that input from our Canadian delegates provided insight into world needs and response by a concerned constituency. Presently there is only one member from Canada on our executive committee.

CRWRC requests synod to revise CRWRC's constitution to allow for additional Canadian representation on the executive committee by changing Article II-A to read as follows:

ARTICLE II

Executive Committee

A. Its Personnel

There shall be an executive committee composed of the members-at-large, the delegates from the thirteen classes as designated by synod: Cadillac, Chicago North, Chicago South, Grand Rapids East, Grand Rapids North, Grand Rapids South, Grandville, Holland, Illiana,

Kalamazoo, Lake Erie, Muskegon, and Zeeland, and three delegates from Canada to be selected by ballot at the annual meeting of the board.

Grounds:

1. This method of restructuring the executive committee (and its subcommittees) recognizes the need for and the benefits of adequate input in maintaining a single (unified) denominational work of mercy.
2. It recognizes the sophistication of the diaconal ministry in Canada and the need to make that asset available to the denomination.

III. DISASTER AND EMERGENCY RELIEF

Disasters, major and minor, at home and abroad, used many of CRWRC's resources and drained much of our energy in 1976. Through God's grace and the support of the denomination, CRWRC was able to respond quickly and generously to many different disaster needs.

Just as we wrote last year's report to synod, the tragic earthquake in Guatemala had destroyed thousands of homes and many lives. CRWRC's response to this need continued throughout 1976 and into 1977. Material aid in the form of clothes, blankets, plastic sheeting, tools, and roofing materials was the first aid to leave the United States for Guatemala. Volunteers followed quickly—first nurses, and then builders to help restore homes. Several volunteers served during the year and at the writing of this report, there are three volunteer builders still serving. In addition, CRWRC appointed Mark Kapenga to a one-year term to develop and supervise any longer-term programs that CRWRC undertakes during 1977.

Typhoon damage in the Philippines and Guam in May 1976, resulted in CRWRC's shipping clothing, blankets, milk, candles, and charcoal, as well as sending funds for purchasing other material needs. In Guam distribution was carried out by the Board of World Missions' Rev. Henry Dykema; in the Philippines CRWRC's Ivan De Kam was in charge of distribution.

In June and August floods held CRWRC's attention. The breaking of the Teton Dam in Idaho left thousands homeless and destroyed whole communities. CRWRC's aid was concentrated on person-to-person services. CRWRC provided caseworkers to the Red Cross, clean-up aid for many victims, and personnel to help the local community develop and staff disaster recovery operations. Working in a heavily Mormon area, CRWRC was pleased with the many requests for Bibles that developed out of contacts with victims. Hundreds of hours of work were contributed by Christian Reformed people from Montana. A little-noticed flood on the Atlantic coast of Nicaragua brought a request for aid from CRWRC's staff in that disaster prone country. Aid was sent in the form of blankets, mosquito netting, cash-for-food distribution and seeds for replanting the devastated crops.

On July 29 an unusual period of thunderstorms produced a violent flash flood in Colorado's Big Thompson Canyon. A torrent of water

swept away homes, possessions, and whole communities. Again CRWRC responded with person-to-person aid—volunteers to help clean up, to offer emotional and spiritual support to victims, to help the local community organize and carry out a long-term disaster recovery program. At this writing, volunteers are still serving there, still discovering needs that are not being met.

A shipment of blankets and medicines to the mid-East was used by CRWRC-Jordan staff to serve victims of the Lebanese civil war. CRWRC investigated possible relief to victims of earthquakes in other parts of the world—Italy, Mindao, the Philippines, and Turkey, but found that substantial aid was not practical. In several domestic disasters also, CRWRC staff reports were that local help was adequate to meet the needs.

In accordance with synod's request, CRWRC and our Board of World Missions collaborated in the formation of a World Hunger Task Force (Acts of Synod 1976, Art. 55, pg. 56). The committee has already had several meetings and presents its report separately as Report 39.

IV. FOREIGN SERVICE OUTREACHES

It is estimated that two-thirds of the world's population live in stark poverty that permeates every phase of life. Despite the efforts of relief agencies the world over and massive doses of government funds, poverty in underdeveloped countries continues to increase.

To attempt to alleviate the "burden of poverty" of two-thirds of the world's population is a task beyond comprehension. World relief agencies, in an effort to focus limited resources where they are most needed, have focused their attention on the poorest countries in the world and the poorest people. The "poorest of the poor" has become an oft-heard expression.

But how do we identify the "poorest of the poor?" The United Nations' World Bank identifies the poorest people as those with annual per capita incomes of \$50.00 or less. It is estimated that about 640 million persons fall into this category.

It is to this monumental task that the Christian Reformed Church through its agency, the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee, is "providing a ministry of Christian love that reflects Christ's total concern for the needy and stimulates a desire by the recipient to see Jesus."

1976 was a year of increasing involvement for the CRWRC. Relief efforts were extended from twelve to thirteen foreign countries. During the year the CRWRC foreign staff increased by eight, in addition to three long-term volunteers. A staff of thirty-four expatriates serves overseas with a budget of \$1.4 million.

During 1976 the CRWRC developed a new budget approach for its field activities. As we continue to develop and improve upon this planning procedure we hope to provide the CRWRC board with a management tool by which program progress can be more fully determined and analyzed.

A. *Asia*

1. Bangladesh

Pakistan was separated from India in 1947 because the inhabitants were primarily Muslim in contrast to the Hindu population of the present nation of India. Pakistan, however, became two provinces separated by 900 miles and two distinct cultures. In 1971 civil war between West Pakistan and East Pakistan ended with the formation of a new nation, Bangladesh, in place of East Pakistan. To this new nation, laid bare by the ravages of war, CRWRC first sent staff on loan to the Mennonite Central Committee. This past year the CRWRC gained recognition as an independent agency in Bangladesh, carrying out a deed ministry in the areas of agriculture and community development with a staff of six Christian Reformed young people and families. Two staff members are on loan to the Mennonite Central Committee, John Deelstra and Ronald Prins, and four are working in CRWRC's own program in Bogra District; John Brouwer, Rick De Graaf, Kees Poppe, and Dave Van Der Puy.

2. India

A continuing CRWRC outreach to the small, struggling Christian Reformed Churches of South India includes a midday-feeding program, medical assistance, and disaster relief. The CRWRC has no expatriate staff in India.

3. Jordan

To the country of Jordan the CRWRC brings a ministry of deed in physical, mental and social rehabilitation. CRWRC brings a labor of love to the mentally and physically handicapped in a country where many of its cities were founded in ancient times and are mentioned in various parts of the Bible—Hebron, Jericho, and Bethlehem being but a few. Warfare in 1948 split Jerusalem between Israel and Jordan. After the Six-Day War in June of 1967 victorious Israelis annexed the Arab sector, vowing never to give it up. The results of war have left many displaced Arabs in Jordan, a country whose economy prevents adequate care of the people, much less the ability to cope with the problems of rehabilitation. It is to this need that the CRWRC is giving professional help and guidance with the cooperation of Pine Rest. CRWRC currently has two families serving in Jordan—the families of Paul Kok and Larry Slager.

4. Korea

Three programs continue to receive CRWRC assistance in Korea. A diminishing annual grant is provided to the Holt Agency for the CRWRC's pioneer adoption program, CAPOK. A medical program to provide prenatal care in the slum areas on the fringes of Seoul is administered by Dr. H. C. Lee. A program offering educational, medical and social services in the Sadang-dong community is under the direction of Mr. K. H. Kang. The CRWRC has no expatriate staff in Korea.

5. Philippines

The CRWRC outreach in the Philippines consists of agricultural projects, medical projects, nutrition programs, self-help and community development programs. The CRWRC has also assumed the obligation to assist the growing Christian Reformed Churches of the Philippines in organizing their own diaconal outreach. Although such beginnings are modest, the local churches are expected to meet local congregational needs with their own resources. CRWRC has four staff persons and families serving in the Philippines—Ivan De Kam, William Fernhout, Eleanor Haan, and Peter Vellenga.

B. Africa

1. Niger

The CRWRC involvement in Niger provides two staff members who are on loan to the Sudan Interior Mission (SIM). Markus Frei supervises the Sudan Interior Mission agricultural program among the nomadic Fulani tribes and Judy Dotonga is engaged in medical work in the Sudan Interior Mission hospital at Galmi. The Fulani are among the nomadic tribes victimized by the great famine of 1974.

2. Nigeria

The CRWRC works closely with the Board of World Missions in Nigeria to promote the Christian Rural Development Program (CRD). During 1976 the long-awaited visa was secured and CRWRC sent a second staff member to begin work in that country. The Christian Rural Development Program is an agricultural help program to increase food production and family incomes among the communities served by the Tiv and Ekas Benue churches. The split within the Nigerian church early in 1975 continues to be a frustration to the Christian Rural Development Program and the CRWRC staff personnel—Louis Haveman and Steven Nikkel.

C. Latin America

1. Costa Rica

Alfalit International headquarters is located in the Republic of Costa Rica. The name Alfalit is formed from two Spanish words, Alfabetizar—to make literate, and literatura—literature. It is a Christian movement of literacy and basic adult education serving the church and the people of Latin America. Alfalit believes that Christ is the only hope for men and nations. CRWRC provides financial assistance and qualified literacy staff to Alfalit. Currently the CRWRC has one staff person working in Alfalit International Headquarters—Gertie Gietema.

2. Nicaragua

Following disaster relief efforts in 1973, CRWRC was authorized by synod to develop long-range programs in Nicaragua. CRWRC efforts in Nicaragua continue under the umbrella of an evangelical organization known as CEPAD. The CRWRC provides to CEPAD a consultant and an agriculturist. Programs in that country include agriculture, housing, well drilling, medical work, general community

development and advisory assistance to CEPAD. Various projects are also developed in cooperation with the Christian Reformed Churches of Nicaragua. CRWRC staff includes Peter Limburg and Joel Zwier.

3. Honduras

Honduras was synodically approved as a CRWRC field in 1973. In 1974 Hurricane Fifi expanded the CRWRC activities in that country. Subsequent short and long-range development programs led us into the areas of nutrition, day-care centers, feeding programs, and a fishing cooperative. CRWRC provides advisors to two national organizations, CEDEN and Alfalit. The former is an evangelical development organization and the latter is involved in literacy. The literacy work in Honduras has been expanded to include the Miskito project in adult literacy training. The nutrition programs and day-care centers are in conjunction with the national Christian Reformed Churches. CRWRC has four professional staff persons in Honduras—Carol Boersma, Tom Post, Elizabeth Roldan, and Carol Van Ess. An additional appointee is now in language study—the Darryl Mortensen family.

4. Haiti

CRWRC's most recent expansion is in the country of Haiti. This past year two CRWRC staff people have completed language study in the Creole language and are now located in the Central Plateau area developing a CRWRC outreach in cooperation with the Missionary Church. While in language study, Dave Genzink devoted considerable time to the tedious task of gaining official government recognition for the CRWRC. It is hoped that this status will become a reality during 1977. Beginning programs will include community development, agricultural projects and a medical outreach. Sandy Beelen is already beginning her medical work in the Central Plateau.

5. Mexico

The CRWRC outreach in Mexico is in agriculture. CRWRC has projects in the Yucatan Peninsula and the Oaxaca Valley. The Yucatan work is among the local farmers and rural villagers and is accomplished in cooperation with the local Presbyterian churches. CRWRC efforts in Oaxaca center around the Oaxaca Training Center and nearby experimental farm and animal centers. The training center is a joint venture with the Board of World Missions. CRWRC has four staff members in Mexico with their families—Loren Buurma, Clare De Boer, Calvin Lubbers, and Duane Postma.

V. DOMESTIC PROGRAMMING

One of the primary goals established for domestic programs in 1976 was that projects begun in 1974 and 1975 should become more firmly established, without great concern for major program expansion. Another goal was that deacons and diaconal conferences might achieve greater awareness of the possibilities for diaconal service. This goal was not entirely reached and still needs a great deal of effort and attention. The following is a brief report on each program and project carried on by the CRWRC in the United States and Canada during 1976:

A. *Appalachia*

Appalachia is a part of the United States that gained considerable attention during the late 1960's, but is now being forgotten. Severe poverty, however, continues to exist. In this area, CRWRC has established two offices, one in Middlesboro, Kentucky, and the other in Pennington Gap, Virginia. Through a variety of programs—including family counseling services, summer camping programs for youth, assisting community and local church people to develop programs that will help correct existing conditions, self-help, and nutrition programs—effort is being made to encourage the poor to work toward the adoption of an alternative Christian life-style that will enhance personal growth, security, and independence.

The Middlesboro office is staffed by Jim Boldenow, Janna Doesburg, CRWRC board appointees, and Regenia Edens, Perry Cook, and Joanne Cook, from the local community. The Pennington Gap office, which opened officially on June 1, 1976, is staffed by Del Willink, appointed by CRWRC board and Ann Nolan from the local community.

B. *Mississippi Christian Family Services*

During 1976, this program celebrated its first anniversary with twenty-nine children enrolled, the maximum for which the program was designed. A grant from the United States Department of Health, Education, and Welfare helped accelerate the movement toward program goals and objectives. During this past year, a local board of directors became a reality and planning began for a program for developmentally disabled adults. Under the direction of Elvinah Spoelstra, with Susie Evans, and thirteen locally hired staff persons, three major services are being provided today: 1) day training for developmentally disabled children, and 2) day training for developmentally disabled adults, and 3) special services to the handicapped.

C. *Disaster Preparedness Program*

In the states of Florida, Washington and California, the training of additional disaster volunteers assisted in working toward the goal of having trained CR volunteers in all areas of North America. Volunteers who were trained in Washington state in April had an opportunity to serve in Idaho with the Teton Dam recovery efforts. Four CRWRC long-term volunteers are still on location in Colorado after the Big Thompson Canyon flood. Major steps were taken during 1976 to put together a manual detailing our disaster response program. Refresher courses for disaster volunteers were held in Grand Rapids, Michigan, and in Sioux Center and Pella, Iowa, to keep previously trained volunteers up-to-date.

D. *Refugees*

Resettlement of Vietnamese refugees declined rapidly during the early part of 1976. CRWRC was assisted through funds available from Church World Service (CWS) to respond to major and unusual

financial needs incurred by churches in the resettlement of their refugee families.

E. *Diaconal Training*

CRWRC has continued to cooperate with the Board of Home Missions and the Education Department in the preparation of an Office-bearers Resource Training Manual. This manual will be available to churches beginning in the fall of 1977. The Education Department has assumed full responsibility for the final editorship and publication of the manual.

Several retreats for deacons and diaconal conference meetings were attended by CRWRC staff during 1976. Each session documented the urgent need for a contemporary approach and perspective on the ministry of *diakonia*.

F. *Detroit Community Assistance*

When a home missionary found he could not deal with the multiple social and economic problems brought to his attention, the Board of Home Missions requested that CRWRC provide a social worker to the Detroit church. Josephine Collins, a para-professional social worker and member of the Detroit Community Church, has served to respond partially to the ongoing problems. Detroit area churches provide funds and food products for distribution to those urgently in need. CRWRC funds are used to pay Josephine's salary, fringe benefits, and related program costs.

G. *Edmonton Family Counseling*

A concern that no structured Christian family counseling program existed in the Edmonton metropolitan community led to the decision by the North Alberta Diaconal Conference that they should help to organize such a program. 1976 was the first full year that this program was in operation. John Carr serves as director. Besides counseling services for CR individuals and families and the broader Edmonton community, training seminars are conducted to enhance marital understanding and relationships. CRWRC financial resources are used to help pay the director's salary and other supportive program costs.

H. *L.A. Resource Center*

The Vietnamese refugees and elderly persons living in downtown Los Angeles became concerns of the Los Angeles Deacons Association during 1975. During 1976, the refugee program phased out faster than anticipated and efforts were put forth to initiate a special program for the unattached elderly. A significant ministry is being established and will require a unique effort on the part of the Los Angeles Deacons Association. During 1976 CRWRC provided funds for operational costs which were partially matched with funds raised by the Los Angeles Deacons Association. Additional support is planned for 1977.

I. *Native American Urban Transition Program*

This program focuses on the needs of Native American girls who migrate to Denver from their tribal reservations. A Christian tem-

porary residential home is available to help them make the transition to urban life. Through the Denver Diaconal Conference local resources have been generated. Directed by Mary Pioche with the assistance of Bev Jaeger, a program including counseling, job seeking assistance, and temporary shelter is provided. CRWRC funds are used to pay Mary's salary and supportive program costs.

J. Roseland Christian Ministries Center

This inner-city, multi-ministry program is a cooperative effort on the part of the Board of Home Missions, SCORR, CRWRC, and the three Chicago area classes. Housed in the former Back to God Hour building, this program intends to provide a Christian witness to the greater Roseland community. The Rev. A. Van Zanten was appointed by the Board of Home Missions during 1976 to serve as the Center's home missionary. During 1976, CRWRC funds helped pay costs related to establishing and maintaining this program. Subsequent funding will be used to pay the salary of a social worker to be assigned to the program.

K. Sun Valley Christian Family Services

Started two and one-half years ago, this program has been, and continues to be, an integral part of the multi-ministry provided by the Sun Valley Community Church. By providing counseling, referral, and advocacy services to distressed Spanish speaking individuals and families, an effective word-deed ministry is being realized. The Family Services program is funded entirely by CRWRC, including program costs, the salary of Lupe Rodriguez, program director, and the services of a part-time professional social worker.

L. Calvary Rehabilitation Center

Alcoholism continues to be a serious problem in the United States. Calvary provides a Christian recovery program, not only for alcoholics in the Phoenix community, but to many alcoholics of CRC background. Due to federal fund cut-backs, Calvary appealed to CRWRC to supply a full-time counselor. Jim Laack, a CRWRC social worker, was transferred to the Calvary program. Through his services, Calvary has been able to provide a more comprehensive recovery program.

M. One to One

This program matches church and community volunteers on a one-to-one basis with persons confined in Washington State and Federal Correctional institutions. The Cascade Diaconal Conference helps to support, with the assistance of CRWRC, the One to One program operated out of the Tacoma area. The Mount Baker Diaconal Conference, with the assistance of CRWRC, supports the One to One program established for the Lynden church community. The Tacoma program supervises over four hundred volunteers while the Lynden project supervises approximately one hundred volunteers. These programs are effective diaconal ministries in the rehabilitation of persons confined in correctional institutions.

N. Gallup Friendship House

This ministry started by CRWRC has now been effectively and efficiently supervised by a local board of directors for three years. A NIAAA grant has served as the major funding source for this program. Through a sustaining grant from CRWRC, along with limited local finances, the board of directors has been able to provide the essential match for the grant. During 1976, ninety-three graduated from this intensive thirty-day residential Christian alcohol recovery program for male and female Navaho Indians.

O. Northside Addicts Rehabilitation Center

This drug-free addict rehabilitation program located in the heart of Paterson, New Jersey, has been the major project of the Eastern Diaconal Conference for six years. CRWRC provides a sustaining grant to this conference, which, combined with local financial resources, provides the essential match for the federal grant. The federal grant pays for program, personnel, and salaries; CRWRC funds assist in the purchase of food, educational materials, and utilities.

VI. FINANCES — ADMINISTRATION — PROMOTION

The growth of CRWRC over the past year has been one for which we give praise and thanks to our God. The expansion and growth of both our foreign and domestic programs has increased for financial needs as well. Our people have responded generously to these needs.

A. Material Resource Center

The new facility at 4317 Airwest has been a great help to the work of CRWRC. During 1976 it served well for the disasters in Guatemala, Colorado, Idaho, as well as shipments of supplies to Jordan, Philippines, Nicaragua, Honduras, and Nigeria. We shipped seeds, school supplies, clothing, food, and many other items as requested by our missionaries. In addition the warehouse carpenter section has crated many missionaries' personal goods for both World Missions and CRWRC. It has also assisted in supplying needs in Mississippi and Appalachia.

During 1976 the warehouse took in 137,816 pounds, or 29,674 pounds more than in 1975. We shipped out 154,485 pounds, or 22,016 pounds more than in 1975 and made 1,131 more bales of clothing and blankets.

For the Guatemala disaster we had donations of wheelbarrows and uniforms. We purchased shovels, plastic, and blankets. Free freight was donated by Associated Freightways to Chicago, and Delta Airlines donated space on a cargo plane to Florida.

Our lease on the building on Airwest is scheduled to terminate in 1978. The lease has been extended for another year while we work with the Synodical Interim Committee and an architect to study possibilities of a new building on denominational property to the rear of the present building.

B. Administration

Remaining alert to a myriad of human needs, planning Christian outreaches and providing support to a staff in many parts of the world requires a back up team with a wide range of skills. Our foreign outreaches are supervised by Wayne Medendorp while C. "Neil" Molenaar serves in a similar role for our domestic programs.

Merle Grevengoed serves as controller and supervises our material aid services. He is assisted by Art Schaap, our clothing center manager, and Charles Berghuis, as accountant.

The tentative appointment given Karen De Vos as coordinator of promotions at our last annual meeting was changed to a permanent appointment in May. She has made encouraging progress in the areas of audio-visual aids and in increasing our relations with churches and other support groups. Peter Zwart continues to handle a variety of essential tasks for CRWRC in Canada. His experience and knowledge of Canadian matters have saved our administrative staff much time and effort.

Our administrative efforts were further assisted by a number of volunteer and part-time aides. The secretarial work continues under the capable direction of Mrs. Jane Ritsema who will soon be completing her tenth year of service for CRWRC. Her services have been unusually valuable for CRWRC and are deeply appreciated. Connie Bolt and Kathy Door were both married during the year and continue their pleasant and cheerful services. Cheryl Talsma serves as a welcome addition to our clerical staff.

Louis Van Ess is Executive Director, the position to which he was appointed in 1962. Realizing that his present appointment would carry through 1977 and that he is nearing retirement age, he indicated his desire not to be considered for another term as Executive Director. The board acknowledged his wish and expressed appreciation for the fifteen years of service during an important period of CRWRC's witness. A recommendation for a successor to Mr. Van Ess is covered in Section "X-A."

C. Report on Receipts and Disbursements

As CRWRC grows, our receipts and expenditures also increase. Giving for the Guatemala disaster was greater than for any other disaster; however, it did divert funds from the general fund. We pray for the continued response of our people to our increased program expenses and thank the Lord for the opportunities to serve those in need.

D. Deferred Giving

CRWRC recognizes the value and importance of deferred giving in the future funding of denominational causes. We recognize also the desirability of maintaining unified approaches to the constituency in this area. CRWRC is grateful for the work of the Barnabas Foundation and Christian Stewardship Services and recommends that the denominational quota for their work be continued for one year.

E. Request for Approval for Denominational Offerings

CRWRC requests that synod commend the work of mercy to our churches and urge them to take offerings on a regular and sustaining basis to provide the necessary funds for this ministry.

CHRISTIAN REFORMED WORLD RELIEF COMMITTEE

STATEMENTS OF FUND BALANCE

December 31, 1976

GENERAL FUNDASSETS

Cash:			
Demand deposits		\$188,451.26	
Savings accounts and certificates		200,913.83	
Field bank and cash accounts		<u>56,820.34</u>	\$446,185.43
Nigeria revolving fund			24,900.00
Marketable securities			<u>950.00</u>
			<u>\$472,035.43</u>

LIABILITY

Unexpended government grants			\$ 63,881.00
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FUND EQUITY

Balance at December 31, 1976:			
General Fund		\$358,154.43	
Disaster Fund		<u>50,000.00</u>	<u>\$408,154.43</u>
			<u>\$472,035.43</u>

FURNITURE AND EQUIPMENT FUNDASSETS

Furniture and equipment - at cost			\$113,287.42
Less allowance for depreciation			<u>31,220.46</u>
			<u>\$ 82,066.96</u>

FUND EQUITY

Balance at December 31, 1976			<u>\$ 82,066.96</u>
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STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN FUND EQUITY
GENERAL FUND

Year ended December 31, 1976

BALANCE - January 1, 1976			\$ 394,780.68
ADDITIONS			
Cash receipts:			
Contributions:			
General	\$1,294,535.34		
Foreign programs	363,639.65		
Domestic programs	25,412.74		
Clothing center	<u>1,443.69</u>	\$1,685,031.42	
Insurance refunds and miscellaneous		8,216.86	
Interest and dividends		<u>25,361.70</u>	
		\$1,718,609.98	
Material aid - at fair market value:			
Clothing (137,816 pounds)	\$ 206,724.00		
Drugs and medicines	16,000.00		
Transportation and miscellaneous	<u>2,832.00</u>	225,556.00	
Government grants		90,119.00	
Transfer from disaster fund		<u>157,876.14</u>	2,192,161.12
			\$2,586,941.80
DEDUCTIONS			
Disbursements (detail schedules):			
Program services:			
Foreign programs	\$1,334,081.81		
Domestic programs	380,000.30		
Clothing processing	<u>45,151.99</u>	\$1,759,234.10	
Supporting services:			
Program	\$ 72,509.16		
Administrative	136,848.08		
Fund raising	<u>34,640.03</u>	243,997.27	
Material Aid		<u>225,556.00</u>	2,228,787.37
BALANCE - December 31, 1976			\$ <u>358,154.43</u>

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN FUND EQUITY
DISASTER FUND

Year ended December 31, 1976

BALANCE - January 1, 1976			\$ 50,000.00
ADDITIONS			
Cash contributions:			
General		\$ 22,582.92	
VietNam refugees		2,548.37	
VietNam scholarship		254.66	
Famine		34,419.64	
Guatemala		488,381.18	
Honduras		100.00	
Turkey		<u>1,225.00</u>	549,511.77
			\$599,511.77

DEDUCTIONS		
General disbursements	\$ 31,069.70	
Famine	2,500.00	
Tornado	60.75	
Honduras	8,284.09	
Teton Dam	24,495.47	
VietNam refugees	11,312.51	
Fort Valley	(5,950.54)	
Colorado	25,084.84	
Guatemala	289,697.81	
Jordan	5,081.00	
Transfer to general fund	<u>157,876.14</u>	<u>549,511.77</u>
BALANCE - December 31, 1976		<u>\$ 50,000.00</u>

VII. PROJECTED 1977 OUTREACHES

It appears that 1977 will not be a year of large expansion in CRWRC's programmed work. We might call it a year of consolidation. There will be some growth in current programs, however, especially in the areas of agriculture development, community development, and nutrition needs.

In Bangladesh, the registration with the Bengali government of CRWRC's program in Bogra District will allow us to bring to full staff that program to increase food supply and improve the lot of the poor farmer. Three new staff positions are anticipated.

In Haiti, a field approved by synod in 1976, the plans for the program are well underway. Projected plans for 1977 include the addition of an agriculturist and a nurse, all working in the Central Plateau area with the Missionary Church.

Meanwhile, CRWRC is diminishing its work in Korea, steadily reducing its financial obligation by phasing out or turning its work over to nationals or other Christians. The same may be true in Mexico's Yucatan Peninsula but definite decisions about the future of the work there depend upon gathering more data and upon the decision of the Board of World Missions about placing a missionary in that area.

A community development program in Pennington Gap, Virginia, part of CRWRC's Appalachian outreach, will increase by one staff position this year in an attempt to help this eager community develop its own resources and services for the poor.

The Disaster Preparedness Program, CRWRC's unique training program for disaster volunteers will expand somewhat, with training sessions being planned for three parts of the denomination. This will bring us closer to our goal of having trained volunteers ready to move into disaster areas in several different parts of the United States and Canada.

Expansion of the diaconal participation by our Canadian and United States churches continues to be a high priority effort. Increasing the sensitivity of deacons to the immensity of their task will be facilitated by CRWRC's contribution to the office-bearer training materials being prepared by the Board of Publications, by CRWRC's field personnel's effort to stimulate diaconal awareness in local and indigenous churches, as well as by CRWRC's work with diaconal conferences.

VII. CRHRC Planned Programming for 1977

A. Foreign Programs

Bangladesh	\$250,800
India	10,200
Jordan	173,700
Korea	135,000
Philippines	101,500
Alfalit	47,800
Guatemala	100,600
Haiti	62,500
Honduras	176,100
Mexico	115,300
Nicaragua	137,400
Niger	33,200
Nigeria	87,300
Food Needs	---
Contingency	<u>55,000</u>

TOTAL \$1,486,400.

B. Domestic Programs

Middlesboro	\$100,060
Pennington Gap	56,640
West Lee County	---
Mississippi Chr. Family Services	101,318
Refugee Project	2,100
Sun Valley Family Services Program	25,050
Detroit Community Assistance	13,550
Denver - NAUTP	18,925
Edmonton - Pastoral Institute	15,350
Tacoma-Cascade -- One to One	6,250
Ht. Baker -- One to One	1,750
Northside Addicts Rehab Center	15,200
Gallup Friendship House	25,550
L.A. Resource Center	30,000
Calvary Rehab Center	16,188
Chicago - Roseland Chr. Ministries	\$ 10,150
Disaster Preparedness Program	13,019
Diaconal	3,300
Anticipated Projects	<u>8,600</u>

TOTAL \$ 463,000

Administration	\$276,500
Resource Center	42,500
Promotion	124,500
Contingency	<u>5,000</u>

TOTAL 448,500

Working Capital 50,000

TOTAL BUDGET \$2,447,900

VIII. NEW FIELDS

CRWRC entered Guatemala in February 1976, in response to a devastating earthquake. Several volunteers served during the year and three are still serving at the time of this writing. The disaster recovery needs of Guatemala have not been completely met, especially in the area of housing, and, as so often happens in the aftermath of disaster, CRWRC has been able to respond to needs there that are not directly disaster related, but which are nonetheless pressing needs in communities affected by the disaster.

Request for Approval of 1977 Programming

CRWRC requests that:

A. Synod approve projected plans for 1977.

B. Synod approve Guatemala as a continued CRWRC outreach during 1977 with the understanding that continued involvement beyond 1977 will be analyzed and a recommendation as to long-term programs brought to the Synod of 1978.

Grounds:

1. CRWRC has commitments made in 1976 that will be completed in 1977.

2. As the disaster phase is now in its final stages, the CRWRC will be able to determine whether efforts should be continued after 1977 in light of its policy guidelines.

3. The Board of World Missions is also considering Guatemala as a potential field of labor; therefore, joint efforts should be explored during 1977.

IX. PROGRAM GUIDELINES

Our report to the Synod of 1976 made mention of preparing guidelines for selection and evaluation of our programs. Synod indicated its desire to be apprised at its 1977 session on progress in this effort (Acts of Synod 1976, Art. 74-V-B, page 84).

As the preparation of guidelines was further studied it became evident that a prior inquiry was needed, namely, refining CRWRC's purpose. This point was confirmed by the use of such an approach by other denominational agencies in reviewing and evaluating their efforts. The new articles of incorporation of our denomination by the Synod of 1974 (Acts of Synod 1974, Art. 53-II-B) included the preparation of a statement of purpose.

Similarly, the Home Missions Board's comprehensive mission planning study adopted a statement of long term goals (Acts of Synod 1976, Report 4-I, p. 209). The newly adopted mission order of the Board of Christian Reformed World Missions (Acts of Synod 1976, Art. 24-IV) also contains the purposes of their outreach in the Introductory Statement.

Accordingly, CRWRC feels that a Statement of Purpose is a prior requirement to the preparation of program guidelines. In this effort CRWRC took note of the approaches taken by agencies listed above.

After such a study CRWRC adopted the following statement at its February meeting:

“CRWRC’s purpose is to serve as the benevolent arm of the denomination. CRWRC shall respond with Christ-like compassion to the sufferers of disasters. It shall plan and implement longer term outreaches in areas of need through programs of rehabilitation and development. Whenever possible programs shall be carried on in communities where a word ministry by local or other witnessing agencies can bring about a continuing comprehensive expression of Christ’s concern for man’s needs. When needs call out from areas where such planned total witness is not readily possible, CRWRC shall evaluate the prospects for and its capability of providing a ministry of Christian love that reflects Christ’s total concern for the needy and stimulates a desire by the recipient ‘to see Jesus’ (John 12:21).”

Request for Constitutional Revision

The foregoing statement of purpose recognizes the two-fold outreach followed by CRWRC in its past decade and a half of service. This comprehensive outreach of disaster and permanent benevolence was also recognized in our discussions with the Synodical Study Committee on Mission Principles.

The Constitution of CRWRC repeatedly recognizes the two types of aid—“emergency” and “permanent benevolence.” Article V—*Administration of Relief* in Section “A” also recognizes these two forms of assistance. Section “B”, however, identifies only “emergency” and presently reads as follows:

“In areas where the Christian Reformed Church is not represented:

1) The CRWRC shall determine whether or not emergency relief shall be given in disaster areas where the Christian Reformed Church is not officially represented. Priority shall be given to those areas which meet the following conditions:

- a. Where CRWRC is able to send its own personnel to the field.
- b. Where follow-up missionary activity can be anticipated.
- c. Where a Christian witness can be achieved by this ministry.

2) The administration of emergency relief shall be conducted along the following line of procedure:

- a. Cooperation with other relief agencies will be sought whenever this does not endanger the identity of CRWRC.
- b. The committee shall at all times attempt to assure the proper use of the funds and materials.”

CRWRC requests that synod approve the deletion of the words, “emergency” and “disaster” from Art. V-B-1 and the word, “emergency” from V-B-2.

Ground: This makes explicit in the constitution the work assigned to CRWRC by synod.

Program guidelines will be further studied against these foregoing criteria and reported to next year’s synod.

X. APPOINTMENTS

A. *Executive Director*

Following the request of our present Executive Director, Mr. Louis Van Ess, that he not be reappointed, the officers began recruitment for a successor through The Banner ads and contacts with our congregations. After extensive evaluation of applicants and many interviews the board interviewed Mr. Dirk Booy of Brampton, Ontario, Canada and Mr. John De Haan of Denver, Colorado, at the annual meeting in February.

The board selected Mr. John De Haan for presentation to synod for an initial appointment of two years as Executive Director of CRWRC. He is 43 years of age, a graduate of Calvin College and the University of Michigan School of Social Work. He is certified by the Academy of Certified Social Workers and has been associated with the Bethesda Community Mental Health Center of Denver for the past eight years. He and his family are members of the Third Christian Reformed Church of Denver.

B. *Board Member Positions*

Terms of the following board members-at-large will expire in 1977. Each is completing his first term of three years.

Sociologist	James Tuinstra
Accountant	Donald Pruis
Minister	Rev. John Bergsma

CRWRC will provide synod with two nominees for each position and for the alternate position.

XI. SUMMARY MATTERS REQUIRING SYNOD'S ATTENTION:

A. Representation at synod—CRWRC requests that its president, Dr. Daniel De Vries; minister board member, the Rev. John Bergsma; and its Executive Director, Mr. Louis Van Ess, be granted the floor when matters pertaining to our work are discussed.

B. Constitutional revision re membership of executive committee (Section II)

C. Approval for offerings (Section VI, E)

D. Endorsement of Barnabas Society and Christian Stewardship Services quotas (Section VI)

E. Program approval for 1977 outreaches (Section VIII)

F. Constitutional revision re clarification of task (Section IX)

G. Appointments—Executive Director (Section X,A)
—board members-at-large (Section X,B)

Christian Reformed World Relief Committee
Louis Van Ess, Executive Director

REPORT 6-A
CHRISTIAN REFORMED WORLD RELIEF COMMITTEE
(Art. 56)

From time to time CRWRC through various means is made aware of needs in new areas. The Ambunti Akademi in Papua, New Guinea, has requested that CRWRC assign workers with construction and mechanical skills to supervise training programs in community development among the inhabitants of the Sepik Basin in Papua, New Guinea.

The Ambunti Akademi is under the direction of Mr. Orneal Kooyers, member of the First Christian Reformed Church in Seattle, Washington. Mr. Kooyers has served with the Wycliffe Translators in New Guinea for sixteen years. This project is supported by Classis Pacific Northwest.

CRWRC requests that synod authorize the placing of one community development worker in the Ambunti Akademi.

Grounds:

1. A severe unmet need has been expressed by the Board of the Ambunti Akademi.
2. An opportunity is present to augment the current Christian Reformed presence in New Guinea.

Christian Reformed World Relief Committee
Louis Van Ess, Executive Director

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

REPORT 7

BACK TO GOD TRACT COMMITTEE

(Art. 63)

COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Rev. Calvin Bremer,* Jack De Vos, Willard De Waard, LaVern Haas, Stephen Lambers, Kenneth Swets, John Tibbe, Rev. William Vander Hoven and Rev. John Wieggers.**

* Rev. Calvin Bremer completes his three-year term of service and is eligible for reappointment.

** Rev. John Wieggers is completing six years of service with the committee.

I. INTRODUCTION

The committee meets monthly at the denominational building. Our tracts are designed, published, stored, and distributed there. Between meetings, the committee is served well by Mrs. Angie Westershuis.

II. PURPOSE

The committee's purpose is to develop, publish, and disseminate the gospel message via short, meaningful, theologically sound messages in attractive tract form. We tap both the clergy and lay persons as authors, carefully screen and edit the material produced, and arrange for the publication and distribution of the resulting tracts. The tracts cover a variety of topics in a wide range of presentations, yet each tract has a specific message for a specific reader.

III. ACTIVITIES

A. *Tract Distribution*

During 1976, 477,604 tracts were distributed. Of that total, approximately 44,285 were given free of charge to places like the Lighthouse Ministry of Nashville, the Rev. Richard Ooi of Malaysia, the Sunday School Convention committee (for inclusion in delegate packets), all CRC chaplains who requested them (as per decision of 1975 synod), SWIM teams, and some special tracts (i.e. "Votes and Vetoes" and "1776-1976") to all churches.

B. *Promotion*

Ads for tracts are placed regularly in *The Banner*. This year we also advertised for potential authors.

For the Bicentennial edition of *The Banner*, the committee sponsored the inclusion of six, special, full-color pages, "How the Bible Shaped America," originally prepared by Thomas Nelson Sons, publishers. About two thousand extra copies of these six pages were given to The National Union of Christian Schools for distribution to NUCS member schools in the United States.

C. *Special Projects*

The committee paid the Rev. John H. Piet \$1,000 for publishing a Tamil version of one of our tracts.

A special United States Bicentennial tract, "1776-1976", was prepared and distributed.

A special tract concerning elections in both the United States and Canada, "Votes and Vetoes", was prepared and distributed.

A "character studies" series of tracts has been started.

D. *Regular Projects*

We have an ongoing process of revising, editing, and updating existing tracts due for reprint. A number of new tracts were produced, and some fifteen more will be completed by the time this report is printed.

E. *Finances*

Our work is funded by gifts and offerings received from individuals and churches. During 1976, our receipts were \$24,784.23; disbursements, \$21,948.67. We began the year with a balance of \$9,952.29, so our year end balance is \$12,787.85. A financial statement and auditor's report will follow.

IV. SYNODICAL DECISIONS

The committee respectfully requests synod to recommend the Back to God Tract Committee to the churches as worthy of one or more offerings.

Two new committee members must be selected to replace those whose terms expire. A list of nominees will be submitted for synod's consideration and selection.

Back to God Tract Committee
Kenneth Swets, secretary

—FINANCIAL REPORT—

BACK TO GOD TRACT COMMITTEE
Financial Report 1976

Balance of accounts January 1, 1976:

Checking	\$ 1,352.52
Savings	8,599.77
Total	\$ 9,952.29

RECEIPTS:

Contributions - churches	\$17,884.76	
Contributions - others	152.25	
Sales - tracts	6,487.07	
Interest	247.92	
		<u>24,772.00</u>
		\$34,724.29

DISBURSEMENTS:

Clerical and Distribution	\$ 5,343.28	
Printing and Engraving	13,319.16	
Writing	110.00	
Postage	13.00	
Advertising	161.05	
Meals and mileage	300.73	
Art Work	120.00	
Coordinated Services	2,149.22	
Honorarium	250.00	
Miscellaneous	170.00	
		<u>21,936.44</u>

Balance of accounts December 31, 1976

\$12,787.85

Checking Account	\$ 3,440.16
Savings Account	9,347.69

REPORT 8
BIBLE TRANSLATION COMMITTEE
(Art. 22)

Last year our review of *The New International Version* was published in *The Banner, De Wachter* and *Calvinist-Contact*.

—With the completion of that review, the pressure for reviewing any particular version has lessened considerably. The controversy that surrounded the appearance of new translations during the past two decades seems to have disappeared. We think it is important for this committee to review the Old Testament portion of *The New International Version* when it appears, perhaps in 1978.

Last year we proposed that in the interim we would review one of the contemporary Catholic versions with a view to shedding some light on the ecumenical situation that now exists in the area of Bible translation. The committee had decided to review *The Jerusalem Bible*. However, due to the absence of two members for part of the year and the pressures of other committee assignments, we have not yet begun that project. Meanwhile, the Old Testament portion of *Today's English Version* has appeared. Since the committee has reviewed TEV's New Testament and since more of our people will be reading this version than any of the Catholic versions, it may be more important to review TEV's Old Testament. We expect to meet sometime this spring and to begin on one of these two options.

Bible Translation Committee

Andrew Bandstra, chairman
David Holwerda, secretary
Stanley Bultman
David Engelhard
Bastiaan Van Elderen
Clarence Vos
Marten Woudstra

REPORT 9
CHAPLAIN COMMITTEE
(Art. 22)

Since the Synod of 1976, the Chaplain Committee has met regularly, doing the work assigned it by the synod of the Christian Reformed Church. This report will give a brief accounting of that work, highlighting significant aspects of the work and present recommendations on how this work of the denomination can continue.

I. PURPOSE

The committee represents the denomination in institutional, military and industrial chaplaincies. It recruits, monitors the training, processes ecclesiastical endorsement and facilitates the placement of ministers going into chaplain service. It investigates and evaluates positions of chaplain services in federal, provincial, state, private, public, religious and secular institutions. It studies new models of chaplain services; observes trends in professional training as it relates to pastoral care and fosters the integration of Reformed theology into the practice of pastoral care.

II. ORGANIZATION

By appointment of synod, the following persons serve as members of the Chaplain Committee.

Rev. Duane Visser, chairperson	1978
Rev. Marvin Baarman, vice-chairperson	1979
Mr. Donald Swierenga, treasurer	1978
Mr. Harold Mast, vice-treasurer	1979
Rev. John Van Til, (Canadian representative)	1979
Mrs. Jean Ettesvold, (institutional)	1979
Mr. Neal Berghoef, (industrial)	1977
Dr. Melvin Hugen, (industrial)	1977
Dr. Dick Van Halsema, (military)	1977
Mr. Evert Vermeer, (industrial)	1979

The Rev. Harold Bode serves as Executive Secretary of the Chaplain Committee. The Revs. Harold Dekker, James Lont and Duane Vander Brug serve the committee in various ways; the former two as representatives of the General Commission on Chaplains and Armed Forces Personnel and the latter as a liaison with the Board of Home Missions. The Rev. James Kok serves on the Institutional Committee and Mr. Andrew Vander Wall serves on the Industrial Committee.

Due to the growing opportunities for chaplain services in Canada and the need for closer affiliation with the organizational structures of Canadian life, a subcommittee was appointed to promote chaplain service there. The Rev. John Van Til is the chairman, and the Revs. Anthony De Jager and Carl Tuyl serve as members of this subcommittee.

III. MILITARY CHAPLAINCY

Sixteen Christian Reformed ministers serve on extended active duty. Some changes in personnel is expected during 1977. Two chaplains will leave active duty, one by way of retirement and one by the continuing reduction in forces. We are anticipating the placement of one chaplain on active duty during 1977. Each serves with respect and distinction, some have received promotions during this past year. One, Chaplain Robert Brummel, suffered a heart attack while with the Marines on Okinawa and has returned to the United States and is doing well. Twenty ministers serve in reserve assignments, fulfilling reserve obligations. A roster of active duty chaplains with their branches of service, assignment, and date of induction follows:

Air Force

Chaplain, Major, Ralph W. Bronkema, Homestead AFB, FL (1966)
 Chaplain, Lt. Col., Henry Guikema, Elmendorf AFB, AK (1962)
 Chaplain, Lt. Col., Louis E. Kok, Hancock Field, NY (1962)

Army

Chaplain, Major, William Brander, Taegu, Korea, (1968)
 Chaplain, Major, Jan Friend, Ft. Bragg, NC (1962)
 Chaplain, LTC, John J. Hoogland, Stuttgart, Germany (1959)
 Chaplain, LTC, Bruce C. Hemple, Ft. Sam Houston, TX (1959)
 Chaplain, Major, Herman Keizer, Ft. Wadsworth, NY (1968)
 Chaplain, LTC, Marvin Konynenbelt, Ft. Wadsworth, NY (1965)
 Chaplain, LTC, Paul Vruwink, USARG, Japan (1958)
 Chaplain, Capt. Karl Willoughby, Ft. Leonard Wood, MO (1976)

Navy

Chaplain, LCDR, Herbert Bergsma, Quantico Marine Base, VA (1966)
 Chaplain, LCDR, Robert Brummel, Navy Security Station, DC (1966)
 Chaplain, LCDR, Donald den Dulk, Camp Pendleton, CA (1975)
 Chaplain, CDR, Albert J. Roon, USN Supply School, GA (1966)
 Chaplain, LCDR, Raymond Swierenga, Camp Le Jeune, NC (1960)

IV. INSTITUTIONAL CHAPLAINCY

A. Personnel

1976 has been an exceptional year in the placement of institutional chaplains during which year more chaplains were placed than during any other year in the history of the Christian Reformed Church. During 1976, one institutional chaplain died, the Rev. William Swierenga; another, the Rev. Donald Klompeen, left, accepting a call to serve at the Friendship House in San Francisco. Six ministers accepted positions in institutional chaplaincy for a net gain of four during the year. The following chaplains have received ecclesiastical endorsement from the Chaplain Committee and serve full-time in various institutions:

Chaplain John de Vries, Jr., Federal Training Centre, Montreal, Quebec
 Chaplain A. Dirk Evans, Peoples Community Hospital Authority, Detroit, MI

- Chaplain Marvin P. Hoogland, Chicago Christian Counselling Center,
Chicago, IL
- Chaplain Gordon J. Kieft, Bethesda Hospital, Denver, CO
- Chaplain James R. Kok, Pine Rest Christian Hospital, Grand Rapids,
MI
- Chaplain William R. Lenters, Calvary Rehabilitation Center, Phoenix,
AZ
- Chaplain Peter Mantel, Millbrook Correctional Centre, Millbrook, Ont-
ario
- Chaplain Gerald Oosterveen, Dixon Development Center, Dixon, IL
- Chaplain Elton J. Piersma, Christian Life Enrichment Ministries, Mus-
kegon, MI
- Chaplain Henry Post, W. A. Foote Memorial Hospital, Jackson, MI
- Chaplain Adrian Van Andel, VA Palo Alto/Menlo Park, Palo Alto, CA
- Chaplain Larry Vande Creek, Family Practice Dept./Ohio State Univer-
sity, Columbus, OH
- Chaplain Thomas Vanden Bosch, VA Hospital, Sioux Falls, SD
- Chaplain Nick Vander Kwaak, Pine Rest Christian Hospital, Grand
Rapids, MI
- Chaplain Peter Van Katwyk, Cambridge Interfaith Pastoral Counsel-
ling Centre, Cambridge, Ontario
- Chaplain Duane Visser, Pine Rest Christian Hospital, Grand Rapids,
MI
- Chaplain Peter Winkle, Rehoboth Hospital, Gallup, NM
- Chaplain Benjamin Ypma, Koinonia Medical Center, Muskegon, MI

A number of pastors have applied for specialized training; others are in programs of training; and still others are in different stages in the process of ecclesiastical endorsement, classical approval and/or placement. The Chaplain Committee is involved in the healing ministry of the church and is privileged to represent the Christian Reformed Church and its synod in this ministry.

B. Program

The term "institutional" covers a broad spectrum of chaplain service. Institutional chaplains may serve in federal, provincial, state, county or municipal, private or public, secular or religious institutions. These could be in hospitals or prisons or in a variety of organizations such as correctional, alcohol rehabilitation, counselling, developmental, readjustment and geriatric centers. More institutions are recognizing the importance and value of chaplain service and the committee continues to keep abreast of new developments and challenges.

Meanwhile, the Chaplain Committee continues to recruit ministers for training and for eventual chaplain service. It often takes several years from the time a pastor evidences serious interest in chaplain service to the time he actually enters such a service after a period of training. The committee provides stipends for training and this is costly but necessary if the church is to be represented by qualified chaplains in strategic positions, presenting the Reformed faith in diverse settings.

The committee believes that the synod and the church need to be aware that we are very concerned that our chaplains function as ministers of the gospel and are pastoral in their ministry. That is to say, that even though the chaplain receives specialized training and is a "specialist" in a type of ministry, he is still called by God and ordained by the church to the gospel ministry and functions as a pastor.

V. INDUSTRIAL CHAPLAINCY

A. *Introduction*

Past synods have been apprised of a form of ministry called industrial chaplaincy. Already in the '40's a general study was made of industrial chaplaincy. In more recent years there has been a renewed interest in this form of ministry. The denomination has engaged in one model of industrial chaplaincy for more than a decade through its harbor or seaway ministries. The Industrial Subcommittee of the Chaplain Committee has been compiling information on this chaplaincy for several years and is now engaging in a serious study of this complex ministry.

In recent years, industrial chaplains from various denominations have organized what is called the National Business and Industrial Chaplains Association. This association, though in its formative stages, is seeking to compile information, formulate guidelines and assess current developments in industrial chaplaincy.

There are so many types of chaplaincies subsumed under the title of business and industrial chaplaincy that it is questionable whether that title is descriptively accurate. Would, for example, a police chaplaincy or a "tall-towers" chaplaincy fit under the title of business and industrial chaplaincy?

Other more probing questions would be: Is it necessary? If it is, what form should it take? Would the chaplain find a place to stand amid the milling crowd, pushing modern economic madness? Would his voice be heard amid the din of cash registers and computers? Is there a voice crying in this modern wilderness? What is the word of the Lord spoken by the church in such a situation?

The Lord of hosts said through the prophet Malachi, "And I will come near to you for judgment; and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, and against false swearers, and against those that oppress the hireling in his wages, the widow and the fatherless, and that turn aside the stranger from his right and fear not me, saith the Lord of hosts" (Malachi 3:5). Or is George McLeod at least partly right when he says: "I simply argue that the cross should be raised at the center of the marketplace as well as on the steeple of the church."

B. *Information*

During this past year, the Chaplain Committee commissioned the Revs. Al Hoogewind of Inkster, Michigan and Hans Uittenbosch of Montreal, Quebec, to study models of industrial chaplaincies. Their reports have been received and are valuable resources for further study

and action. The reports are far too lengthy to reproduce here but there are a number of recurring themes in these reports which are important for the church to recognize and be aware of on the subject of industrial chaplaincy.

One dynamic of an industrializing society is the movement of people from rural areas to urban complexes. Suburban housing was constructed to accommodate the influx of people. People who once could look up from their plow and see the steeple of their church or hear the call of church bells, now are surrounded by assembly lines, blasting furnaces, noisy machinery—monuments of steel. Meanwhile, the church has moved into these suburban communities to maintain pastoral concern for their relocated people and to provide them with the ministry of the word, sacraments and instruction, during their “free-time”. This the church did and still does. However, the church did not realize immediately that simultaneously with this movement came a frightening secularization. Along with this secularization came a kind of impersonalization which was caused by the structures of industry and a trend toward specialization which was caused by the needs of industry. The church and the busy pastor were not sufficiently equipped to interpret the dehumanizing effects of an industrial climate. Hence, the emergence, especially in Europe, of the industrial chaplaincy.

The church could and did send out business and industrial chaplains to work with church-related persons in rugged business and industrial complexes. They formed “Bible study groups”, “prayer groups,” and “discussion groups” where they discussed the ethical issues of unfair labor practices, unsafe labor conditions, and other concerns. Some business and industrial chaplains labored as evangelists among the non-churched. Some churches in an inter-denominational setting formed industrial missions such as those in Detroit and Boston in order to speak prophetically to the larger issues of industry and to the general public who were unwittingly the beneficiaries or victims of industrial decisions. This then becomes an ideological confrontation between the church and some of the motivations and practices which are prevalent in the modern industrial order. Scott I. Paradise, director of the Boston Industrial Mission, concludes his article entitled *Requiem for American Industrial Missions* with this challenge, “The church is being called to dig deep into its traditions to quarry from them the most valuable spiritual and ethical resources they bear and use them to help with the building” of a new industrial order.

Earlier in this report, it was intimated that there are many different types or forms of business and industrial chaplaincies. There are police, firemen, crisis center, hotel, motel, tall-tower, mall and emergency unit chaplaincies. Among these forms or types of chaplaincies, various models are utilized, such as, pastoral counselling, ministry of presence, prophetic, preventive ministry, pastoral missionary, public relations, and action program models of business and industrial chaplaincy. In some of these settings, chaplains minister utilizing a combination of several of these models. This listing is not exhaustive but indicative of some of the options open to a church seeking to evaluate business and industrial chaplaincy.

Notation should be made of the Ministry of Seafarers which is one of the oldest examples of industrial chaplaincy, its history dating back to 1800 AD and possibly further. In 1818, "The Society for the Promotion of the Gospel Among Seamen" was formed in New York, which was a precursor to what is known today as the American Bible Society. In 1832, the annual report of the American Seamen's Friend Society stated that the Rev. John Diell of the Reformed Church was appointed chaplain to seamen to what was then the Kingdom of Hawaii. Our denomination has been involved in a ministry to seafarers for a number of years both in the United States and in Canada. The Rev. Hans Uittenbosch is currently president of a North American organization called the International Council of Seamen's Agencies and, therefore, enjoys a seat on the standing committee of the International Christian Maritime Association which is a world organization.

Both study reports indicate that there are crucial questions which must be considered regarding business and industrial chaplaincy. Should the church speak to the public, industrial sector of life? If so, what should she say? The prophets of both the Old and New Testaments spoke out against injustices and unfair practices in the business life of their society. Is and/or how is the prophetic voice of the church speaking out against similar practices today? Has the church by and large been overwhelmed by and unwittingly become part of the business and industrial mind-set of the day? Has the church moved to suburbia to minister to the private sector of life, to family and children during their leisure hours? Is it too late for the church, through her pastors, local congregations and classes to minister to the ever-changing patterns of our public business and industrial complexes? Should local congregations employ an industrial chaplain to minister in a business and industrial context? Or how can we better equip churches and pastors to minister to industrialized society? These are some of the questions being raised and studied.

The Chaplain Committee is convinced that we would be serving the synod and the denomination better by: engaging in more study of the issues involved; designing various models of business and industrial chaplaincy and experimenting with active models for a specified period of time. This would give the committee time to set up evaluative criteria by which to judge models of business and industrial chaplaincy and time for further study through active models without committing ourselves to such chaplaincy on an indefinite basis.

VI. THE CHAPLAIN COMMITTEE AND THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

The Chaplain Committee with its Executive Secretary has begun to analyze its mandate programs, finances and office operations in keeping with the instructions of the Synod of 1976 (Acts of Synod 1976, Article 50, C, 5 b). Our programs are expanding, as our report indicates, within our mandate. Our finances are beginning to stabilize in such a way that we feel more confident in meeting the demands of the expanding programs. The experiences of the past few years have shown the committee that much more must be done:

1. to publicize the work of chaplains and of the committee;
2. to provide guidelines for those aspiring to chaplain services;
3. to publish policies on training and ecclesiastical endorsement;
4. to promote the work of recruitment among pastors and seminarians;
5. to facilitate the placement of chaplains;
6. to assist the re-entry of military chaplains into civilian life;
7. to meet the pastoral concerns of chaplains and their families;
8. to foster closer contact between chaplains and the denomination;
9. to formulate evaluative criteria in judging effectiveness;
10. to press toward better stewardship of time, talents and money.

The committee has been meeting with other synodical agencies to explore, with the Barnabas Foundation and Canadian Christian Stewardship Services, ways to promote deferred giving and annuities by way of estate planning. The committee realizes that it is not staffed to promote this type of stewardship by itself and is appreciative of being able to do so in cooperation with other agencies.

The committee has been working with the Ministers' Pension Fund Committee regarding the operational procedures of the Chaplain Deposit Fund. Our respective interpretations of the decisions of the Synod of 1971 are not always in agreement, but we are working toward a policy with which we can find mutual agreement or have it resolved by synodical action.

VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Representation at synod: We request that our Executive Secretary, the Rev. Harold Bode, and Dr. Melvin Hugen be permitted to speak at synod on matters affecting the Chaplain Committee.
2. Presentation of chaplains: We request that active duty chaplains, both institutional and military, who may be present while synod is in session be presented to the synod and that one of each type be allowed the privilege of speaking briefly to the members of synod.
3. Recommendation regarding business and industrial chaplaincy: The Chaplain Committee requests permission from synod to explore, design, and initiate active models of business and/or industrial chaplaincy for a period of three years.

Grounds:

- a. This would give the committee time to set up evaluative criteria by which to judge models of business and industrial chaplaincy.
 - b. This would give the committee time for further study through active models without committing ourselves to such chaplaincy indefinitely.
4. Personnel: The initial three-year terms of committee members: Mr. Neal Berghoef, Dr. Melvin Hugen and Dr. Dick Van Halsema end this year.

The Chaplain Committee respectfully requests the synod to reappoint Mr. Neal Berghoef, Dr. Melvin Hugen and Dr. Dick Van Halsema to

another three-year term because of their expertise in the area of industrial and military chaplaincy respectively.

5. Finances:

- a. The Chaplain Committee requests the synod to approve the quota of \$1.95 per family for 1978.
- b. The Chaplain Committee requests the synod to approve the quota of \$0.50 per family for the Chaplain Deposit Fund for 1978.

VIII. FINANCIAL REPORT FOR 1976

The treasurer's annual statement for 1976 is attached. The auditor's report and the proposed budget for 1978 will be available at the time of synod.

Chaplain Committee
Harold Bode,
Executive Secretary

CHAPLAIN COMMITTEE OF THE CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH

Financial Report

Year Ended December 31, 1976

BALANCE - January 1, 1976			
Checking Accounts		\$ 5,864.37	
Savings Accounts		<u>3,360.87</u>	\$ 9,225.24
RECEIPTS			
Quotas		\$64,346.64	
Contributions and Gifts		797.05	
Bank Interest		<u>899.54</u>	<u>66,043.23</u>
Total Available			\$75,268.47
DISBURSEMENTS			
<u>Executive Secretary</u>			
Salary - Base Salary		\$12,600.00	
Child Allowance		1,500.00	
Housing Allowance		<u>3,600.00</u>	\$17,700.00
Other - Pension			
Hospitalization		\$ 1,000.00	
Self Employment Tax		<u>1,092.15</u>	2,692.15
		600.00	
<u>Operating Expenses</u>			
Travel - Executive Secretary		2,530.12	
Other		<u>1,032.15</u>	3,562.27
Coordinated Service Agency			
Labor and Supplies	\$	823.66	
Equipment and Postage		515.37	
Telephone		652.19	
Rent		903.47	
Advance		<u>400.00</u>	3,294.69
Secretary and Clerical			
Advertising and Promotion			1,760.90
Subsidies - Training			759.74
Moving	\$	8,472.42	
Travel and Testing		<u>2,358.28</u>	
		187.50	11,018.20
General Commission Dues			
Retreats			1,320.00
Development (Industrial)			100.00
Miscellaneous			1,634.38
Contingency			289.38
			556.34
<u>Other</u>			
Mayo Clinic			<u>2,700.00</u>
Total Disbursements			<u>\$47,388.05</u>
BALANCE - December 31, 1976			
Checking Account		5,120.01	
Savings Account		21,760.41	
Loan		<u>1,000.00</u>	<u>\$27,880.42</u>

(Unaudited)

Respectfully submitted,

Donald J. Swierenga, Treasurer

REPORT 10
CHURCH HELP FUND
(Art. 72)

The following is a report of the work of the Church Help Fund Committee for the year 1976. Our committee met regularly throughout the year and considered twenty-three applications for funds. After a careful review of the information submitted by the churches, loans were granted to twenty congregations totaling \$346,000. This was slightly less than the total amount granted in the previous year.

The committee always faces the prospect of operating with a deficit, but with the cooperation of the churches in not calling for their approved loans until the funds were actually needed we were able to provide the churches with funds upon request. Once again most of the loans approved were for a ten to fifteen year repayment schedule. By keeping the loans on a somewhat shorter repayment schedule we are able to be of assistance to more congregations. We do not feel this is unreasonable since the payments in most instances are no more than interest payments would be on commercial loans. We are grateful to the churches for their prompt repayments to our fund. Failure to do so jeopardizes the revolving nature of our fund. We are deeply appreciative to the classes for their careful review and helpful evaluations of all applications.

In projecting our needs for the coming year the committee feels that with the cooperation of the churches we should be able to meet the anticipated needs. We also wish to inform synod that the financial regulations regarding the safety of the bank accounts are being followed by the Church Help Committee.

The membership of our committee has undergone considerable change during the past year. The Rev. L. Bouma and Mr. M. Breems were added, replacing the Rev. J. Engbers and Mr. M. Wiersma. The Rev. E. Blankespoor has accepted a call to another field of ministry. We are grateful for his services to the Church Help Fund. The Rev. P. Bakker will replace him on our committee.

Matters requiring action by synod:

1. We recommend the appointment of a ministerial member to our committee replacing the Rev. J. H. Rubingh.

Ground: Mr. Rubingh's term expires and since he has served six years he is not eligible for reappointment.

2. We recommend the appointment of a ministerial alternate to our committee to replace the Rev. P. Bakker.

Ground: Mr. Bakker has become a regular member of our committee replacing the vacancy created by the leaving of the Rev. E. Blankespoor.

3. In matters pertaining to the Church Help Fund you are asked to contact the president, the Rev. J. H. Rubingh.

Church Help Fund Committee

J. H. Rubingh, president
 L. Bouma
 P. Bakker
 M. Breems
 E. Huizinga
 T. Van Bruggen

THE CHURCH HELP FUND
 CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH
 ORANGE CITY, IOWA
 1976

SCHEDULE "A"

CASH RECEIPTS AND DISBURSEMENTS

Cash on hand December 31, 1975

Northwestern State Bank			
Checking account	\$ 65,152.33		
Savings account	17,740.53		
Security National Bank, Savings account	31,211.41		
First National Bank, Savings account	41,975.88		
Total			\$ 156,080.15

Receipts:

Repayment of Loans-Schedule "B"	\$344,975.80		
Interest on savings account	8,870.61		
U.S. - Canadian exchange	889.40		
Classis - gifts	573.13		
Total			\$ 355,308.94
			\$ 511,389.09

Disbursements:

New Loans disbursed-Schedule "B"	\$324,300.00		
Administration expense-Schedule "C"	2,692.62		
U.S. - Canadian exchange	556.71		
Total			\$ 327,549.33
Total Cash			\$ 183,839.76

Cash on hand December 31, 1976

Northwestern State Bank, Orange City, Iowa			
Checking account	\$ 9,781.86		
Savings account	55,652.04		
Security National Bank, Sioux City, Iowa			
Savings account	32,816.06		
First National Bank, Sioux Center, Iowa			
Savings account	44,133.90		
American State Bank, Sioux Center, Iowa			
Savings account	41,455.90		
Total cash	\$183,839.76		

Outstanding Loans to Churches

\$2,206,382.70

THE CHURCH HELP FUND
CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH
ORANGE CITY, IOWA
1976

ANALYSIS - LOANS OUTSTANDING

SCHEDULE "B"

No.	Church	Balance	New Loans	Repay	Balance
		12-31-75			12-31-76
1	Abbotsford, B.C.-2nd	\$ 22,500.00	\$	\$	\$ 22,500.00
2	Ackley, Iowa	11,000.00		3,000.00	8,000.00
3	Acton, Ont.-Bethel	2,556.25		718.75	1,837.50
4	Aetna, Michigan	10,000.00		2,000.00	8,000.00
5	Agassiz, B.C.	14,516.69			14,516.69
6	Alamosa, Colorado	8,000.00		2,000.00	6,000.00
7	Albuquerque, N.M.-Chelwood Community	9,333.36		1,333.33	8,000.03
8	Alliston, Ont.	6,333.36		1,666.66	4,666.70
9	Alto, Wisconsin	5,329.68		1,026.66	4,303.02
10	Ames, Iowa - University		6,000.00	100.00	5,900.00
11	Anchorage, Alaska - Trinity	20,000.00		7,696.20	12,303.80
12	Ann Arbor, Michigan	3,400.00		700.00	2,700.00
13	Athens, Ont.	1,437.50		687.50	750.00
14	Atwood, Michigan	2,669.60		667.40	2,002.20
15	Bakersfield, California	9,333.34		666.66	8,666.68
16	Barrie, Ont. - 1st	625.00		625.00	none
17	Belding, Mich. - Oakwood		20,000.00		20,000.00
18	Belleville, Ont. - Maranatha	3,000.00		750.00	2,250.00
19	Bellevue, Alta.	4,500.00		1,000.00	3,500.00
20	Bigelow, Minnesota	325.00			325.00
21	Big Rapids, Mich.-Fellowship	13,500.00		1,500.00	12,000.00
22	Blenheim, Ont.	12,250.00		1,250.00	11,000.00
23	Bloomfield, Ont. - Bethany	10,000.00		1,500.00	8,500.00
24	Blyth, Ont.	13,250.00		1,250.00	12,000.00
25	Boca Raton, Florida	9,000.00		1,000.00	8,000.00
26	Boulder, Colorado - Crestview	1,000.00		1,000.00	none
27	Bowmanville, Ont.-Maranatha	12,000.00		4,000.00	8,000.00
28	Bowmanville, Ont.-Rehoboth	700.00		700.00	none
29	Brandon, Man. - 1st	3,693.75		1,231.25	2,462.50
30	Britt, Iowa	3,550.00		625.00	2,925.00
31	Brookfield, Wis. - Milwaukee	17,633.34		1,333.33	16,300.01
32	Brooks, Alta.	4,308.66		1,392.50	2,916.16
33	Brooton, Minnesota		3,500.00		3,500.00
34	Burbank, Ill. - Immanuel	8,000.00	20,000.00	1,000.00	27,000.00
35	Burlington, Ont. - Aldershot	2,000.00		2,000.00	none
36	Burnaby, B.C.	5,000.00		1,000.00	4,000.00
37	Byron Center, Michigan - 2nd	1,500.00		500.00	1,000.00
38	Cadillac, Michigan	7,000.00		1,000.00	6,000.00
39	Caledonia, Michigan	12,481.01		1,333.33	11,147.68
40	Calgary, Alta. - Maranatha	4,000.00		750.00	3,250.00
41	Cambridge, Ont. - Maranatha	10,000.00		4,250.00	5,750.00
42	Cedar, Iowa	15,000.00		11,817.51	3,182.49
43	Cedar Falls, Iowa	10,500.00		1,500.00	9,000.00
44	Cedar Rapids, Iowa - Peace	15,995.00		1,335.00	14,660.00
45	Cedar Springs, Mich. - Pioneer	4,750.00			4,750.00
46	Champaign, Ill. - Hessel Park	10,000.00		1,000.00	9,000.00
47	Chatham, Ont. - Grace	5,000.00		2,500.00	2,500.00
48	Chicago, Ill. - Garfield	15,520.02		1,159.99	14,360.03
49	Chicago, Ill. - Korean	25,658.00		2,004.00	23,654.00
50	Chilliwack, B.C.	16,229.30		2,500.00	13,729.30
51	Chula Vista, California	20,000.00		1,333.00	18,667.00
52	Cleveland, Ohio - Maple Hgts.	1,500.00		500.00	1,000.00
53	Clinton, Ont.	256.25		256.25	none
54	Cobourg, Ont. - Grace	6,200.00		1,100.00	5,100.00
55	Cochrane, Ont.	894.15	10,000.00	550.00	10,344.15
56	Collingwood, Ont.	11,489.33		3,300.00	8,189.33
57	Colorado Springs, Colo., - Cragmor	18,666.67		2,666.67	16,000.00
58	Constock Park, Mich.	6,000.00	10,000.00	500.00	15,500.00
59	Conrad, Mont.	5,820.00		560.00	5,260.00
60	Coopersville, Mich. - Little Farms	9,333.34		666.66	8,666.68
61	Coquitlam, B.C.		10,000.00		10,000.00
62	Cornwall, Ont. - Immanuel	15,562.50		2,000.00	13,562.50
63	Crown Point, Indiana	3,000.00		500.00	2,500.00

SCHEDULE "B"

No.	Church	Balance 12-31-75	New Loans	Repay	Balance 12-31-76
64	Cutlerville, Mich. - Cutlerville Hills	5,000.00		1,000.00	4,000.00
65	Decatur, Michigan	7,000.00	20,000.00	3,000.00	24,000.00
66	Delta, B.C. - 1st	2,050.00		625.00	1,425.00
67	De Motte, Indiana - Bethel	20,000.00		2,000.00	18,000.00
68	Denver, Colo. - Center of Hope		20,000.00		20,000.00
69	Denver, Colo. - Fairview	6,225.00		1,350.00	4,875.00
70	Denver, Colo. - Ridgeview Hills	20,666.68		2,333.33	18,333.35
71	Denver, Colo. - Trinity	12,250.00		2,500.00	9,750.00
72	Des Moines, Iowa	4,500.00		1,500.00	3,000.00
73	Dorr, Michigan	17,333.34		1,333.33	16,000.01
74	Drayton, Ont.	1,200.00		1,200.00	none
75	Dresden, Ont.	462.50		420.00	42.50
76	Dundas, Ont. - Calvin	4,750.00		750.00	4,000.00
77	Dunnville, Ont. - Bethel	5,500.00		750.00	4,750.00
78	East Martin, Michigan	1,000.00		1,000.00	none
79	Edmonton, Alta. - Maranatha	937.50		375.00	562.50
80	Edmonton, Alta. - Ottewell	6,500.00		750.00	5,750.00
81	Edmonton, Alta. - Trinity	4,000.00			4,000.00
82	Edmonton, Alta. - West End	2,700.00		1,000.00	1,700.00
85	Edson, Alta.	12,017.68		1,416.00	10,601.68
84	Emo, Ont.	6,205.00		1,200.00	5,005.00
85	Essex, Ont.	780.00		780.00	none
86	Exeter, Ont.	4,000.00		750.00	3,250.00
87	Ferrisburg, Vermont		20,000.00		20,000.00
88	Ferrysburg, Michigan	17,333.34		1,333.33	16,000.01
89	Forest, Ont.	7,812.50		1,218.75	6,593.75
90	Forest Grove, Michigan	24,000.00		3,000.00	21,000.00
91	Fort Collins, Colo. - Immanuel	24,000.00		2,333.00	21,667.00
92	Fort Lauderdale, Florida	21,333.34		4,333.30	17,000.04
93	Framingham, Mass.	3,000.00		500.00	2,500.00
94	Freeman, S.D. - Bethlehem	24,300.00		5,300.00	19,000.00
95	Fremont, Mich. - Trinity	500.00		500.00	none
96	Fresno, California	3,000.00		1,000.00	2,000.00
97	Fruitland, Ont.	281.25		281.25	none
98	Fruitport, Michigan	13,333.35		1,883.33	11,450.02
99	Fulton, Ill. - Bethel	7,000.00		1,000.00	6,000.00
100	Gary, Indiana - Beacon Light	5,850.00		1,850.00	4,000.00
101	Georgetown, Ont.	5,250.00		750.00	4,500.00
102	Goshen, Indiana	2,000.08		666.66	1,333.42
103	Grand Prairie, Alta. - LaGlance	1,977.07		333.66	1,643.41
104	Grand Rapids, Mich. - Arcadia	2,333.42		916.66	1,416.76
105	Grand Rapids, Mi. - Bristolwood	5,833.36		833.33	5,000.03
106	Grand Rapids, Mi. - Ideal Park	6,666.80		1,333.32	5,333.48
107	Grand Rapids, Mi. - Princeton	4,500.00			4,500.00
108	Grand Rapids, Mi. - Riverside	1,000.00		500.00	500.00
109	Grand Rapids, Mi. - Sunshine	9,000.00		1,000.00	8,000.00
110	Grandville, Mi. - Hanley	18,666.67		1,333.33	17,333.34
111	Grandville, Mi. - Ivanrest	3,500.00		250.00	3,250.00
112	Grandville, Mi. - South	500.00		500.00	none
113	Greeley, Colo. - Fellowship	6,800.00		2,400.00	4,400.00
114	Grimsby, Ont. - Mountainview	6,750.00		1,500.00	5,250.00
115	Guelph, Ont.	3,005.00			3,005.00
116	Halifax, Nova Scotia	4,045.01		796.00	3,249.01
117	Hamilton, Ont. - Immanuel	6,475.00		775.00	5,700.00
118	Hamilton, Ont. - Mt. Hamilton	1,250.00		600.00	650.00
119	Hammond, Indiana		10,000.00		10,000.00
120	Hancock, Minnesota	3,125.00		500.00	2,625.00
121	Hartley, Iowa	2,200.00		1,850.00	350.00
122	Hills, Minnesota	16,000.01		1,333.33	14,666.68
123	Holland, Iowa	9,333.36		1,333.33	8,000.03
124	Holland, Mi. - Calvary	6,700.00		3,200.00	3,500.00
125	Holland, Mi. - Park	1,000.00		1,000.00	none
126	Holland, Minnesota	2,690.00		500.00	2,190.00
127	Hollandale, Minnesota	2,500.00		500.00	2,000.00
128	Holland, Marsh, Ont.	1,188.44		500.00	688.44
129	Houston, B.C.	9,000.00		600.00	8,400.00
130	Hudsonville, Mi. - Messiah	1,500.00		1,500.00	none

SCHEDULE "B"

No.	Church	Balance	New Loans	Repay	Balance
		12-31-75			12-31-76
131	Hull, Iowa - Hope	8,750.00		800.00	7,950.00
132	Hull, North Dakota	3,150.00		1,350.00	1,800.00
133	Indianapolis, Ind.-Devington	10,000.00		666.66	9,333.34
134	Iowa City, Iowa - Trinity	8,400.00		600.00	7,800.00
135	Jackson, Michigan	1,750.00		250.00	1,500.00
136	Jamaica, New York - Queens	7,500.00			7,500.00
137	Jenison, MI.-Cottonwood Hgts.	10,500.00		1,500.00	9,000.00
138	Kalamazoo, Mi. -Eastern Hills	14,000.00			14,000.00
139	Kalamazoo, Mi. - Faith	7,500.00		1,500.00	6,000.00
140	Kalamazoo, Mi. - Knollwood	3,500.00		1,700.00	1,800.00
141	Kalamazoo, Mi. - Northern Hgts.	7,500.00		1,500.00	6,000.00
142	Kalamazoo, Mi. - Parchment	2,000.00		500.00	1,500.00
143	Kalamazoo, Mi. - Prairie Edge	2,500.00		750.00	1,750.00
144	Kalamazoo, Mi. - Southern Hgts.	5,000.00		1,000.00	4,000.00
145	Kansas City, Mo. - Lane Ave.	16,000.00		1,333.33	14,666.67
146	Kelowna, B.C.	26,666.68		2,999.99	23,666.69
147	Kemptville, Ont. - 1st		30,000.00		30,000.00
148	Kentville, Nova Scotia	6,750.00		750.00	6,000.00
149	Kitchener, Ont. - 1st	1,343.75		1,343.75	none
150	Lacombe, Alta. - Bethel	3,250.00		750.00	2,500.00
151	Lake City, Mich.	7,875.00		1,750.00	6,125.00
152	Langley, B.C.	1,822.50		287.50	1,535.00
153	Lindsay, Ont.	5,850.00		1,200.00	4,650.00
154	Listowel, Ont.	5,250.00		750.00	4,500.00
155	Lowell, Mich. - Calvary	4,000.00		1,000.00	3,000.00
156	Lucknow, Ont.	14,850.00		1,900.00	12,950.00
157	Lynden, Wash.-Mountainview	24,000.00		2,000.00	22,000.00
158	Lynnwood, Washington	16,000.00		2,000.00	14,000.00
159	Madison, Wisconsin	20,000.00		1,333.33	18,666.67
160	Marysville, Wash.- Cascade	12,000.00		1,333.33	10,666.67
161	McBain, Michigan	10,000.00		1,000.00	9,000.00
162	McBain, Mich. - Calvin	5,000.00		1,500.00	3,500.00
163	Medicine Hat, Alta.	3,250.00	10,000.00	1,750.00	11,500.00
164	Miami, Florida	3,500.00		2,000.00	1,500.00
165	Middleville, Michigan	19,666.70		1,666.66	18,000.04
166	Midland Park, N.J.-Irving Park	500.00		500.00	none
167	Minneapolis, Minn.-Calvary	2,000.00		250.00	1,750.00
168	Minneapolis, Minn.-1st	24,000.00		1,500.00	22,500.00
169	Momence, Illinois	5,000.00		1,000.00	4,000.00
170	Montreal, Quebec	16,500.00		1,500.00	15,000.00
171	Mountain Lake, Minn.	20,000.00	10,000.00	1,333.33	28,666.67
172	Muskegon, Mi. - Grace	2,894.81		2,485.12	409.69
173	New Glasgow, Nova Scotia- Emmanuel	14,000.00	10,000.00	2,000.00	22,000.00
174	New Market, Ont. - Bethel	6,750.00		750.00	6,000.00
175	New Westminster, B.C.	1,537.50		600.00	937.50
176	Niagara Falls, Ont.-Rehoboth	4,500.00			4,500.00
177	Noordeloos, Mich.	17,333.34		3,333.34	14,000.00
178	North Haledon, New Jersey	900.00		900.00	none
179	Oak Forest, Ill. - Hope	2,400.00		800.00	1,600.00
180	Ocheyedan, Iowa	18,000.00		2,000.00	16,000.00
181	Ogden, Utah	18,000.00		4,000.00	14,000.00
182	Olympia, Wash. - Evergreen	26,000.02		4,001.00	21,999.02
183	Omaha, Nebr.-Prairie Lane	9,000.00		1,500.00	7,500.00
184	Orangeville, Ont.	10,425.00		2,250.00	8,175.00
185	Orillia, Ont. - 1st	5,750.00		750.00	5,000.00
186	Orlando, Florida	19,000.00		2,000.00	17,000.00
187	Oshawa, Ont. - Zion	1,300.00		500.00	800.00
188	Oskaloosa, Iowa - Bethel	750.00		750.00	none
189	Ottawa, Ont.	2,625.00		625.00	2,000.00
190	Ottawa, Ont. - East Calvary	9,329.34			9,329.34
191	Palo Alto, California	25,333.35		1,999.99	23,333.36
192	Palos Heights, Ill.	200.00			200.00
193	Paramus, New Jersey	15,000.01		1,000.00	14,000.01
194	Parkersburg, Iowa	15,000.00		1,500.00	13,500.00
195	Pembroke, Ont. - Zion	876.80	5,000.00	875.00	5,001.80

SCHEDULE "B"

No.	Church	Balance 12-31-75	New Loans	Repay	Balance 12-31-76
196	Penticton, B.C.	7,487.97		1,224.00	6,263.97
197	Peterborough, Ont.-Cephas	4,468.52		800.00	3,668.52
198	Phoenix, Arizona - Orangewood	5,000.00		1,000.00	4,000.00
199	Plainwell, Mich. - Calvary	9,000.00		2,000.00	7,000.00
200	Port Alberni, B.C. - 1st	8,338.00		666.66	7,671.34
201	Randolph, Wisc. - 1st	10,500.00			10,500.00
202	Red Deer, Alta. - 1st	750.00		750.00	none
203	Redlands, Cal.-Highland Ave.	1,500.00		250.00	1,250.00
204	Regina, Sask. - 1st	2,050.00	20,000.00		22,050.00
205	Renfrew, Ont. - Hebron	3,750.00		750.00	3,000.00
206	Richfield Springs, N.Y. - Trinity	30,000.00		1,000.00	29,000.00
207	Richmond, B.C.	3,450.00		500.00	2,950.00
208	Riverside, Cal.	8,000.02		666.66	7,333.36
209	Rockford, Mi. - Plainfield	12,341.69		2,008.33	10,333.36
210	Rock Rapids, Iowa	20,000.00		1,333.33	18,666.67
211	Rock Valley, Iowa - Trinity	19,000.00		3,500.00	15,500.00
212	Rocky Mountain House, Alta.	112.50		112.50	none
213	Roseville, Mich. -Immanuel	13,750.00		1,250.00	12,500.00
214	Rudyard, Mich.	6,666.70		666.66	6,000.04
215	Sacramento, Cal.	11,000.00		1,500.00	9,500.00
216	Saginaw, Mich. - Community	5,000.00		1,000.00	4,000.00
217	St. Joseph, Mich.	17,333.34		1,333.33	16,000.01
218	St. Thomas, Ont. - 1st	1,925.00		762.50	1,162.50
219	San Francisco, Cal. -GoldenGate	9,333.34		666.66	8,666.68
220	San Jose, Cal. - Moorpark	11,000.00		2,000.00	9,000.00
221	Sarnia, Ont. - Second	1,050.00		1,050.00	none
222	Saskatoon, Sask. - Bethel	14,000.00		2,350.00	11,650.00
223	Sauk Village, Ill. - Emmanuel		20,000.00		20,000.00
224	Seattle, Wash. - Calvary	2,250.00		750.00	1,500.00
225	Sheboygan, Wisc. - Calvin	4,250.02		1,083.33	3,166.69
226	Sheldon, Iowa - Immanuel	27,500.00		2,833.30	24,666.70
227	Sibley, Iowa		20,000.00		20,000.00
228	Simcoe, Ont. - Immanuel	18,416.67		3,549.99	14,866.68
229	Sioux Center, Iowa - Covenant	10,000.00		1,000.00	9,000.00
230	Sioux City, Iowa - 1st	8,450.00		830.00	7,620.00
231	Smithers, B.C.	3,410.00		1,510.00	1,900.00
232	Smithville, Ont.	19,666.66		2,004.00	17,666.62
233	South Holland, Ill. - Peace	6,500.00		2,000.00	4,500.00
234	Stony Plain, Alta. - Hope	7,000.00		500.00	6,500.00
235	Stratford, Ont.	4,046.00	10,000.00	1,502.00	12,544.00
236	Strathroy, Ont. - East	525.00		525.00	none
237	Strathroy, Ont. - Westmount	1,000.00		1,000.00	none
238	Surrey, B.C.	7,000.00		1,550.00	5,450.00
239	Taber, Alta.	7,333.30		1,000.00	6,333.30
240	Telkwa, B.C.	2,409.30		725.00	1,684.30
241	Terrace, B.C.	2,375.00		625.00	1,750.00
242	Terre Ceia, North Carolina	13,164.09		1,200.00	11,964.09
243	Thunderbay, Ont.-Bethlehem	7,500.00		750.00	6,750.00
244	Toronto, Ont.-Fellowship	9,000.00		500.00	8,500.00
245	Toronto, Ont. - Grace Scar- borough	1,000.00		1,000.00	none
246	Toronto, Ont. - 2nd	7,200.00		500.00	6,700.00
247	Trenton, Ont. - Ebenezer	327.19		327.19	none
248	Troy, Mich. - North Hills	13,666.72		3,000.00	10,666.72
249	Truro, Nova Scotia-John Calvin	2,200.00		600.00	1,600.00
250	Tucson, Arizona - Elim	6,000.00		1,000.00	5,000.00

SCHEDULE "B"

No.	Church	Balance 12-31-75	New Loans	Repsy	Balance 12-31-76
251	Vancouver, Wash. - Trinity	\$ 20,000.00	\$	\$	\$ 20,000.00
252	Vauxhall, Alta.	1,000.00		400.00	600.00
253	Vernon, B.C.	15,503.11		2,033.33	13,469.78
254	Victoria, B.C.	3,125.00			3,125.00
255	Vogel Center, Michigan	6,000.00		1,000.00	5,000.00
256	Wallaceburg, Ont.	5,850.00		1,000.00	4,850.00
257	Walnut Creek, California	20,000.00		2,717.46	17,282.54
258	Wappingers Falls, N.Y. - Immanuel		20,000.00		20,000.00
259	Washington, D.C.	24,000.00		2,000.00	22,000.00
260	Washington, D.C. - Silver Spring	32,000.04		1,666.66	30,333.38
261	Waupun, Wisc. - Bethel	6,000.00		1,000.00	5,000.00
262	Wayland, Mich.	14,000.00		2,500.00	11,500.00
263	Welland Junction, Ont.	14,166.68		1,416.66	12,750.02
264	Wellsburg, Iowa - 2nd	6,000.00		1,000.00	5,000.00
265	Whitby, Ont. - Hebron	4,312.50		937.50	3,375.00
266	Williamsburg, Ont.	2,500.00		1,250.00	1,250.00
267	Winfield, Illinois	7,500.00		3,000.00	4,500.00
268	Winnipeg, Man. - Kildonan	4,000.00		1,000.00	3,000.00
269	Winnipeg, Man. - Transcona	10,000.00		1,250.00	8,750.00
270	Wisconsin Rapids, Wis.	18,833.34		1,833.33	17,000.01
271	Woodbridge, Ont. - Maranatha		20,000.00		20,000.00
272	Wyoming, Mich. - Roger Hgts.	3,000.00		1,500.00	1,500.00
273	Wyoming, Ont.	362.50		362.50	none
274	Yakima, Wash. - Summitview	27,000.00		3,000.00	24,000.00
275	York, Ont. - Maranatha	12,666.70		1,266.66	11,400.04
276	Zeeland, Mich. - Haven	1,500.00		1,500.00	none
		\$2,227,058.50	\$324,300.00	\$344,975.80	\$2,206,382.70

SCHEDULE "C"

Administrative Expense	
Meetings and mileage	\$297.07
Rev. John H. Engbers, Secy.	450.00
Marion Wiersma, Treas.	1,100.00
Henry De Groot, Auditor	50.00
Postage and supplies	247.55
Fidelity Bond	188.00
Coordinated Services - Mileage	360.00

Total \$2,692.62

REPORT 11

EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE TO CHURCHES ABROAD

(Art. 26)

During the past year your committee was presented with many more requests and opportunities than could be accepted. We attempted to assess each opportunity in its relation to the furtherance of God's kingdom as represented in the family of Reformed churches worldwide. In carrying out this task we provided assistance during 1976 to nine overseas Reformed denominations through grants for academic study and leadership training. In addition requests from several overseas libraries were reviewed and their holdings were strengthened as our resources permitted.

Our report to synod last year reported a severe financial situation due to the heavy commitments made by the committee. Several students were completing their study programs and would be returning home and thus incurring significant travel expenses. Other opportunities proved to be irresistible challenges, and we embarked upon them in faith and communicated our needs to the congregations. We are pleased to report that the response to our requests for aid in this time of need was magnificent and we were able to keep all our commitments.

During 1976 five of the beneficiaries completed their studies and returned to their homes overseas to take up the work for which their training was intended.

Professor Wilson Castro Ferreira of the Presbyterian Seminary in Campinas, Brazil, taught and studied at Calvin Seminary. In this project the committee assisted the national church in Brazil, Calvin Seminary, and the Back to God Hour, on whose behalf Prof. Ferreira is actively engaged in Brazil. Through this effort we trust the seminary in Brazil was also aided, as well as relationships cemented with the National Presbyterian Church of Brazil, the denomination with which our missionaries in Brazil are associated.

The Rev. Joseph Dzenda, minister in the Tiv Church of Christ in Nigeria, completed his study program at the School of World Mission, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, California, and returned to Nigeria in mid-year. The Rev. Mr. Dzenda's family was brought to America by interested supporters at no cost to the committee.

The Rev. Sularso Sopater, completed his Th.M. study program in Systematic Theology at Calvin Seminary. This genial Indonesian returned to Jakarta in March to take up a teaching ministry at the Reformed Seminary in his country.

The Rev. Keith Warren, of the Queensland Bible Institute of Australia, also studied in the area of Systematic Theology in a Th.M. program at Calvin Seminary. The Rev. Mr. Warren is a graduate of the Theological Seminary at Geelong and is a minister in the Reformed Church of Australia. In that capacity, he is able to provide a strong Reformed witness as he departed in May to return to the distant area of Queensland.

The Rev. Reginald Een Ebenezer of Sri Lanka, formerly Ceylon, completed his Masters Program in the area of communications at Wheaton College. The Rev. Mr. Ebenezer's contacts and preaching ministry in the Chicago area were well received by our churches and his training will hopefully provide the churches in Sri Lanka with valuable assistance in the area of radio ministry. The Rev. Mr. Ebenezer's wife and children were also brought to this country by generous supporters at no cost to the committee.

This outreach on three continents and in five countries will hopefully bear lasting fruit in the years ahead. They all returned to their churches to occupy strategic positions of leadership in their communities. In addition to these five scholars, your committee supported three beneficiaries who continued their studies through 1976 and into 1977.

Mr. Paul Jin-Yuan Jaw, a member of the Presbyterian Church of Taiwan, is now pursuing a doctoral program in Systematic Theology at Drew Theological School. Mr. Jaw previously studied at Calvin Seminary and upon the completion of his doctoral program will return to a position of leadership training at Tainan Theological College in Taiwan.

The Rev. Han Hum Ok, a pastor in the Hap Dong Church, Seoul, Korea, is engaged in a Th.M. study program at Calvin Seminary in the area of Practical Theology. At the completion of this program in May 1977, he will be able to join the faculty of the Calvin Theological Seminary in Seoul.

Mr. Amos Addi is preparing for a teaching position at the Theological College of Northern Nigeria, located in Bukuru, Plateau State, Nigeria. This school has long been associated with our mission enterprise in Nigeria, and many theological students from the Reformed churches in that country prepare for the ministry at TCNN. The provision of a man of Reformed conviction at that institution is therefore particularly significant.

In addition to the eight churches with whom we cooperated on behalf of those mentioned above, your committee undertook to assist four students with grants during 1976.

The Rev. Jacob Yaaya arrived for study at the Reformed Bible College in January in a cooperative venture by which funding was contributed through the Tiv Church of Nigeria, the Board for World Missions, Reformed Bible College and your committee. The Rev. Mr. Yaaya is a teacher of religious knowledge on the secondary school level, and occupies an important role as the Nigerian churches assume greater responsibility for meeting opportunities in leadership training.

The Rev. Joshua Yakobu, principal of the Reformed Theological College of Nigeria, and graduate of Calvin Theological Seminary, has enrolled in a study program at Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, California. The Reformed Theological College of Nigeria is located at the headquarters of the Tiv Church of Christ at Mkar, Nigeria. As principal the Rev. Yakobu occupies a position of great significance in the life of that church. The Tiv Church of Christ now supervises some

one thousand worship centers in villages and towns in Benue State. Nearly sixty congregations have been organized since the church was first established autonomously in 1957. The Rev. Mr. Yakobu has provided significant contacts with the California churches as he works on his Th.M. program which he hopes to complete during the course of 1977.

Mr. James Gberkon is currently in a graduate program at Western Michigan University in the field of Geography. Upon completion of his studies in 1977 he will return to Benue State, Nigeria, to assume the position of vice-principal at Bristow Secondary School. While your committee's support of Mr. Gberkon was not financially large, a small amount of assistance will enable him to complete his program during the course of 1977.

The Rev. Norberto Wolf, a minister in the Iglesia Reformada en La Argentina, has been provided with a small grant to enable him to pursue studies at the Theological Fraternity in Buenos Aires. This school is supported by the Reformed Churches of Argentina and one of our missionaries, Dr. Sidney Rooy, is on the faculty of this school. Since this study will be carried on right in Argentina, the training should be particularly pertinent to the situation.

For several beneficiaries, the committee's financial involvement consisted of one time grants at the initiation of the study program. All recipients, however, provide the committee with regular progress reports which are also transmitted to their home churches. In order for any recipient to qualify, it is necessary that the home church indicate the purpose for which the training is envisioned as well as the financial contribution which the home church will provide. While such contribution need not be large, it must indicate that church's interest and involvement in the study project. There must, furthermore, be a specific position to be occupied upon completion of the study program. By following these guidelines, your committee provides grants only to those students which the national churches themselves endorse and for whom specific needs and ministry exist.

The book collection and distribution program has been carried on once again this year by Mr. Peter De Klerk, librarian at Calvin Theological Seminary. Solicitations for used books have been made from time to time and this has enabled Mr. De Klerk to provide certain libraries overseas with both new and used volumes. Lists of our holdings have been distributed to appropriate educational institutions and provisions of books have been made to institutions such as: the Freie Theologische Akademie, at Seeheim, Germany, and the seminary at Aix-en-Provence in France. Books have also been provided for the Genevan Reformed Seminary in the Philippines and Juan Calvino Seminary in Mexico City. We continue to appeal to our people to send good used theological books, Bible commentaries, concordances and dictionaries. They should be sent to: Mr. Peter De Klerk, % Calvin Seminary, CEACA, 3233 Burton St. SE, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49506.

Terms of service of three members of this committee, the Rev. James Lont, Dr. Eugene Rubingh and Dr. Peter Vande Guchte expire during

1977. As they are no longer eligible for reappointment, the committee presents the following nominations to synod for their replacement:

Mrs. Edna Greenway and Mrs. Rose Van Reken as replacement for the Rev. James Lont.

Rev. Edward Van Baak and Rev. William Van Tol as replacement for Dr. Eugene Rubingh.

Mr. Donald Boender and Mr. Wayne Medendorp as replacement for Dr. Peter Vande Guchte.

The committee expresses its gratitude to the retiring members, in particular to Dr. Vande Guchte who expended many hours without remuneration on the committee's behalf.

Statement of Cash Receipts and Disbursements

February 1, 1976 - January 31, 1977

Cash Balance, February 1, 1976		\$ 560.82
Receipts:		
Christian Reformed Churches and groups	\$16,933.41	
Personal gifts	1,260.00	
Total receipts		<u>\$18,193.41</u>
		\$18,754.23
Disbursements:		
Support of students	\$15,915.68	
Library assistance program mailing cost	97.56	
Supplies, publicity, postage	<u>284.23</u>	
Total disbursements		<u>\$16,297.47</u>
Cash balance, January 31, 1977		\$ 2,456.76

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. That synod approve the work done by this committee.
2. That synod approve the nomination of Mrs. Edna Greenway and Mrs. Rose Van Reken as replacement for the Rev. J. Lont and elect one of the nominees.
3. That synod approve the nomination of the Rev. Edward Van Baak and the Rev. William Van Tol as replacement for Dr. E. Rubingh and elect one of the nominees.
4. That synod approve the nomination of Mr. Donald Boender and Mr. Wayne Medendorp as replacement for Dr. P. Vande Guchte and elect one of the nominees.

5. That the work of this committee be recommended to the churches for one or more offerings.

**Committee for Educational Assistance
to Churches Abroad**

E. Rubingh, chairman

R. De Ridder, secretary

P. Vande Guchte, treasurer

M. Essenburg

J. Heerema

J. Lont

J. Schuurmann

REPORT 12
FUND FOR NEEDY CHURCHES
 (Art. 72)

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.

The present membership of the committee is as follows:

- President—Mr. John R. Swierenga of Elmhurst, Illinois (1978)
- Vice-president—Mr. H. Ray Schaafsma of Elmhurst, Illinois (1979)
- Secretary—Rev. Harry G. Arnold of Lansing, Illinois (1977)
- Treasurer—Mr. Henry Wierenga of Oak Lawn, Illinois (1977)
- Vicar—Rev. John Vander Lugt of Palos Heights, Illinois (1978)

B. *Committee for the coming year.*

The terms of the Rev. Harry Arnold and Mr. Henry Wierenga expire this year. Both have served two consecutive three year terms and therefore, according to synodical rule, are not eligible for re-nomination at this time. We will recommend nominees to synod to replace these men.

II. THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE

FNC 1976 Statistics

- Applications processed—143
- Assistance granted—143
- Children allowances—318
- Total families in these churches—4987
- New churches—8
- Average number of families per church—35
- Churches no longer requiring assistance—9

III. QUESTIONNAIRE RE FRINGE BENEFITS

In the spring of 1976 the FNC Committee sent out a questionnaire to all churches receiving aid from its fund. We present the results of that survey for synod's information. The results are based on the first one hundred returns, though late returns in no way alter these statistics. We believe it is helpful, both for synod and all our churches, to know what obligations are being assumed by various congregations, in order to give adequate material support to our ministers. The questionnaire and its results are as follows:

1. Does church pay parsonage utilities?
 YES = 98 NO = 2
2. Does church assist with US Social Security tax or Canadian equivalent?
 YES = 55 NO = 45
3. Does church pay hospital/medical insurance?
 YES = 55 NO = 45

4. Does church pay group life insurance?
YES = 5 NO = 95
5. Does church pay toward auto insurance?
YES = 5 NO = 95

IV. POLICY RE ASSURANCE OF CONTINUED SUPPORT OF VACANT CHURCHES

The FNC Committee discovered that many subsidized churches, when becoming vacant, were proceeding to call another minister without first receiving assurance of continued support from our fund. We, therefore, wish to inform synod that on November 10, 1976, we reiterated our policy in compliance with synodical rule, as follows:

Whenever a church receiving aid from our fund becomes vacant, it must notify the denominational FNC secretary and receive assurance of continued support from the FNC Committee *before* proceeding to call another pastor. If this procedure is not followed, the local church must be prepared to assume full cost of support for any pastor it calls.

All churches receiving aid from our fund were notified of this policy during the month of December, 1976.

We will make further recommendation regarding this matter below.

V. MATTERS REQUIRING SYNODICAL ATTENTION

A. We request that our secretary and treasurer be consulted on matters pertaining to the FNC when considered by synod or its advisory committee and that they be given the privilege of the floor. In the absence of either the secretary or treasurer, we request that the same privilege be given to the other members of the committee.

B. *Recommendations:*

1. That the minimum salary for ministers serving churches which receive assistance from the FNC be set at \$12,000 for 1978. This involves an increase of \$1,000 or about 9%.

Ground: This amount of increase is necessary in order to comply with the *Guidelines for Ministers' Salaries* as adopted by the Synod of 1970 and in order to allow for continuing inflation in the economies of the United States and Canada.

2. That a child allowance of \$500 be granted for every child up to twenty-two (22) years of age, excluding those who have reached the age of nineteen (19) years, and who are no longer enrolled in an educational institution.

3. That a car allowance of \$800 be given each minister out of FNC funds and that each church receiving aid from the FNC be required to pay an equivalent amount of \$800 from its own funds.

Note: While the cost of maintaining an automobile will undoubtedly continue to rise, it is the judgment of the FNC Committee that our present arrangement is still quite equitable for 1978. Where total circumstances warrant additional reimbursement, that particular congregation should assume the responsibility for the added expense.

4. That the per family contribution toward the minister's salary in congregations receiving aid from the FNC in 1978 be not less (and if possible more) than \$160 in both the United States and Canada.

Ground: This increase is required in order to raise the percentage of the congregation's support toward a pastor's base salary so as to more nearly approximate synod's support.

(Example: In 1971 a church of thirty families contributed 48% towards the base salary and synod 52%. On the proposed salary of \$12,000 for 1978 and the proposed \$160 per family formula, a church of thirty families will contribute 40% toward the base salary and synod 60%).

5. That the quota for FNC for 1978 be set at \$12.50 per family.

6. That the allowance for a stated supply be set at \$160 per week for 1978.

7. That synod declare that a subsidized church which, upon becoming vacant, calls a pastor or engages a stated supply without receiving prior assurance of continued support from the FNC Committee shall be responsible for the full support of any such pastor or stated supply.

8. That synod elect a ministerial member to replace the Rev. Harry Arnold and a lay member to replace Mr. Henry Wierenga for three year terms from the following nominations:

Ministerial member

Rev. George Holwerda of the Highland II, Indiana, Christian Reformed Church.

Rev. David Zylstra of the Archer Avenue, Chicago, Illinois, Christian Reformed Church.

Lay member

Mr. George Jousma of the Palos Heights, Illinois, Christian Reformed Church. Mr. Jousma is a semi-retired businessman.

Mr. George Vande Werken of the Elmhurst, Illinois, Christian Reformed Church. Mr. Vande Werken is a retired company executive.

Fund for Needy Churches Committee
Harry G. Arnold, secretary

FUND FOR NEEDY CHURCHES, INC.

UNITED STATES ACCOUNT

Statement of Receipts and Disbursements for the Year
ended January 31, 1977

United States Fund Balance February 1, 1976		\$429,627.70
<u>Receipts</u>		
Quota Payments from Classical Treasurers	\$671,309.77	
Interest	23,817.97	
Refunds and Gifts	1,290.98	696,418.72
Total Funds to be Accounted for		\$1,126,046.42

<u>Disbursements</u>		
Salary Subsidy Payments	\$411,169.85	
Child Allowance Payments	93,624.34	
Automobile Allowance Payments	71,047.65	
Moving Expenses	9,466.33	
Stationery, Supplies, Misc.	65.82	
Honorariums	2,400.00	
Auditing Expense	150.00	
Committee Expense	652.07	
Postage	164.12	
Transfer to Canadian Account	<u>5,000.00</u>	\$593,740.18
United States Fund Balance Jan. 31, 1977		\$532,306.24

<u>Cash Account</u>		
First National Bank of Evergreen Park		
Certificate of Deposit		\$325,000.00
First National Bank of Evergreen Park - Checking Account		2,355.49
First National Bank of Evergreen Park - Savings Account		<u>204,950.75</u>
		\$532,306.24

FUND FOR NEEDY CHURCHES, INC.

CANADIAN ACCOUNT

Statement of Receipts and Disbursements for the Year
ending January 31, 1977

Canadian Fund Balance February 1, 1976 \$ 46,217.76

<u>Receipts</u>		
Quota Payments from Classical Treasurers	\$180,711.06	
Transfer from United States Account	5,000.00	
Exchange less Bank Audit Charge	<u>29.50</u>	
Total Receipts		185,740.56
Total Funds to be accounted for		\$231,958.32

<u>Disbursements</u>		
Salary Subsidy Payments	\$119,892.39	
Child Allowance Payments	33,592.15	
Automobile Allowance Payments	24,921.15	
Moving Expense	<u>6,173.77</u>	
Total Disbursements		\$184,579.46
Canadian Fund Balance January 31, 1977		\$ 47,378.86
Cash Account - Canadian Bank of Commerce		\$ 47,378.86

Schedule B

Subsidy payments for year ending January 31, 1977

<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	\$7732.50	\$5432.50	\$1425.00	\$ 875.00	
Edson	6200.00	5450.00		750.00	
Grand Prairie-Le Glace	7055.55	4834.80	383.35	718.75	\$ 1118.65
Stony Plain	3150.00	2400.00		750.00	
<u>Alberta South</u>					
Brooks Vauxhall	4555.00	1805.00	2000.00	750.00	
High River	1350.00	975.00		375.00	
Regina	5133.37	2792.50	600.00	375.00	1365.87
Bellevue	2875.00	2500.00		375.00	
<u>British Columbia</u>					
Agassiz	5245.00	3695.00	800.00	750.00	
Houston	4233.34	2666.67	1066.67	500.00	
Kelowna	4217.50	2725.83	341.67	1150.00	
Port Alberni	4970.00	3020.00	1200.00	750.00	
Prince George	8070.00	5720.00	1600.00	750.00	
Telkwa	3785.15	2946.00	433.00	406.15	
Terrace	3765.00	2615.00	400.00	750.00	
Vernon	2880.00	1130.00	1000.00	750.00	360.00
Coquitlan	2154.50	1227.50		187.50	739.50
Penticton	3017.35	1531.25	233.35	218.75	1034.00
<u>Cadillac</u>					
Lake City	7400.00	5450.00	1200.00	750.00	
<u>California South</u>					
Fountain Valley	8600.00	5450.00	2400.00	750.00	
<u>Central California</u>					
Hayward	2123.33	1606.67	266.66	250.00	
Sacramento	6050.00	4500.00	800.00	750.00	
<u>Chatham</u>					
Elenheim	6455.00	4505.00	1200.00	750.00	
Dresden	6185.00	4235.00	1200.00	750.00	
Forest	6595.00	5045.00	800.00	750.00	
Wallaceburg	1508.35	695.85	500.00	312.50	
Woodstock	4850.00	4100.00		750.00	
<u>Chicago North</u>					
Garfield	9190.00	7800.00	640.00	750.00	
Karean	6950.00	5000.00	1200.00	750.00	
Winfield	6300.00	4750.00	800.00	750.00	
<u>Chicago South</u>					
Immanuel	6720.00	4370.00	1600.00	750.00	
Richton Park	5546.25	3783.75	1200.00	562.50	
<u>Columbia</u>					
Conrad	\$4850.00	\$3300.00	\$ 800.00	\$ 750.00	
Gallatin Gateway	3050.00	1500.00	800.00	750.00	
Calvin-Portland	6050.00	4500.00	800.00	750.00	
Calvin-Spokane	6150.00	4200.00	1200.00	750.00	
Oak Hills - Portland	7310.00	4370.00	800.00	750.00	\$1390.00
Quincy	6000.00	5250.00		750.00	
Trinity, Vancouver	7675.00	6125.00	800.00	750.00	
<u>Eastern Canada</u>					
Athens	3350.00	1800.00	800.00	750.00	
Cornwall	4125.00	2500.00	1000.00	625.00	
Halifax	5734.40	4211.65	1036.75	486.00	
Kemptville	5521.50	4322.00	551.25	648.25	
Pembroke, Zion	3650.00	2000.00	900.00	750.00	
Renfrew	8456.25	6000.00	800.00	750.00	906.25
Truro	5645.00	3695.00	1200.00	750.00	

<u>Classis</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Salary Subsidy</u>	<u>Child Allowance</u>	<u>Car Allowance</u>	<u>Moving</u>
<u>Florida</u>					
Boca Raton	2420.85	1093.65	107.70	150.50	1069.00
Miami	4175.00	2250.00	800.00	750.00	375.00
Orlando	5650.00	4100.00	800.00	750.00	
Pinellas Park	1750.00	1000.00		750.00	
<u>Grand Rapids, East</u>					
Grace	3894.35	1525.00	1335.00	416.00	618.35
Lowell	5225.31	2467.50	1419.25	1041.75	296.81
Madison Square	6865.00	5315.00	800.00	750.00	
Middleville	6050.00	4100.00	1200.00	750.00	
Portland	7150.00	5600.00	800.00	750.00	
<u>Grand Rapids, South</u>					
Wayland	4925.00	2075.00	2100.00	750.00	
<u>Grand Rapids, North</u>					
Bristolwood	6060.00	4910.00	400.00	750.00	
Cedar Springs	2492.50	2117.50		375.00	
Comstock Park	5450.00	3500.00	1200.00	750.00	
Sparta (Trinity)	6320.00	4370.00	1200.00	750.00	
<u>Hackensack</u>					
Broomal	4596.75	2390.67	1033.33	593.75	579.00
Franklin Lakes	4250.00	1900.00	1600.00	750.00	
Madison Ave. Paterson	4306.66	3273.33	533.33	500.00	
Monsey	7717.30	5990.00	400.00	750.00	577.30
Paterson N. J. Community	8075.00	6125.00	1200.00	750.00	
Pompton Plains	1950.00		1200.00	750.00	
Queens, Jamaica N. Y.	8350.00	6800.00	800.00	750.00	
Terra Ceia	7164.44	4040.00	1167.00	750.00	1207.44
<u>Hamilton</u>					
Ancaster	1042.50	755.00	100.00	187.50	
<u>Holland</u>					
St. Joseph	4250.00	1900.00	1600.00	750.00	
<u>Hudson</u>					
Binghamton	\$6050.00	3300.00	\$2000.00	\$ 750.00	
Ferrisburg	3895.00	2345.00	800.00	750.00	
Framingham	3921.50	2849.00	660.00	412.50	
North Haledon	4430.00	2080.00	1600.00	750.00	
Paramus	7750.00	6240.00	800.00	750.00	
Silver Springs, Md	4285.00	2000.00	1535.00	750.00	
<u>Huron</u>					
Collingwood	7655.00	4505.00	2400.00	750.00	
Orangeville	2210.00	860.00	600.00	750.00	
Stratford	4445.00	2686.67	1133.33	625.00	
<u>Illiana</u>					
Beacon Light, Gary	6258.33	4775.00	733.33	750.00	
Crown Point	4975.00	3425.00	800.00	750.00	
Indianapolis	6458.68	3497.25	642.00	520.00	\$1799.43
<u>Kalamazoo</u>					
Decatur	4629.16	3208.33	733.33	687.50	
Eastern Hills	7450.00	5500.00	1200.00	750.00	
Northern Heights	3450.00	1500.00	1200.00	750.00	
Plainwell, Calvary	6710.00	5160.00	800.00	750.00	
South Bend	5250.00	3700.00	800.00	750.00	

<u>Classis</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Salary Subsidy</u>	<u>Child Allowance</u>	<u>Car Allowance</u>	<u>Moving</u>
<u>Iake Erie</u>					
Akron	7400.00	5450.00	1200.00	750.00	
Cherry Hill, Inkster	5950.00	4000.00	1200.00	750.00	
Columbus, Olentangy	6050.00	4100.00	1200.00	750.00	
Farmington, University Hills	9400.00	6250.00	2400.00	750.00	
Flint	9290.00	7340.00	1200.00	750.00	
Jackson	4450.00	2500.00	1200.00	750.00	
Lambertville, Toledo	7165.00	5315.00	1100.00	750.00	
Maple Heights	5000.00	3050.00	1200.00	750.00	
Roseville	7050.00	5500.00	800.00	750.00	
Saginaw	4988.53	3392.50	383.33	720.00	492.70
<u>Minnesota North</u>					
BeJou	500.00			500.00	
Brandon	6985.00	4235.00	2000.00	750.00	
Brooten	4950.00	3800.00	400.00	750.00	
Emo	6855.00	4505.00	1600.00	750.00	
Hancock	4630.00	3480.00	400.00	750.00	
Ogilvie	3495.00	2345.00	400.00	750.00	
Port Arthur (Thunder Bay)	4568.53	2075.00	1887.78	605.75	
Invergrove Heights	7093.33	4910.00	1433.33	750.00	
<u>Minnesota South</u>					
Rigelow	2927.50	2440.00	300.00	187.50	
Holland	6052.20	6052.20			
Hull, N. D.	4150.00	3000.00	400.00	750.00	
Lodgepole (Holland Center)	7490.00	5540.00	1200.00	750.00	
Mt. Lake	7300.00	6150.00	400.00	750.00	
<u>Muskegon</u>					
Fruitport	5520.00	4370.00	400.00	750.00	
Grace	6325.00	4775.00	800.00	750.00	
Green Ridge	9015.00	6665.00	1600.00	750.00	
<u>North Central Iowa</u>					
Ackley	\$6700.00	\$4750.00	\$1200.00	\$ 750.00	
Britt	8330.00	6280.00	1300.00	750.00	
Cedar Falls	6710.00	5160.00	800.00	750.00	
Holland	1038.50	1003.50		35.00	
Iowa Falls	7804.55	5360.00	1200.00	750.00	\$ 494.55
<u>Orange City</u>					
Hartley	7680.00	6530.00	400.00	750.00	
Hope, Hull	4975.00	3425.00	800.00	750.00	
Le Mars	3607.40	2622.00	342.75	642.75	
Omaha (Prairie Lane)	7275.00	6125.00	400.00	750.00	
Sioux City	5340.00	4235.00		750.00	355.00
<u>Pacific Northwest</u>					
Bellevue, Wash.	4569.00	2817.00	1274.00	478.00	
Lynwood	7940.00	5990.00	1200.00	750.00	
Mt. View	5365.00	2615.00	2000.00	750.00	
Seattle, Calvary	6185.00	4235.00	1200.00	750.00	
<u>Pella</u>					
Tracy	7950.00	6000.00	1200.00	750.00	
<u>Quinte</u>					
Lindsay	3850.00	1500.00	1600.00	750.00	
<u>Rocky Mountain</u>					
Albuquerque	6150.00	5000.00	400.00	750.00	
Denver, Trinity	3350.00	1400.00	1200.00	750.00	
Fairview	7050.00	3900.00	2400.00	750.00	
Ridgeview Hills	3480.00	1130.00	1600.00	750.00	
Salt Lake City, First	5515.00	3965.00	800.00	750.00	
Tucson, Bethel	3750.00	3000.00		750.00	

<u>Classis</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Salary Subsidy</u>	<u>Child Allowance</u>	<u>Car Allowance</u>	<u>Moving</u>
<u>Sioux Center</u>					
Freeman, S. D.	7810.00	5860.00	1200.00	750.00	
Harrison	3251.75	1930.00	385.00	725.00	211.75
Marion, Bethel	8285.00	6935.00	600.00	750.00	
Valentine	9150.00	7600.00	800.00	750.00	
<u>Toronto</u>					
Thistleton, Rexdale	4143.67	2194.17	800.00	500.00	649.50
<u>Wisconsin</u>					
Wisconsin Rapids	5250.00	4500.00		750.00	
	\$769887.63	\$531062.24	\$127216.49	\$95968.80	\$15640.10

Schedule C

1976 Quota Payments

<u>Families</u>	<u>Classis</u>	<u>1976 Quota</u>	<u>Payment as of January 31, 1977</u>	<u>Percentage of Quota</u>
1628	Alberta North	\$21,978.00	\$20,947.40	95%
1062	Alberta South	14,337.00	13,856.25	97%
2110	British Columbia	28,485.00	27,974.71	98%
659	Cadillac	8,896.50	8,579.30	96%
2241	California South	30,253.50	38,203.33	126%
1211	California Central	16,348.50	16,313.37	100%
2251	Chatham	30,388.50	24,076.57	79%
1331	Chicago North	17,968.50	16,679.02	93%
1360	Chicago South	18,360.00	17,397.39	95%
838	Columbia	11,313.00	12,144.53	107%
980	Eastern Canada	13,230.00	10,930.00	83%
545	Florida	7,357.50	7,071.91	96%
3788	Grand Rapids East	51,138.00	50,719.60	99%
2115	Grand Rapids North	28,552.50	27,821.19	97%
2516	Grand Rapids South	33,966.00	34,589.00	102%
3256	Grandville	44,091.00	44,333.34	101%
1036	Hackensack	13,986.00	13,464.42	96%
2606	Hamilton	35,181.00	38,719.81	110%
2966	Holland	40,041.00	40,716.58	102%
1930	Hudson	26,055.00	30,076.50	115%
1328	Huron	17,928.00	21,907.66	122%
2413	Illiana	32,575.55	32,968.33	101%
1835	Kalamazoo	24,772.50	25,670.13	104%
1162	Lake Erie	15,687.00	15,457.82	99%
1726	Minn. North	23,301.00	24,962.08	107%
1101	Minn. South	14,863.50	14,278.97	96%
1894	Muskegon	25,569.00	25,935.04	101%
761	Northcentral Iowa	10,273.50	10,844.42	106%
1560	Orange City	21,060.00	21,498.80	102%
1818	Pacific Northwest	24,543.00	27,180.72	111%
1678	Pella	22,653.00	22,196.10	98%
1398	Quinte	18,873.00	12,125.56	64%
1602	Rocky Mt.	21,627.00	19,453.51	90%
1680	Sioux Center	22,680.00	23,110.76	102%
1864	Toronto	25,164.00	4,141.31	16%
1249	Wisconsin	16,861.50	16,861.50	100%
2880	Zeeland	38,880.00	38,813.90	100%
		\$869,238.00	\$852,020.83	98%

REPORT 13
HISTORICAL COMMITTEE
(Art. 24)

During the past year, the work of this committee concentrated on the activities of Mr. E. R. Post, our "Hauler of Heritage for Heritage Hall," and his capable volunteer-assistant, Mr. Dave Van Vliet. These men have been strengthened by God to continue to gather and preserve for future use so many different documents and memorabilia which are being added to the Colonial Origins collection.

Synod will be pleased to learn about the growing collection of such material and about the form it has taken with guidance from our committee. Although Mr. Post is especially concerned with tracking down documents of historical value in the way of minutes, the fact is that certain additional and related materials are being offered him, even though their value may not be as great as some. A judgment with reference to policies must be made, and our committee has offered advice.

For the past twelve years, Mr. Post has been working in this interesting and important area. The original mandate was to secure minutes of consistories and classes and to preserve these in microfilm form. Opportunities to obtain related materials have almost forced him to enlarge the scope of the work he performs, so that incidental and related collections are growing, too.

As a result, open vertical files have been set up to accept clippings and articles reflecting the on-going task performed in the church. Anniversary booklets and especially photos are preserved as valuable mementos of God's favors on the CRC and, in the judgment of the committee, will serve good purposes in time to come. Accordingly, this aspect of the work is being encouraged.

With reference to denominational records, it is significant to note that official minutes of classes, consistories, and related agencies are still being collected with vigor. Various publications like the Back to God Hour tapes and photos form an important segment of this area of interest.

Genealogies and immigration records, scrapbooks, diaries, and regionally-oriented records are offered and accepted for the present, though these materials are not being solicited in any active fashion. Similarly, congregational membership records are not thought to be too valuable unless they antedate the early 1900s.

Denominational memorabilia connected with Calvin College & Seminary does not find a place in the Colonial Origins collection as such, since Miss Gertrude Slingerland is working in this area, chronicling and preserving the affairs of the college community.

Synod will be interested to know that Dr. H. Brinks, archivist, has spent some time in the Netherlands, establishing some valuable contacts with both the Hervormde and Gereformeerde Kerken. He has been able

to obtain in microfilm form certain valuable documents and minutes reflecting on the Afscheiding. The Historical Committee has commended Dr. Brinks on this accomplishment and endorses his continuation of the task.

Through co-operative efforts with personnel from Dordt College in Sioux Center, Iowa, the denomination's files have been growing by acquisition of materials that are considered important enough for preservation. This cooperation is proving to be mutually beneficial both to Dordt College and to the denomination, without any sense of unhealthy competition.

Among materials being offered for placement in our historical files are personal papers of significant alumni and other members who have served the nation and the church with distinction. Heritage Hall is the thankful recipient of such papers, reflecting significant contributions made by individuals who have served with distinction, and this area of activity is being encouraged with more vigor than some others.

The story of Christian education among us is rather well represented in the growing collection. Minutes, photos, school annuals, plus National Union of Christian Schools promotional materials and textbooks are being added constantly. Regional teachers' alliances, teacher and principal associations, and the AACS all find place in the files.

Records from 550 churches and no less than 175 schools are now found in the collection. This includes a certain number of disbanded churches, though many of these may still be "unearthed." More than 1300 reels of church minutes now exist, while the number of reels of material in microfilm form now exceeds 1500!

What our committee finds ever more significant, however, is the growing sense of history that is so apparent in our denomination. In a great many consistories and, in a number of instances, on the classical level too, historical committees have been formed, some of which have already proven themselves to be very productive. We are very happy to sense a growing interest in the whole enterprise of historical preservation among members of the denomination. Contacts with representatives of other churches have revealed that our church has developed an enviable record in terms of productive foresight that has resulted in the formation of valuable holdings. At least, unlike the holdings of some churches, ours cannot be contained in a large suitcase anymore.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. That synod note with thankfulness the labors of Messrs. E. R. Post and D. Van Vliet as they do much of the legwork required in the accomplishment of the work.
2. That synod urge the united cooperation of all the churches and officebearers with the committee and its representatives in the pursuit of its goals.
3. That synod once again allocate \$10,000 to defray costs incurred in the acquisition, administration, preservation, and cataloging of ma-

terials in the denominational archives, and to help subsidize the continued preservation of materials which contribute to our denominational heritage.

Historical Committee

L. Oostendorp, chairman

J. Leugs, secretary

H. Zwaanstra

H. Ippel

REPORT 14
INTERCHURCH RELATIONS COMMITTEE
(Art. 32)

During the past year your committee met monthly except for July and August, with additional meetings when necessary. Dr. John H. Kromminga continues to serve as president of the committee with Dr. John H. Bratt as vice-president and the Rev. Tymen E. Hofman as secretary. The work of the committee continues to be extensive although several fundamental aspects of interchurch relations have matured to the point where the committee can work with greater fruitfulness and less concern for developing new structures. Special mandates to the committee have also been less pressing than in the past. The committee has carried out its mandate with genuine interest and with a sense of satisfaction in the progress of the work.

A. Fraternal Delegation

1. John H. Bratt served as the fraternal delegate of the CRC to the Synod of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church held in June in Flat Rock, North Carolina.
2. Albert A. Bel and Raymond Opperwall served as fraternal delegates to the General Assembly of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church meeting in Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania in May.
3. William P. Brink and Arthur W. Hoogstrate were delegated to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America which met in September in Greenville, South Carolina.
4. Rodger Buining served as fraternal delegate to the Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church (North America) which met in Northfield, Minnesota, in May 1976.
5. James R. Kok and Stanley Mast were delegated to the Synod of Reformed Presbyterian Church (Evangelical Synod) which met in Colorado Springs in May 1976.
6. Tymen E. Hofman served as delegate to the General Synod of the Reformed Church in America which met in Madison, New Jersey, in June.
7. Sierd Woudstra served as our fraternal delegate to the 1976 Synod of the Reformed Church of Australia in Blacktown, New South Wales.

Our fraternal delegates have been well received by the assemblies of the various churches to which they have been sent. This contact, in its formal and informal aspects, is an important ingredient in interchurch fellowship and experience. In each case we request a report from our fraternal delegates which includes a copy of the address they delivered at the assembly. These reports and addresses are on file with the committee and are available to anyone interested in them. Further reports have been made in the pages of *The Banner* and will continue to be made when considered of sufficient significance and when space is available.

B. Churches in Ecclesiastical Fellowship

1. Those delegates to synod who are not fully conversant with the basic concept of churches in ecclesiastical fellowship are urged to review the reports of this committee beginning in 1974. Your committee continues to be very satisfied with the import of this relationship with churches both domestic and worldwide. We saw fit to inform the Cape Town meeting of the RES of the change in CRC interchurch categories from sister-church relationship to churches in ecclesiastical fellowship, explaining the meaning of this new approach. It is reported that there was considerable interest of a positive nature expressed. Churches in ecclesiastical fellowship opens the way for churches to relate to each other with serious commitments in situations where it is not possible to come to complete unity or union.

The following are the churches in ecclesiastical fellowship with the CRC:

- a. De Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland
- b. Die Gereformeerde Kerken in Suid Afrika
- c. The Reformed Churches of New Zealand
- d. The Reformed Churches of Australia
- e. The Evangelical Reformed Church of Brazil
- f. The Reformed Church of Argentina
- g. The Dutch Reformed Church in Sri Lanka
- h. The Benue Church of Christ in Sudan (EKAS)
- i. The Church of Christ in Sudan Among the Tiv (NKST)
- j. The Reformed Church in Japan
- k. The Christian Church of Sumba (Indonesia)
- l. The Orthodox Presbyterian Church
- m. The Presbyterian Church in America
- n. The Reformed Church in America

2. *The Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church* has expressed its desire to enter the relationship of churches in ecclesiastical fellowship with the CRC. This church is a member of the Reformed Ecumenical Synod (RES) and is seeking membership in the North American Presbyterian and Reformed Council (NAPARC) and it is therefore quite natural that we should respond favorably to this request, especially in view of the fact that this church was formerly listed as a "correspondence church" and its fraternal delegates have been invited to our synod and our delegates have attended theirs.

The committee has studied this matter with some thoroughness and finds that the ARPC is a creedally committed church which stands in much the same tradition as the CRC. While of Scottish background, the ARPC is the product of a union in 1782 of two American groups, the Associate Presbyterian and the Reformed Presbytery. Both of these churches had their origins out of the Church of Scotland in the struggle to maintain Reformed and evangelical principles. The history of the ARPC is an involved one, with problems between northern and southern synods and movements toward union isolating this church from its northern associations in 1822. Strong commitment to the Westminster Standards has characterized this church throughout its history, and some recent inroads

of doctrinal liberalism into its educational structures have been identified and are being eliminated very deliberately by those in positions of responsibility. The ARPC was an exclusively psalm-singing church until 1945. It has 152 congregations and draws its ministers from its own seminary, Erskine, and from Reformed Theological Seminary and Gordon-Conwell Seminary.

Your committee *recommends* that synod receive the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church as a church in ecclesiastical fellowship, contingent upon equivalent action by the next synod of the ARPC.

Grounds:

- a. The ARPC has long been a "correspondence church" with the CRC.
- b. The ARPC is a member church of the RES.
- c. The ARPC is Reformed in its creedal commitment and is seeking to strengthen its confessional position in areas where there has been concern.
- d. The ARPC leadership is very desirous of establishing this relationship.

We will report supplementally as to which of the six (6) aspects of ecclesiastical fellowship will apply to the ARPC.

3. *Transfer of Membership*

A matter directly related to the change from sister-church relationship to churches in ecclesiastical fellowship is the question of whether members shall at their request be transferred to these churches or whether they shall be given a statement of membership in lieu of dismissal from our membership. It should be remembered that the transfer of membership was a standard practice when members of the CRC joined one of our sister churches.

In view of the fact that a church in ecclesiastical fellowship is in an intimate relationship of cooperation and trust, your committee believes that it is consistent with the relationship and necessary for the building of trust and promotion of good relationships that the practice which held in the sister-church relationship shall also hold for churches in ecclesiastical fellowship.

Therefore we recommend that synod advise the consistories, under normal circumstances, to grant transfer of membership rather than a certificate of dismission to members seeking to affiliate with a church in ecclesiastical fellowship.

(For the reception of members from churches in ecclesiastical fellowship, see Acts of Synod 1975, p. 41, and Acts of Synod 1976, p. 43.)

C. *The Reformed Church in America*

As has been widely publicized in the CRC and the RCA church press, the 1976 synods of the respective churches approved entering the relationship of churches in ecclesiastical fellowship. With this major step having been taken, a goal has been attained and the framework has been established for fruitful activity between the churches on the congregational and classical levels. Many reports continue to come to the committee indicating that this is happening widely throughout the United States. The

committee is not aware of much activity of this nature in Canada, though it may also exist. We continue to work with a special subcommittee of the Committee on Christian Unity of the RCA in order to develop greater insight into the import and possibilities of the new relationship and to explore areas of discussion and cooperation that will promote the true unity of our churches. If there are further developments in this area, they will be reported supplementally.

D. The Gereformeerde Kerken in the Netherlands

We have had little official contact with the GKN since the Synod of 1976 where we met with its fraternal delegate, the Rev. G. Van Halsema. The committee has followed with deep interest and some concern the developments at the Synod of the GKN in the "Wiersinga case" and in the matter of the protest lodged against the writings of Dr. H. Kuitert. It must be said in all candor that the GKN is far from arriving at a fruitful solution to the problem of doctrinal diversity which has plagued its life in this decade. The Consistory of Amsterdam has not responded favorably to the advice of the synod in the Wiersinga matter, and the problem must still be resolved. The Synod of Maastricht held its final session in November 1976 and the 1977-78 Synod of Zwolle was called to order early in the year, and has a schedule of several meetings this year.

It is the intention of the committee to send two fraternal delegates to the Synod of the GKN in September or October of this year. This delegation will also confer with other Reformed churches during their stay in the Netherlands. They will be mandated by the committee in the light of further developments in the life of the churches there.

E. Other Churches in Ecclesiastical Fellowship

The committee has had no direct dealings with nor given special attention to our other churches in ecclesiastical fellowship. Relationships with the Presbyterian Church in America and the Orthodox Presbyterian Church are carried on in the context of the North American Presbyterian and Reformed Council and the relationships with the representatives of these two churches are very positive and constructive. With the remainder of the fourteen (14) churches, our contact is much more remote and indirect, limited for all practical purposes to the meeting of the RES where two of our committee members were delegated by synod. We continue to view the relationship as of essential importance but in view of the geographic remoteness of these churches we find it impossible to develop a sphere of closer cooperation and consultation. That is not to say that contact and consultation would not be desirable or beneficial. And it would be possible, but only through the appointment of a staff person and the adoption of a budget enabling extensive travel. The committee has not given serious thought to such a proposal.

F. The Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerken of the Netherlands

In September of 1975 the Netherlands delegation of the IRC met with the committee of the CGKN concerning the desirability of entering the relationship of churches in ecclesiastical fellowship. With a view to re-

porting to the September 1977 meeting of their synod, the interchurch relations committee of the CGKN is delegating two ministers as fraternal representatives to our synod. They are the Rev. G. Bilkes and Prof. Dr. W. van't Spijker. This is the first time that we will receive fraternal delegates from this church. We look forward to their fellowship.

G. The Gereformeerde Kerken of the Netherlands (Vrijgemaakt)

It can be reported that the GKN(V) has informed the committee that its synod has taken official action terminating its "relationship" with the CRC. Since the "relationship" has never been more than that of exchanging correspondence and holding two discussions, we interpret this to mean that the GKN(V) will not hold further discussions with our committee. The committee has responded with a letter clarifying certain incorrect assumptions on the part of the GKN(V) and indicating that the IRC is willing to take up discussions at any time the GKN(V) is willing to do so.

The problem of the GKN(V) is largely our continued relationship with the GKN, a relationship the CRC must break if it is to relate to the GKN(V). It also rejects the concept of churches in ecclesiastical fellowship.

H. The Gereformeerde Kerken of the Netherlands (Buitenverband)

This group of independent churches, which has broken away from the GKN(V) and is designated as the Nederlandse Gereformeerde Kerken in some unofficial circles, has responded to a letter from our committee addressed to one of the leading churches of that group. A "national assembly" of these churches in 1976 received our letter and took positive action on it, inviting the IRC to meet with a contact committee established by the assembly. This meeting will be one of the assignments of the Netherlands delegation.

I. RES Cape Town 1976

1. IRC Initiatives — The Reformed Ecumenical Synod met in Cape Town, South Africa in August of 1976. Contrary to opinions expressed at the CRC Synod of 1976, it was confirmed by the General Secretary of the RES that the agenda of the RES is open to the member churches and their agencies up to the time the RES meets. Therefore, the IRC saw fit to place on the agenda of the RES two matters it considered of importance.

The first was an item of information in which the committee informed the RES of the action of the CRC Synod in abolishing the relationship of "sister-church" and establishing the relationship of churches in ecclesiastical fellowship, explaining the reasons for this change and the import of the new relationship. No action was requested and none was taken, but it is reported that there was considerable favorable reaction to the concept.

The second was an overture occasioned by the June 1976 race-riots in South Africa and the need for an organization as significant as the RES to take some action suitable to the occasion and indicative of the concern of the RES and its churches for inter-racial peace and har-

mony founded on a Christian understanding of justice and righteousness. It requested "the Reformed Ecumenical Synod to meet this providential opportunity" suggesting that "the Reformed Ecumenical Synod, in view of its years of study and its adopted positions on race relations, is not without background for taking up the question." It added that "its churches in other lands, through their own experience with race relations, have some light to shed upon the situation." It suggested "that a competent commission, geographically representative if possible, be established to interpret the insights and experience of the worldwide Reformed community to their South African fellow members, and to interpret the attitude and actions of the South African Churches to their Reformed fellow members throughout the world." The full text of our communication may be found in Appendix A.

The RES responded favorably to this initiative of the IRC and authorized such a commission, and left the designation of this committee to the Interim Committee.

In a subsequent meeting of the IRC with the General Secretary of the RES, Dr. Paul Schrottenboer, the matter was fully discussed, with the result that the IRC recommended to the Interim Committee of the RES that it constitute itself as the interpretive commission and that it give serious consideration to meeting in South Africa before and during a very important Potchefstroom Conference on Race in which all the Reformed churches of South Africa will be participants. In order to facilitate such a meeting of the Interim Committee of the RES, the IRC indicated its willingness to seek to raise funds for transportation in view of the fact that no funds are available in the budget of the RES.

Thereupon the IRC requested SCORR, with the endorsement of the Synodical Interim Committee, to make funds available for this purpose with the understanding that the IRC would recommend to the SIC that it should endorse a denomination-wide appeal for gifts to compensate for this outlay of funds. Both SCORR and the SIC responded favorably to this suggested action.

It is the conviction of the committee that there is no more urgent matter in the life of the world's Reformed churches than a positive and Christian witness in the matter of racial relations, particularly with respect to the problems in this area in South Africa. At stake is the well-being of the churches of South Africa, of all races, of the nation of South Africa and of Africa in general. We *recommend* that synod endorse these actions of the IRC and that synod urge our churches and members to pray without ceasing for Africa and South Africa, and for the churches and for our brothers and sisters in that great continent.

2. *Report of CRC Delegates to the RES*

The report of the delegates to the RES can be found in Appendix B, along with their recommendations. By decision of the Synod of 1976, this report is submitted to synod through the IRC which shall also process the recommendations of the delegates. The recommendations of the IRC are generally in complete harmony with those of the RES

delegates but at certain points there is difference. We will use the rubrication of the report in setting forth our recommendations:

I. RACE RELATIONS

A. We recommend that synod adopt the recommendation of the delegates.

B. We recommend that synod adopt this recommendation.

C. We recommend that synod adopt this recommendation.

D. Understanding that the RES is concerned to call the attention of the churches to the problems of poverty, discrimination, prejudice, etc., which create an atmosphere of dissatisfaction and unrest, we recommend that synod adopt this recommendation and refer it to the churches in general and to SCORR for specific action.

E. We recommend that synod adopt the revisions made in resolutions 9, 11 and 12 of the Lunteren-Sydney resolutions on race and that the revised Lunteren-Sydney-Cape Town resolutions be printed in the next revision of *Synodical Decisions on Doctrinal and Ethical Matters*.

II. ECUMENICAL MATTERS

A. We recommend:

1. that synod receive as information the RES Cape Town 1976 decisions on membership of RES churches in the WCC.

Ground: This is not the kind of action of the RES that requires ratification by the member churches.

2. that this matter be referred to the IRC for further study.

B. 1. We recommend that synod take note of the decision of the RES with respect to the GKN.

Ground: This is not the kind of decision that requires ratification by the member churches.

2. We endorse the recommendation of the delegates.

C. 1. We recommend that synod adopt this recommendation.

2. We recommend that synod take note of the 1976 RES decisions on Ecumenical Relations with bodies other than the WCC (Art. 56, 1-3).

3. We recommend that synod adopt this recommendation.

III. MISSIONS, EVANGELISM AND WORLD RELIEF

A. We recommend that synod adopt this recommendation with the inclusion of the BTGH.

B. We recommend that synod receive the Message to the Churches and that it direct the boards of Home Missions, World Missions, and World Relief, and the faculties of Calvin Seminary and Calvin College to implement this statement as fully as possible; and that synod commend it to all consistories and to those faculties of higher education associated with the CRC.

C. We recommend that synod adopt this recommendation.

D. We recommend that synod adopt this recommendation.

E. We recommend that synod adopt this recommendation with the

addition of "and the boards of Home Missions and World Missions."
 F. We recommend that synod adopt this recommendation.

IV. THEOLOGICAL ISSUES

- A. We recommend that synod receive the RES report on "Baptism of the Holy Spirit" and call it to the attention of the churches.
- B. We recommend that synod take note of the decisions of the RES on the Sabbath/Sunday question and call to the attention of the churches the message of the RES in this matter.
- C. We recommend that synod adopt this recommendation.
- D. We recommend that synod take no action.

V. ORGANIZATION AND FINANCES

- A. We recommend that synod adopt this recommendation.
- B. We recommend that synod adopt this recommendation.
- C. We recommend that synod adopt this recommendation.
- D. We recommend that synod adopt this recommendation, being aware that this increases the CRC assessment from 20% to 21% of the RES budget.
- E. We recommend that synod take note that the next meeting of the RES is scheduled for 1980 at a place to be designated by the Interim Committee, and that synod make provisions for considering items for the RES agenda. (Note: It is the mandate of the IRC to present nominations for delegates to the RES.)

Further, we recommend adoption of the recommendation of the delegates "that synod encourage all its members, churches and agencies to promote, support and cooperate with the RES in all possible ways so as to promote the cause of Reformed ecumenicity with the CRC and throughout the world."

J. *North American Presbyterian and Reformed Council*

1. The Synod of 1975 endorsed the formation of the North American Presbyterian and Reformed Council, provisionally approved its constitution and by-laws, and mandated the IRC to formalize membership. NAPaRC was formally organized on October 31, 1975 at Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania, with the Christian Reformed Church; the Orthodox Presbyterian Church in America; the Reformed Presbyterian Church (Evangelical Synod); the Presbyterian Church in America; and the Reformed Presbyterian Church (North America) as charter members. A beginning was made at that meeting in canvassing possible areas of interdenominational cooperation. Our synod in 1976 urged our denominational boards and agencies to participate in these consultations, endorsed in principle a proposal of the National Presbyterian and Reformed Fellowship to sponsor a congress as a witness to the Reformed faith, and decided to invite the other NAPaRC churches to hold their major assemblies concurrently with ours in June of 1978 on the campus of Calvin College and Seminary.

The second annual meeting of NAPaRC was held in Grand Rapids on October 29 and 30, 1976, at our denominational headquarters and

on the Calvin Campus. John H. Bratt, William P. Brink, Tymen E. Hofman and John H. Kromminga served as delegates of the Christian Reformed Church with Albert A. Bel as alternate. Observers were present from the Reformed Church in the US (Eureka Classis) and from the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church, the latter of which is applying for membership to NAPA RC. John H. Bratt was elected secretary of the council and Albert A. Bel was reelected treasurer.

Reports disclosed that the council is making progress in mutual understanding and cooperation and shows promise of advancing the unity of the church of Jesus Christ.

A conference of member churches on *Diaconal Ministries* was held in Pittsburgh on October 21-22, 1976. Further meetings will consider such matters as the biblical-theological basis of the diaconate, women in diaconal affairs, the work of independent diaconal organizations such as World Vision and others, and possible areas of cooperation in diaconal work.

A meeting of representative heads of foreign and home mission boards was scheduled for November 22-23, 1976, (also in Pittsburgh) and meetings of representatives of home mission and Christian education boards are in the planning stage. It was also reported that three of the four churches invited to hold their synod/assembly on the Calvin campus in June of 1978 had accepted and that the fourth, which had previously decided to meet elsewhere on that date, was reconsidering its action.

The council voted to promote conferences on *Racial Issues*, *Office in the Church* and *Theological Education*, the first two scheduled for 1977 and the last one to be at a later date. The CRC will implement the one on *Racial Issues*, the RPCNA the one on *Office in the Church* and the OPC the one on *Theological Education*. The concept of "Churches in Ecclesiastical Fellowship," now in operation between the CRC and other churches, was commended to the council for broader usage and a possible policy for all NAPA RC churches. A committee comprising members of the constituent churches was named to consider it.

The application of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church (ARPC) for admission to NAPA RC was delayed for one year pending further dialogue by the investigating committee and further consideration of one item in the constitution by the ARPC. It is expected that the application will be voted upon at the next meeting of NAPA RC at Covenant Theological Seminary in St. Louis in October 1977. An updated *Denominational Studies Index*, studies recently completed or now in process, was requested of each delegation.

The basis of the council, which at the adoption of the constitution read as follows:

"In commitment to Jesus Christ as only Savior and Sovereign Lord over all of life we acknowledge that the basis for the fellowship of Presbyterian and Reformed churches is full commitment both to the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the infallible Word of God and to their teachings as set forth in the Reformed standards, viz., the Heidelberg Catechism, the Belgic Confession, the Canons

of Dort, the Westminster Confession of Faith and the Westminster Larger and Shorter Catechisms.”

was amended by substitution to read thus:

“Confessing Jesus Christ as only Savior and Sovereign Lord over all of life, we affirm the basis of the fellowship of Presbyterian and Reformed churches to be full commitment to the Bible in its entirety as the Word of God written, without error in all its parts, and to its teaching as set forth in the Heidelberg Catechism, the Belgic Confession, the Canons of Dort, the Westminster Confession of Faith, and the Westminster Larger and Shorter Catechisms.”

The minutes of the meeting of NAPaRC have been sent to each delegate to synod.

We recommend:

a. that synod approve the above amendment of the Constitution of NAPaRC.

b. that two copies of the minutes of NAPaRC be sent to each consistory.

2. Concurrent Synods of NAPaRC Churches

With the possibility of all NAPaRC churches holding their major assembly meetings concurrently at Calvin College and Seminary in 1978, the delegates to the October meeting of NAPaRC discussed and endorsed the concept of a joint service of prayer for all the delegates to these assemblies, and designated a committee of representatives of each of the churches to consider further joint activities, each church naming two members, with the CRC naming three members, John H. Bratt, William P. Brink and Clarence Boomsma. This committee will work closely with the committee appointed by Calvin College and Seminary on arrangements. This committee is composed of Harry Faber, John H. Kromminga, Anthony J. Diekema, Charles Miller and John H. Bratt.

We recommend:

a. That synod approve a joint service of prayer, to be ordered by the Concurrent Synods Committee, to be held on June 19, 1978.

b. That with respect to other joint activities, the Concurrent Synods Committee be given power to act in cooperation with the Arrangements Committee of Calvin College and Seminary.

Note: It should be clear that the joint service of prayer is not intended to displace the regular prayer service for synod arranged by the host church which will be held on June 12.

K. *World Alliance of Reformed Churches*

The committee is still keeping up contact with the WARC with a view to evaluating the question of possible membership in this organization. Our committee is regularly invited to send two visitors to the annual meeting of the North American Area Council of WARC, one of which is Dr. Fred Klooster who is a member of the Theological Committee of NAAC. The annual meeting of NAAC, usually held in January, was held in Princeton, New Jersey, in August 1976 and was attended by John H. Kromminga. Dr. Klooster was not able to attend because of prior commitments.

We consider this a valuable relationship but the committee is not prepared to recommend fuller participation. It should be noted that Dr. James McCord has retired as the executive secretary of NAAC after many years of fine leadership. He highly valued the presence of CRC visitors and they were always well received. We await the outcome of the 1977 meeting of the "augmented" Executive Committee of WARC in St. Andrews, Scotland, to make the 100th Anniversary of WARC. This meeting is being held in lieu of the canceled full anniversary meeting, canceled due to the financial demands of such a meeting.

L. *Mandate of the IRC*

Under mandate of synod, the IRC has acted to set forth a comprehensive mandate for the committee, taking into account the recent decisions of synod in matters of interchurch relations. The following is proposed, and *we recommend* its adoption by synod.

I. BASIC MANDATE

A. The Interchurch Relations Committee is a standing committee of the Christian Reformed Church, authorized by Article 49 of the Church Order:

"a. Synod shall appoint a committee to correspond with other Reformed churches so that the Christian Reformed Church may exercise Christian fellowship with other denominations and may promote the unity of the church of Jesus Christ.

b. Synod shall decide which denominations are to be received into ecclesiastical fellowship, and shall establish the rules which govern these relationships."

B. The basic mandate of the committee is expressed in Church Order Article 49; namely, to serve as the official agency of liaison between the Christian Reformed Church and other churches throughout the world. As a committee of synod the Interchurch Relations Committee shall exercise only those powers which are assigned by synod.

C. Synod has adopted the following principles relating to the ecumenical responsibilities of the Christian Reformed Church.

1. The Christian Reformed Church is closely related to other Christian churches as being with them a manifestation of the church, which is the one body of Christ.

2. Though organizational unity is not the paramount interest of the church, its spiritual unity should come to expression as much as possible.

3. Where organizational unity cannot be realized, churches should relate with each other in the spirit of Article 49 of the Church Order.

4. For the purpose of implementing interchurch relations in the spirit of Church Order Article 49, the churches of Christ may be roughly classified into four groups: Orthodox churches, the Roman Catholic Church, non-Reformed churches, and Reformed churches. Hence the Christian Reformed Church maintains a variety of types of interchurch relations: with other Reformed churches,

with non-Reformed Protestant churches, with the Roman Catholic Church, and with the Orthodox churches.

5. The Christian Reformed Church should seek unity in the truth with all churches of Christ but should attach first priority to churches which are Reformed as to confession, polity, and liturgy, as determined not only by their formal standards but also by their actual practice.

6. The unity of those churches which are Reformed in form and practice should come to organizational expression as soon and as fully as possible.

7. The shape of this organizational unity should be determined in keeping with prudence and such circumstances as language, distance, and non-essential differences in formal standards and practice.

II. SCOPE OF THE WORK OF THE INTERCHURCH RELATIONS COMMITTEE

A. The Committee on Interchurch Relations shall actively seek to promote and maintain relations of the Christian Reformed Church:

1. with churches in ecclesiastical fellowship,
2. with other churches of Reformed persuasion,
3. with ecumenical organizations in which the Christian Reformed Church cooperates with other denominations of Reformed faith, in accord with Church Order Article 50.

B. Relationships of the Christian Reformed Church with other churches of Reformed practice shall be governed by the following regulations of synod (Cf. Acts of Synod 1974, p. 57):

1. There shall be one relationship with other Reformed churches designated by synod as "Churches in Ecclesiastical Fellowship."
2. The receiving of churches into ecclesiastical fellowship implies, and where possible and desirable involves:
 - a. exchange of fraternal delegates at major assemblies,
 - b. occasional pulpit fellowship,
 - c. intercommunion (i.e., fellowship at the table of the Lord),
 - d. joint action in areas of common responsibility,
 - e. communication on major issues of joint concern,
 - f. the exercise of mutual concern and admonition with a view to promoting the fundamentals of Christian unity.

C. The committee shall maintain a broader interest in the church at large through study and contact with ecumenical organizations and other denominations.

III. SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE INTERCHURCH RELATIONS COMMITTEE

A. The Interchurch Relations Committee shall continue close relationships with the denominations which have been named by synod as churches in ecclesiastical fellowship.

B. The Interchurch Relations Committee shall recommend to synod which additional churches are to be received into ecclesiastical fellowship.

C. The Interchurch Relations Committee shall recommend which specific kinds of fellowship and cooperation shall apply to each church in ecclesiastical fellowship.

D. The Interchurch Relations Committee shall initiate and/or pursue contact and closer relationship with churches other than those referred to in A, B, C, above in accord with the principles laid down in I, C, above.

E. Ecumenical Organizations — The Interchurch Relations Committee shall serve as the agency of contact with ecumenical organizations.

1. It shall serve as the agency of liaison of the Christian Reformed Church with those ecumenical organizations with which the CRC is affiliated, such as the Reformed Ecumenical Synod and the North American Presbyterian and Reformed Council.

2. It shall suggest to synod names of nominees as delegates to the Reformed Ecumenical Synod and shall designate those who are to serve as delegates to NAPaRC and its various committees.

3. It shall study the activities of the above two ecumenical organizations and present to synod reports on the work of these organizations and such recommendations as may be necessary.

4. It shall observe and study various other ecumenical organizations and report the results of such observations and studies to synod.

5. It shall maintain contact as circumstances warrant with ecumenical organizations with which the Christian Reformed Church has not affiliated.

F. The Interchurch Relations Committee shall annually present to synod in its printed agenda a report of its activities which shall include a resume of all the interchurch relations comprehended in the mandate detailed above.

M. *Committee Membership*

The terms of three committee members expire this year, those of Jacob D. Eppinga and Tymen E. Hofman, and of our Canadian representative, Jacob Kuntz. Only Jacob Kuntz is eligible for reelection, the other members having served the limit of two terms.

We recommend:

1. That synod thank Jacob D. Eppinga and Tymen E. Hofman for their service to the committee.

2. That synod elect three members to the IRC from the following nominations:

- a. Jacob Kuntz and Hilbert VanderPlaat with Jacob Kuntz noted as incumbent.

- b. William D. Buursma and Elco H. Oostendorp

- c. Clarence Boomsma and John Daling

N. *Representation at Synod*

The president and secretary of the committee will be available for meeting with synod and we respectfully request that they be given the

privilege of the floor and access to the advisory committee when matters pertaining to the report of this committee are being considered.

O. *Hospitality Committee*

The committee wishes to inform synod that it has adopted a Hospitality Committee to care for the proper reception of fraternal delegates to synod and to be attentive to the demands of proper hospitality for our guests while they are in attendance at synod. We request that synod's Reception Committee work closely with the Hospitality Committee of the IRC. We request that the members of this committee be given meal privileges while on duty at synod.

P. *Summary of Items for Synodical Action*

1. Committee representation at synod - Section N
2. Hospitality Committee - Section O
3. Receiving of ARPC - Section B, 2
4. Transfer of Membership - Section B, 3
5. RES Delegates recommendations - Section I, 2
6. NAPaRC Constitution - Section J, 1, a
7. NAPaRC Minutes - Section J, 1, b
8. Concurrent Synods - Section J, 2 a & b
9. Mandate of IRC - Section L
10. Committee Membership - Section M

Q. *Appendix "A" - Letter to RES*

Appendix "B" - Report of RES Delegates

R. *Items sent to Delegates - Minutes of 1976 meeting of NAPaRC*

Interchurch Relations Committee

John H. Kromminga ('79), president

Tymen E. Hofman ('77), secretary

Albert A. Bel ('79)

Gerard Bouma ('78)

John H. Bratt ('79)

Jacob D. Eppinga ('77)

Jacob Kuntz ('77)

John H. Stek ('78)

William P. Brink, ex officio

APPENDIX A

July 12, 1976

The Reformed Ecumenical Synod
Capetown, South Africa

The August meeting of the Reformed Ecumenical Synod in Capetown comes at a strategic time and place in the history of South African race relations. The June race riots have focused world attention again on

South Africa and have brought race relations into renewed prominence. This disturbance continues the spread of the turmoil which has engulfed Angola and Rhodesia during the past year. This crucial turning point invites response in two opposite directions: either intensify the repression of the black race or provide means to alleviate the tensions and build for a better future.

The role of the Christian Church in confronting such a situation must not be underestimated. We pray that our South African fellow Christians may be equipped and inspired to lend leadership to their troubled nation in this critical time. We trust that they may be enabled to stand above instinctive reactions and view the situation from the point of vantage of the Word of God. To that end we would direct the resources of their fellow Christians in the Reformed community throughout the world.

We respectfully request the Reformed Ecumenical Synod to take suitable initiatives to meet this providential opportunity. This item comes late to the agenda of the Reformed Ecumenical Synod; but no one could predict when or in what manner the racial issue would again come to the center of the stage. The Reformed Ecumenical Synod, in view of its years of study and its adopted positions on race relations, is not without background for taking up the question. Its churches in other lands, through their own experience with race relations, have some light to shed upon the situation.

We will not presume to say what form this initiative should take. The Reformed Ecumenical Synod during its meeting can undoubtedly improve on any suggestions made in advance. We offer a modest proposal for your consideration. We suggest that a competent commission, geographically representative if possible, be established to interpret the insights and experience of the world-wide Reformed community to their South African fellow members, and to interpret the attitudes and actions of the South African Churches to their Reformed fellow members throughout the world. We seek in this way to provide a means of support to the South African Reformed Churches in their difficult, but potentially very important role in the current crisis.

We pray that out of this situation, tragic in itself, some lasting good may come. We desire the avoidance of injustice and bloodshed and the coming of racial peace in the nation of South Africa, the continent of Africa, and the entire world. As representatives of Reformed churches, we stand in a strategic position. Among churches, there are none better situated to make a contribution to racial peace than our fellow churches in South Africa. Among ecumenical organizations, there is none more strategically situated than our own, relatively small, Reformed Ecumenical Synod. We beg you not to let this situation pass without seeking to seize, in the name of the Lord, the opportunity he has given.

Yours in Christ,

Interchurch Relations Committee
Christian Reformed Church
Tymen E. Hofman, secretary

APPENDIX B

Report of the delegates to the Reformed Ecumenical Synod meeting at Cape Town, South Africa, August 10-20, 1976

As delegates of the Christian Reformed Church to the Reformed Ecumenical Synod of 1976 held at Cape Town, South Africa, we are pleased to submit the following report to synod.

The RES met at Cape Town from August 10 to 20. The synodical prayer service was held on August 9 in the colored township of Bellville since the Dutch Reformed Mission Church was the official calling church for the Cape Town RES. During the week of August 2 to 7 a Missions Conference and a Theological Conference were held in which your delegates also participated. Papers presented at those conferences will likely appear in forthcoming issues of the *International Reformed Bulletin*.

The Cape Town meeting of the RES was the largest in its history. Three churches were admitted to membership in the RES, namely, the Midlands Reformed Church (South Africa), the Reformed Church of South Africa (Synod of Soutpansberg) and the Evangelical Reformed Church in Africa. There are now some forty Reformed churches from throughout the world holding membership in the RES representing some six million members. The largest number of member churches and the largest number of delegates at Cape Town came from the continent of Africa—fourteen member churches with more than sixty delegates and advisors. Unfortunately there were a number of member churches which did not send delegates to the Cape Town RES; these were the Benue Church of Christ in the Sudan, the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Scotland, the Independent Presbyterian Church of Mexico, the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church (USA), the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America, the Reformed Church in Brazil, the Church of Toradja Mamasa (Indonesia) and the Javanese Christian Church. There were present a number of fraternal delegates and observers.

The officers of the Cape Town RES represented three continents and five member churches. They were: J. Galbraith, moderator (OPC); P. E. S. Smith, first clerk (NGK); F. H. Klooster, second clerk (CRC); S. P. E. Buti, first assessor (NGKA); and A. I. De Graaf, second assessor, (RC Australia). These men together with the General Secretary serve as the Interim Committee of the RES until the next meeting scheduled for 1980. Dr. Paul Schrottenboer (CRC) who has served as General Secretary since 1963 was reappointed until 1980.

Two items continue to dominate the RES agenda and these items reflect the problems that all the member churches face. They are racial issues and ecumenical issues.

Riots in Soweto, the sprawling black township near Johannesburg, received world headlines since June of 1976. While the RES was in session, riots continued intermittently in Soweto and they also broke out in the colored townships around Cape Town itself. Naturally, race relations were an important subject on the agenda of the RES meeting in this troubled land of *apartheid* or separate development.

But the Cape Town RES faced an equally serious crisis from within. The continued membership of the Gereformeerde Kerken in the Nether-

lands in the WCC and the theological views of Prof. H. M. Kuitert and Dr. H. Wiersinga within that church threatened the continued existence of the RES itself. By the grace of God the RES faced these problems squarely and openly, and the RES has probably come through the crisis stronger than it was before. To many veteran observers, this was probably the best meeting of the RES to date.

The Acts 1976 of the Cape Town RES will be available to synodical delegates who wish to survey all the actions of this synod. From the numerous items that were on the synod's agenda, we select the following items which call for synod's concern and/or action:

- I. RACIAL ISSUES
- II. ECUMENICAL MATTERS
- III. MISSIONS, EVANGELISM, WORLD RELIEF
- IV. THEOLOGICAL ISSUES
- V. ORGANIZATION AND FINANCE

I. RACE RELATIONS

Racial issues have been a major concern of the RES for many years. "The Testimony of the Christian Reformed Church on Race Relations" had its origin in the RES. Apart from the riots in South Africa, there were items on the RES agenda dealing with race. But the Soweto and Cape Town riots added urgency to their consideration. The 1976 RES actions on race involved two series of resolutions, some revision of the Lunteren-Sydney (1968-1972) race resolutions and a mandate to the Interim Committee concerning these issues.

A. *Race Resolutions - Friday, August 13, 1976*

Your delegates consider it advisable to inform synod of the resolutions taken by the RES with respect to the Soweto and Cape Town riots. This first set of resolutions was adopted at the end of the first week of the synod.

The Reformed Ecumenical Synod, Cape Town 1976, taking note of the escalation of unrest and riots which have now occurred in the black townships around Cape Town itself,

RESOLVES

1. to express sympathy to the bereaved and to all who have sustained loss and injury in these days;
2. to devote a period of synod's time to intercessory prayer for peace, justice and order in South Africa;
3. to call upon all people to refrain from fomenting unrest and violence in the present tense situation;
4. to call upon the government of the Republic of South Africa to do everything possible to alleviate burdens that contribute to the rise of these riots, assuring the government of the prayers of the synod;
5. to call upon the people of this country to turn to the Lord in prayer and to turn to one another in love, so that conflicts may be resolved in a spirit of mutual understanding and self-denial (Art. 50).

After these resolutions were adopted, synod engaged in a period of prayer for approximately one-half hour. It was a moving expression of intercessory prayer for a troubled nation in which many delegates prayed, most of them South Africans themselves. The resolutions were sent to Prime Minister Vorster. Later, on August 26, the officers of the RES together with the General Secretary met with the Prime Minister in Pretoria for more than two hours to discuss these issues with him and to convey to him the Christian concerns of the RES. This meeting also included prayer by one of the RES delegates for Mr. Vorster and the nation.

B. *Race Resolutions — Friday, August 20, 1976*

On the last day of the Cape Town RES the following series of resolutions on racial matters was adopted (Art. 121):

The Reformed Ecumenical Synod, Cape Town 1976, having taken serious note of the disturbances that have occurred in South Africa just prior to and during the time while the synod has assembled in Cape Town, hereby resolves:

1. to request the member churches to give early and serious attention to those problems involved in creating an atmosphere of dissatisfaction and unrest which led to the present riots as matters of great urgency.
2. to call on the Regional Conference to be held in Potchefstroom to devise ways and means for united action on these issues.
3. to request member churches in South Africa to prepare memoranda on the above-mentioned problems for the agenda of the Regional Conference.
4. to urge all Christians to reach out to each other in demonstration of love, thus promoting peace in South Africa.

Resolutions 2 and 3 of the above refer to "these issues" and "the above-mentioned problems." These phrases referred to the following matters: "detention without trial, unequal pay for equal work, lack of free compulsory education for all South Africans, practice of discrimination on race and color, lack of say in the running of the country, and migrant labor system." It is to be sincerely hoped that the RES stimulus for the Potchefstroom Conference scheduled for April 1977 will be able to deal significantly with these burning issues. The subjects involved in this series of resolutions were also included in the discussions held with the Prime Minister on August 26, 1976.

C. *Mandate to the Interim Committee re Race Relations*

1. A third recommendation relating to race relations had its origin in suggestions made to the RES by the Interchurch Relations Committee of the Christian Reformed Church. The RES adopted the following motion and then referred it to the Interim Committee for implementation:

That synod establish a competent commission to interpret the insights and experience of the world wide Reformed community to their South African fellow members and to interpret the attitudes

and actions of the South African churches to their Reformed fellow members throughout the world (Art. 120).

In the light of further discussion and consultation, the Interim Committee has decided to constitute itself the "commission" referred to in this decision and attempt to carry out this very difficult assignment. As a result the members of the Interim Committee will attempt to attend the Potchefstroom Conference on Race scheduled for April 1977.

2. After the above decision was taken the RES adopted the following recommendations (Art. 120):

1. That synod note with appreciation the deep and sincere concern of the Christian Reformed Church with fellow Christians in South Africa.

2. That synod refer the Christian Reformed Church to its resolutions and actions taken on this issue (cf. Articles 50, 51—1976).

3. That synod draw the attention of member churches to the principles and spirit of resolutions 14 and 15 of its meeting in Sydney, 1972 (cf. Acts 1972, p. 330).

4. That synod note with regret that no reports were submitted in terms of resolutions 14 and 15 (RES, 1972). Member churches are now called upon to report to RES on their actions in terms of resolutions 14 and 15 (Sydney, 1972) and through the General Secretary to have the relevant information distributed to member churches.

5. That synod urge member churches to make relevant material on aspects of racial problems available to other RES churches.

D. *Resolution Addressed to All Member Churches*

After these various decisions which focused primarily on South Africa had been completed, the RES addressed a resolution to all the member churches. It was acknowledged that in every land there are racial problems and other discrimination problems which may not be ignored. The resolution was as follows:

That synod request all member churches of the RES to give serious attention to the problems involved in creating an atmosphere of dissatisfaction and unrest in their own lands and throughout the world, and to do all in their power as Christian churches to promote justice, order and peace everywhere (Art. 122).

The unanimous adoption of this motion was preceded by one of the most moving sessions of synod. Representatives of the United States, Northern Ireland, Japan and other lands spoke frankly about critical conditions in their own countries calling for renewed Christian concern.

E. *Revisions of Lunteren-Sydney (1968-1972) Race Decisions*

The Cape Town RES made some changes in the RES statement on Race Relations developed at Lunteren, the Netherlands in 1968 and revised at Sydney, Australia in 1972. Reference is made to these statements as found in Acts RES 1972, pp. 250-258 or in CRC Acts, 1974, pp. 32, 481 or in the booklet "Synodical Decisions on Doctrinal and

Ethical Matters" pp. 67-69. The revisions related to three of the statements — 9, 11 and 12.

1. Point 9 of the Lunteren-Sydney statement on race relations deals with the calling of the church in her pastoral ministry to "strive to eradicate attitudes of racial superiority and racial prejudice by leading her members into full Christian maturity in race relations." This point is concluded with "various practical suggestions which could be implemented in this respect" and four are listed. The Cape Town RES decided to add a fifth to this list, namely "giving attention to it in Christian Education and youth work of the church." This addition called for reordering the items so that they now read, as amended, as follows (Art. 68):

- a. Giving due attention to this matter in sermons.
- b. Giving attention to it during pastoral visits.
- c. Giving attention to it in Christian Education and youth work of the church.
- d. Discussions at church council meetings.
- e. Contact on the local level between clergy of the older and younger churches for discussion, Bible study, prayer, etc."

2. Point 11 of the Lunteren-Sydney race relations statement deals with the question of common worship. The revisions suggested were considered to be simply a matter of clarification. The revised point 11 now reads as follows:

The unity of the church as the body of Christ must be acknowledged. It may be that linguistic or cultural differences make the formation of separate congregations, often with their own type of preaching and worship, advisable; in these cases it is wise not to force an outward and therefore artificial form of unity but to recognize the differentiation within the circle of God's people. Where different churches for different indigenous groups exist, no person may be excluded from common worship on grounds of race or color. Common worship, including the Lord's Supper, among Christians regardless of race is an expression of the unity of the body of Christ. Such worshipping together of people of different races, is a sign of the unity of the church and the communion of the saints and can be a Christian witness to the world.

3. Point 12 of the Lunteren-Sydney race relations statement deals with "racially mixed marriage." As revised at Cape Town, this statement now reads as follows:

Holy Scripture does not give any explicit judgment about racially mixed marriages. Biblical teaching on marriage and on the unity of mankind offers no ground to regard such marriages as impermissible. Marriage is not only a personal concern, but also involves the individual's relationship towards God, the church, the family and society. In practice, account will have to be taken of the problems which racial, ethnic and cultural differences may cause in a marriage on the personal, family and social level. Church and state should refrain from limiting the free choice of a marriage partner on the grounds of race

...or color. In all these matters the church has a pastoral and prophetic calling.

II. ECUMENICAL MATTERS—INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL

The other most critical issues of the Cape Town RES concerned ecumenical matters and focused upon the Gereformeerde Kerken in the Netherlands. In a real sense this church is the "mother church" of most of the Reformed (in distinction from Presbyterian) members of the RES. Reformed churches in the United States, Canada, South Africa, Australia, New Zealand, Argentina, Brazil and Indonesia all have their roots in the GKN. Grave concern with the recent theological trends in the GKN and her continued membership in the World Council of Churches led to the crisis this RES faced. Some member churches were calling for the exclusion of the GKN from the RES with the threat that failure to exclude the GKN would require the protesting church's withdrawal. Advisory committees dealing with these matters submitted majority and minority reports. Long and serious discussions in plenary sessions led to decisions that were taken with great unanimity and proved satisfactory to the vast majority of delegates. These decisions had a pastoral tone and it is hoped that they will achieve the desired results and cement the member churches more closely together in confessing and living the Christian faith in accordance with the basis and purpose of the RES.

A. *Concerning Membership in the WCC*

Ever since 1953 the RES has advised its members not to join the WCC. The GKN did join the WCC after this advice was reaffirmed by the RES of 1968. Although two Indonesian churches are also members of the WCC, the focus of attention was especially the GKN. The decision which Cape Town RES finally reached on this matter is as follows. (Art. 92):

1. That synod declare that the RES cannot, on the basis of its constitution, rule on affiliations RES churches make with other organizations, unless such affiliations result in demonstrated unfaithfulness to the Reformed confessions.
2. That synod reaffirm the advice given by every meeting of the RES from 1953 on to member churches not to join the WCC, and in accordance with the advice now expressly declares membership in the WCC to be inconsistent with membership in the RES ("inconsistent" meaning in this instance, a deviation from the decisions of previous RES synods, but not implying an immediate irreconcilability between the RES and the churches that are members of the WCC); and therefore, recognizing the long consideration that has been given to WCC membership by both the RES and the churches that are members of the WCC, instruct the Interim Committee to seek to arrange consultation with these churches at an early time with regard to membership in the WCC, and instruct the Interim Committee to arrange for a report (or reports) to the churches and the RES 1980.

3. That the RES now call upon those member churches which also hold membership in the WCC to give serious reconsideration to this dual membership, and to report the results of this reconsideration to the next meeting of the RES.

B. Concerning the Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland

The decision which was reached after many hours of debate was the following (Art. 109) :

1. That synod, grateful for the many invaluable contributions of the GKN to Reformed theology, deeply regrets certain theological developments within this church.

2. That synod, having been told by the GKN delegates that "the GKN are faithfully exercising church discipline in the case of Prof. Kuitert and in the case of Dr. Wiersinga," urges the GKN to pursue this process of discipline with all due haste and assures the GKN of the great concern, support and fervent prayer of the RES.

3. That synod, being aware of the particular problems that confront the GKN in its efforts to exercise proper discipline over theologians and officebearers who deviate from Scripture and the confessions, clearly states that, if these problems should be awarded a higher priority than the duty of the church to protect the people of God from apostasy, the result can only be that the GKN will lose the marks of the true church; and therefore remind the GKN that a policy that permits unbiblical teaching and practice in the church is in violation of Article V, 1, b, of the Constitution of the RES.

4. That synod respectfully request the GKN to keep the Interim Committee informed of the progress in these matters and ask the Interim Committee to include these issues in its connection with the consultations between representatives of the GKN and the Interim Committee.

5. That synod requests all churches in the RES pray that they and all our other churches remain faithful to Scripture and to profess and maintain the Reformed Confessions.

This decision—a rather strong one, disciplinary in nature, and pastoral in tone—was reached with great unanimity. The threats from both sides heard early in the discussions disappeared. A representative of the GKN as well as the moderator commended the delegates for the spirit evident in the discussions involving these difficult matters. A crisis was at least temporarily averted by an open and frank and brotherly discussion. God's grace was evident and the delegates were conscious of the Lord's guiding and blessing. The Interim Committee has received another difficult assignment in this matter. Only the future will reveal whether the needed steps will be taken that will resolve these issues in a mutually satisfactory way. The prayers which the RES requested should be made continually by all the member churches.

Your delegates urge that synod inform our churches of this call to prayer.

C. Other Ecumenical Matters

There were a number of other decisions dealing with ecumenical relations which your delegates bring to synod's attention.

1. The communication from the Christian Reformed Church which described the new conception of interchurch relations was received for information. The 1976 RES Acts record that "instead of two categories, a more intimate sister-church relationship and a less intimate fraternal relationship, there is now a single category of churches in ecclesiastical fellowship" (Art. 98).

2. With respect to Ecumenical Relations with Bodies Other than the WCC, the Cape Town RES adopted the following three recommendations (Art. 56):

1. (*As to the relationship with World Confessional Families - WCF*)

That the synod authorize the Interim Committee to continue to participate in the meetings of Secretaries of the WCF in such a manner as is consistent with the purpose of the RES as expressed in its constitution.

Ground: The committee is of the opinion that it is of value for the General Secretary to be aware of what is going on in other Confessional Families.

2. (*As to the relationship with the World Alliance of Reformed Churches - WARC*)

That the synod authorize the Interim Committee and the General Secretary to continue liaison with the World Alliance of Reformed Churches.

3. (*As to relationship with the North American Presbyterian and Reformed Council (NAPaRC) and other such councils*)

That the synod commend the churches in Australia, in Central Africa and in North America for having formed these councils.

3. Although the RES advises against membership in the WCC, it does attempt to carry out a Reformed ecumenical witness to the WCC by means of consultation through the Interim Committee. In this connection the following recommendations were adopted:

1. That the synod encourage the Interim Committee to continue its meetings with representatives of the WCC in such a manner as is consistent with the purposes of the RES as expressed in its Constitution.

Ground: The evaluation of the 1975 consultation with representatives of the WCC, as provided by the Interim Committee, encourages a continuation of this effort and enables the RES churches to carry out part of their ecumenical calling.

2. That the synod express its appreciation for the way in which representatives of the RES carried out their mandate to meet with representatives of the WCC.

3. That the synod call to the attention of its member churches the record of this meeting contained in the publication, "The Nature of the Church and the Role of Theology" for information, study, and possible response.

4. That the synod encourage its representatives to future consultations with representatives of the WCC to prepare joint assessments which will delineate areas of agreement and disagreement between the delegations.

In this connection another consultation between the Interim Committee of the RES and representatives of the WCC is planned, possibly in 1978, on the subject of "The Calling of the Church in Society." The RES has appointed a major study committee to study this important subject (cf. Art. 62). That study committee's report will be used in this planned consultation.

The Cape Town RES also authorized "the General Secretary to participate in a meeting between the World Evangelical Fellowship and the World Council of Churches on the use of the Bible in evangelical theology and WCC documents" (Art. 126, B 2). This consultation took place during September 1976. In these various ways the RES attempts to maintain its own integrity as a Reformed confessional body and at the same time make its witness known to other ecumenical bodies without compromise.

III. MISSIONS, EVANGELISM, AND WORLD RELIEF

Concern for missions and evangelism has always been at the center of RES. A significant missions conference again preceded the meetings of the RES and the papers presented at that conference will appear in the *International Reformed Bulletin*. The following actions were taken with respect to the above subjects.

A. The RES decided to continue its standing Committee on Missions and reaffirmed its mandate to this committee. It was decided to "add an instruction that where feasible an exchange of information be provided through the office of the General Secretary regarding the human resources needed and available by the several churches for the carrying on of our missionary task" (Art. 35).

B. The RES adopted a "Message to the Churches Concerning the Missionary Task and Their Equipment for It" which originated in the Missions Conference the preceding week. It was decided to send this message "to the member churches and urge them to consider it carefully and to implement it in every way possible" (Art. 36). It was again decided to hold a Missions Conference in connection with the 1980 RES and suggestions were made concerning its program (Art. 36).

C. The subject of the "Proclamation of the Gospel Among Israel" has been on the RES agenda in 1972 and earlier. The 1972 RES requested member churches which investigate in depth the question of Israel and the gospel to communicate their findings to the 1976 RES. The only churches to report to the Cape Town RES were the Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland (GKN). The advisory committee reported that it was "grateful for the response and the great amount of data contained therein. The issues raised are of such vital concern that our churches would do well to study this exceptionally worthwhile

document." In this connection the following two recommendations were adopted (Art. 39):

1. That synod reaffirm its decision of 1972 urging the member churches of the RES to acquaint themselves with work of a Reformed nature presently being done among the Jews and encourage them to support the work in prayer and in gifts.
2. That synod instruct the General Secretary to ask all member churches to give attention to this matter and to send all available materials to the General Secretary for distribution to the churches.

D. The following decisions were taken with respect to "Radio and Television" (Art. 38):

1. That synod note the existence of the new Radio and Television Sub-Committee of the Missions Committee and urge member churches to correspond with this new committee, indicating the name of their contact man for broadcasting.
2. That the member churches submit to the Radio and Television Sub-Committee through the office of the General Secretary information concerning their present level of broadcasting.
3. That the member churches describe any special opportunities for broadcasting and indicate what help they would need in order that these opportunities could be realized.

E. The subject of World Relief has been before the RES on a number of occasions. A special evening session of the Cape Town RES was devoted to what was called a "Diaconal Conference." In connection with RES World Diaconal Involvement, the RES adopted the following recommendations (Art. 79):

1. That synod urge its member churches to lay emphasis on the unity of word and deed in their missionary labors, so that the world may see the wide scope of Christ's salvation, and so that the full-orbed resources of his church may be utilized in this word-deed ministry.
2. That synod do not accede to the request of the Reformed Churches of Australia to establish an RES relief agency.

Grounds:

- a. The work of diaconal relief should be carried out by the churches themselves.
 - b. The RES is not equipped to become a relief agency, nor is it appropriate to separate relief work from the total missionary task.
 - c. An RES relief agency would involve unnecessary duplication of efforts already being carried on.
 - d. The 1972 RES resolutions give adequate room for the necessary exchange of information and coordination.
 - e. Smaller churches may channel their support to one of the existing agencies.
3. That synod remind the churches that when international and regional conferences are held, the comprehensive nature of the missionary task be always kept in mind.

Grounds:

- a. Our missionary outlook views man as a body-soul totality over whom God is sovereign.
 - b. Our Reformed understanding of the missionary task does not permit the separation of deed from word.
4. That synod refer the study of the theological bases and implications of world diaconal involvement to the several churches for their further study.

Grounds:

- a. The churches should themselves do such study and reflection, and not simply rely on the studies of others.
 - b. Such study will itself stimulate the churches to greater diaconal involvement.
5. That synod authorize the General Secretary to publish materials which will sensitize the people of God in the Reformed churches to their involvement in the conditions that contribute to the great disparity between rich and poor, and to their task to alleviate distress to the utmost of their power.

F. The missions conference recommended to the RES that regional conferences on missions be held. Member churches have held such regional conferences on race relations in the past. The Cape Town RES broadened this missions conference recommendation and decided to "encourage the member churches to hold Regional Conferences on Missions and on other vital issues that are of mutual concern" (Art. 126, B 3). This recommendation is aimed at increasing the contact between churches that are members of the RES between the periods of RES meetings within various geographical regions.

IV. THEOLOGICAL ISSUES

Theological and confessional issues are always a large part of the RES agenda. Prior to the meetings of synod a theological conference was held on the subject of "Theology and Church in the Contemporary World" and during the meetings of synod a full day was devoted to a conference on the Holy Spirit. The papers of these conferences will also be published, likely in the *International Reformed Bulletin*.

A. The Sydney RES 1972 appointed a study 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 both Scripture and the Reformed Confessions." This committee submitted its report to the Cape Town RES which decided to "receive the Report on Holy Spirit Baptism as a sound statement of the Reformed view on the Baptism of the Holy Spirit and commend it to the member churches as a statement giving guidance to their preaching and teaching ministries" (Art. 40). The report itself can be found in the 1976 RES Acts.

B. A study report on the Sabbath/Sunday questions covered more than fifty pages of the printed Agenda for the 1976 RES. A committee on this subject was appointed in 1968. Majority and minority reports were submitted to the Sydney RES in 1972. Since agreement could not be reached, a new committee was appointed which again

came up with majority and minority reports. The 1976 Acts contains an extensive summary of the various positions (Art. 93). Unfortunately, the RES has not been able to come to a clear-cut decision on this subject. The decisions and the Message to the Churches follow (Art. 93):

1. That synod express its thanks to the study committees for their reports and the Free Church of Scotland for its communication.
2. That synod, recognizing the varying viewpoints on this issue that have existed for many centuries among the Reformed churches, advocate a brotherly forbearance on the part of member churches towards each other, free of a judgmental attitude, on this issue.
3. That synod take note of the material (the two study reports and the communication) and the evaluation, and recommend them to member churches for study and appropriate action.
4. That synod adopt the Message to the Churches.

Message to the Churches:

The Sabbath/Sunday issue as we face it today, in our complex societies, is not merely one demanding academic attention. Confronted with a world-wide spirit of secularism, the Reformed churches, while not ignoring the areas of dispute among them, must stand together on their united conviction that the Lord's day has been given for the good of man, to be used, like all God's gifts, to the glory of God. To that end, RES 1976 urges its member churches to guard the celebration of the Lord's day against the onslaught of secularization, and to maintain its observance as a day of rest, worship, good works and Christian joy.

In facing the practical implications of the Lord's day as a day of rest, the churches must be prepared for the reproach of the world, but must nevertheless persevere in an effort to curtail Sunday labor, not only in business and industry, but in the domestic sphere as well, so that domestic servants and farm laborers may also share in this benefit of the Lord's day.

The Lord's day calls us also to corporate worship. It comes to us not primarily as a private or family day; rather it belongs to the church as the body of Christ. The Reformed churches must seek ways to maintain and cultivate the hallowed gatherings of the people of God to worship their risen Lord on *his* day, even when living in a society that maintains rest days different from the Lord's day.

Not only worship and rest, but also "the works of their Father" should characterize the Lord's day. The ministries of the visitation, encouragement and consolation of people in need, and the evangelization of the lost are fitting ways of fulfilling God's mandate to "do good on the Sabbath day," and of rendering Christian service to the Divine Author of the creation and the new creation, the Redeemer of his people whether in bondage to Pharaoh or sin.

Lastly, RES 1976 calls upon Reformed churches to reinstate the note of joy to the keeping of the Lord's day. Fellowship with the risen Christ and worship of the God who "on the first day" gave the light and his Spirit, do not call for wearisome austerity but for a spirit of "joy un-

speakable and full of glory" as we draw water from the wells of salvation. Then shall the Sabbath be a day of delight in his presence, a foretaste of that eternal Sabbath that awaits the people of God.

C. The Cape Town RES also decided to appoint a new study committee with regional sub-committees to consider "The Calling of the Church in Society." The extensive but significant assignment to this committee is the following (Art. 62):

1. That synod appoint a study committee to consider "The Calling of the Church in Society."
2. That the agenda reports on "The Church and Its Social Calling" and "Salvation, Justice and Liberation" together with the Advisory Committee's reservations noted in the Analysis (Art. 58) be referred to the Study Committee for their study.
3. That the following topics be considered by the Study Committee:
 - a. Biblical Studies:
 - 1) Kingship, kingdom and church.
 - 2) Church as institution and organism.
 - 3) The church's task in and toward the world.
 - 4) The church as first fruits of the new creation.
 - b. Historical-sociological Study (a history of ideas):
 - 1) The role of the church in a changing society.
 - 2) The church as a community amid the social structures of the modern age.
 - 3) The church as a persecuted community.
 - c. The calling of the church with regard to such subjects as:
 - 1) Divinely ordained human rights.
 - 2) Social justice.
 - 3) Just wages and right distribution of property.
 - 4) Industrial relations.
 - 5) Evaluation of work and labor as a vocation of man.
 - 6) The place of women in society.
 - 7) Education and youth problems.
 - 8) Human exploitation.

D. Various other theological issues on the 1976 RES agenda call only for brief mention. Through the Secretariat the RES is engaged in a World Survey of Reformed Theological Education (Art. 104, cf. 57 & 108). Scripture (Art. 64), the laying on of hands at the ordination of office bearers (Art. 63) and women in office (Art. 65) came up for brief consideration. Theological interchange is carried on through the newly named "RES Theological Forum" and through the RES standing committee for Theological Interchange (Art. 109).

V. ORGANIZATION AND FINANCE

A. As mentioned earlier, a number of representatives and observers from churches that are not members of the RES were present at the Cape Town RES. Some of these churches are clearly interested in joining the RES. The officers of synod interviewed representatives from the following churches: Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland—Vrijgemaakt Buiten Verband, Nederduitsch Hervormde Kerk van Afri-

ka, Reformed Church of Caprivi, Reformed Church of East Africa (Kenya) and the Presbyterian Church of Southern Africa.

B. As mentioned earlier, some member churches of the RES were unable, for financial reasons, to send delegates to Cape Town. The NGK provided funds for some churches to send delegates and the same was done by other member churches. To provide financially weak churches with the means for sending delegates and to remove the burden that often falls upon the host churches, the RES decided to "authorize the inclusion of \$6000 (US) per year in the budget for a Central Assistance Fund which will provide for the assistance in travel costs in RES meetings of up to one (1) person per church in need of such assistance" and to instruct the Interim Committee "to draw up guidelines for the administration of this fund by the Secretariat" (Art. 126, B 5).

C. The RES has had a full-time General Secretary for some time and the work of the secretariat has steadily grown with the maturing of the RES. For some time now there has been a need for an Associate General Secretary. The 1972 RES recognized the need for expansion and "authorized the appointment of a part-time Associate General Secretary and allocated \$5000 in the annual budget for this post." The 1976 RES decided to move toward a full-time Associate General Secretary and carefully moved in this direction by means of the following decision (Art. 126, B 9):

That synod approve in principle the appointment of a full-time Associate General Secretary who fits the qualifications in the Report of the Interim Committee in the Supplementary Agenda concerning the Secretariat (RI-S-D with the deletion of "non-North American") and that synod determine that the description of his post fit as closely as possible the division and sharing of tasks listed under Section II of that Report.

That synod instruct the Interim Committee to send a communication to all member churches, asking for the formal approval of such an appointment. As soon as a sufficient number of positive replies, guaranteeing the salary has been received, the Interim Committee is authorized to proceed with the appointment.

That synod instruct the Interim Committee in its communication to the churches to stress the urgency of the appointment of a full-time Associate General Secretary.

D. The RES adopted a budget and assessments for the member churches. Two sets of figures were presented—one including the funding for an Associate General Secretary and one without this item. The assessment for the Christian Reformed Church was raised from 20 to 21% of the total budget to compensate for some of the smaller churches which were finding the assessment very difficult for them to meet. (See the budget and assessments in Art. 126, B 6.)

E. The next meeting of the RES is scheduled for 1980. An invitation to meet in France was received from the National Union of Independent Reformed Evangelical Churches of France. This gracious invitation from a very small member church was referred to the In-

terim Committee with authorization to decide on location and date of the 1980 RES.

This concludes the survey of the major actions of the Cape Town 1976 RES which deserve synod's attention and action. We have, of course, selected only the major items and those particularly calling for action by the Christian Reformed Synod. Your delegates to the RES urge the delegates to synod specifically, and Christian Reformed members generally, to read the reports and actions contained in the 1976 RES Acts.

Your RES delegates also wish to add the suggestion that synod encourage all its members, churches and agencies to promote, support and cooperate with the RES in all possible ways so as to promote the cause of Reformed ecumenicity within the CRC and throughout the world.

The recommendations to synod from your delegates to the Cape Town RES now follow in the sequence of the sections of the report as presented above.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS TO CRC SYNOD

In the light of the above report of major actions by the Cape Town 1976 RES, your delegates to that synod now make the following recommendations to synod. The recommendations follow the divisions and headings of our report.

I. RACE RELATIONS

Your delegates to the RES recommend:

- A. That synod take grateful note of the August 13 and August 20, 1976, RES resolutions (Sections A & B) and actions relating to the riots and the unrest in South Africa.
- B. That synod take grateful note of the RES action on the recommendation of the CRC Interchurch Relations Committee and encourage the RES Interim Committee to do all in its power to carry out the important task "to interpret the insights and experience of the world wide Reformed community to their South African fellow members and to interpret the attitudes and actions of the South African churches to their Reformed fellow members throughout the world" (Art. 120).
- C. That synod again draw the attention of the Christian Reformed churches to the race resolutions 14 and 15 of Sydney 1972, report to the RES through the General Secretary on CRC actions in terms of resolutions 14 and 15, and make relevant materials on aspects of racial problems available to other RES churches. (Cf. RES Acts 1972, p. 330 and CRC "Synodical Decisions on Doctrinal and Ethical Matters," p. 69.)
- D. That synod respond to the RES request (Art. 122) and "give serious attention to the problems involved in creating an atmosphere of dissatisfaction and unrest in . . . [our] own lands and throughout the world, and . . . do all in . . . [our] power as Christian churches to promote justice, order and peace everywhere."
- E. That synod adopt the revisions of the Lunteren-Sydney race resolutions made by the 1976 RES in resolutions 9, 11, 12 [on pas-

toral ministry re racial matters, common worship, and racially mixed marriages], reprint the complete statement on race relations including these changes, and provide for the inclusion of the complete text, as revised, in the CRC Acts and in the booklet containing "Synodical Decisions on Doctrinal and Ethical Matters."

II. ECUMENICAL MATTERS

Your delegates to the RES recommend:

A. That synod ratify the Cape Town 1976 RES decisions (Art. 92) on membership of RES churches in the WCC and await the report(s) from the RES Interim Committee on its consultations as well as the requested reports from those RES churches holding membership in the WCC.

B. 1. That synod concur in the Cape Town 1976 decisions (Art. 107, 14) regarding theological developments in the GKN.

2. That synod engage in prayer and other appropriate actions, as requested by the RES, that the GKN, ourselves, and "all our other churches remain faithful to Scripture and . . . profess and maintain the Reformed Confessions."

C. 1. That synod take cognizance of the fact that its new "single category of churches in ecclesiastical fellowship" has been reported to the RES.

2. That synod take appropriate notice of the 1976 RES decisions on Ecumenical Relations with bodies other than the WCC (Art. 56, 1-3).

3. That synod receive as information the RES actions relating to consultations between the RES Interim Committee and representatives of the WCC, take account of the report of the consultation held in 1975 and reported in the publication entitled "The Nature of the Church and the Role of Theology," and of the consultation planned for 1978 on "The Calling of the Church in Society."

III. MISSIONS, EVANGELISM AND WORLD RELIEF

Your delegates to the RES recommend:

A. That synod refer the new instruction concerning the Committee on Missions (RES) to the Board for World Missions for implementation (Art. 35).

B. That synod receive the "Message to the Churches Concerning Their Missionary Task and Their Equipment For It" and "consider it carefully and implement it in every way possible" (Art. 36). [Cf. postscript for text of message.]

C. That synod refer the GKN statement on "Proclamation of the Gospel Among Israel" to the Back to God Hour Committee, the Board of Home Missions and the Board for World Missions for consideration (Art. 39).

D. That synod instruct the Back to God Hour Committee to carry out the 1976 RES decision re the Radio and Television Sub-Committee (Art. 38).

E. That synod ratify the RES decisions concerning RES Diaconal Involvement (Art. 79) and refer these decisions to the CRWRC.

F. That synod instruct the Interchurch Relations Committee to seriously consider the advisability of holding regional conference(s) with other RES member churches in North America on issues of mutual concern.

IV. THEOLOGICAL ISSUES

Your delegates to the RES recommend:

A. That synod receive the RES report on "Baptism of the Holy Spirit" and commend it to our churches and members for their guidance.

B. That synod take note of the decisions of the RES on the Sabbath/Sunday question and refer the "Message to the Churches" to our churches for their consideration.

C. That synod receive as information the RES appointment of a major study committee (with regional subcommittees) on "The Calling of the Church in Society" and await its report.

D. That synod receive the items regarding a World Survey of Reformed Theological Education, Scripture, laying on of hands at the ordination of office bearers, women in office, and matters pertaining to theological interchange as information.

V. ORGANIZATION AND FINANCE

Your delegates to the RES recommend:

A. That synod note with gratitude the interest of other churches in the RES and their consideration of membership in the RES.

B. That synod approve the inclusion of provisions for a Central Assistance Fund in the RES budget (Art. 126, B 5).

C. That synod approve the RES action leading to the appointment of a full-time Associate General Secretary for the RES.

D. That synod approve the budget endorsed by the RES including provision for an Associate General Secretary and authorize the payment of the CRC assessment to the RES.

E. That synod recognize that the next RES is scheduled for 1980, consider items for its agenda, and, at the proper time, appoint delegates to that meeting.

May God richly bless you, brothers, as you carry out the work assigned to you. We thank synod for the privilege of representing the CRC at the Cape Town meetings of the RES in 1976 and we pray that this significant venture in Reformed ecumenicity may prosper with God's rich blessing.

1976 Reformed Ecumenical Synod Delegates

Non-voting Delegates

J. Boonstra
E. Rubingh
J. G. Van Ryn

Voting Delegates

A. A. Bel
J. D. Eppinga
F. H. Klooster

POSTSCRIPT

[This "Message to the Churches . . ." relates to Section III, B and Recommendations, III, B.]

**A Message to the Churches Concerning Their Missionary Task
and Their Equipment for it.**

In this day when more people than ever before are within the hearing of the gospel, we find that the number of those who do not accept the Kingship of our Lord increases far more rapidly than the number of those who believe.

In this day when forces of unbelief and evil in both the world and the organized church intensify in power around us, we see the Spirit of the living God at work in the world, calling out a people to his name from darkness to light and from death to life, who are to witness to his Kingdom in the midst of unbelief and sin.

It is in this day and in this world that the church of Jesus Christ must clearly demonstrate to itself and to the world that it is in fact, as well as in profession, the living Body of the living Christ; for that profession which does not manifest itself in Christian practice is incomplete and contradictory. It is thus, in order to fulfill her missionary calling that the church must in this time show through the use of her tremendous resources, spiritual and material, that God is the King of the earth who condemns all unrighteousness, and brings salvation, reconciliation, and peace, through his Son to his people, looking forward to the great day when all shall be summoned to behold his glory.

However, this church which was purchased at such great cost — even with the blood of God's own Son — has used its God-given resources to only a small part of their potential toward reaching mankind, lost in sin, with his gospel. This failure is due in large part to the failure of the church to train its whole membership in the many ways in which they could and should bear witness to the one true God and the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. Of this failure the church should repent; and for it it should provide remedy without delay. The church *must* be the salt of the earth, the light on the hill.

It was for the purpose of helping our churches to use their God-given resources that a conference of the churches of the RES was held on the theme "Training for Missions." We, the representatives of the world-family Reformed churches from all the continents, call upon our churches to affirm that:

1. God's unchanging Word is to be proclaimed to a swiftly changing world. As the church comes to expression in a diversity of circumstances and cultures, new insights into and applications of God's truth become possible and necessary. The church must joyfully receive and utilize new knowledge and train its people in its use.
2. The whole people of God are called as servant people; in serving God as their only Lord and as stewards of his good gifts they stand in a relation of service to their fellow men.
3. This service will involve God's people in suffering and cross-bearing, for as God's children they are to deny themselves and follow Christ as

his disciples. Such discipleship has dimensions which are not only personal, but also cultural, political, and economic, and require of the Christian life-style which makes clear witness to the world of his saving power and compassion.

4. The forces of evil are seen both in the lives of individuals and in the organizations and structures of society. The Christian, as a steward of the mysteries of God, must be trained to work not only for the conversion of individuals but also for the application of the Word to the social structures.

5. The task of discipleship, proclaiming and serving, belongs to the whole people of God and requires the equipping of all the saints through training for service. We must constantly seek to understand the world in which we live in order to address ourselves to its specific and urgent needs, while wholeheartedly relying on the Holy Spirit who equips us for witness and service. This need for understanding by all God's people calls for training them.

6. In this training God's people may learn from and utilize analyses of human problems found in non-Christian ideologies; yet we must always be critical of these ideologies, knowing that God's Kingdom is not of this world. We ourselves must be aware and repent of having too often been closely identified with the systems and ideologies of this world as though they were themselves an integral part of our Christian faith.

7. The churches must reaffirm the significance of the three-fold office of all believers as prophets, priests, and kings, while also affirming the unique function of those ordained to the ministry of the Word.

8. The bearers of special office in the church are called to equip God's people for *their* ministry or service (cf. Eph. 4:11, 12) as they are God's gift to the church for the equipping of the saints that they themselves may serve. Thus the training of elders and deacons, as well as pastors, to enable them to train others, is an urgent need laid on the church in this hour. These offices are to be exercised in servanthood together with all the people of God so that all may bear the good news, in word and deed together. Such a practice of servanthood, as exemplified and taught by Christ himself (e.g., Matt. 20:20-28), will be an effective preventive of elitism, clericalism, and paternalism.

9. The training of the ministers of the Word should be such that they are enabled to equip the people of God for their service and witness in the world. The changing world situation demands that they be granted an on-going and in-service training. Theological Education by Extension, for example, could be developed as a powerful resource for effective theological training.

10. Training provided by the older churches for the younger churches should serve to awaken and enable, not to paternalize nor confine. Training should seek to develop the full potential of young Christians and churches by bringing forth and applying the riches of God's Word in the particular culture and situation for which the training is provided.

11. Mutual exchanges both of students and teachers in training insti-

stitutions should be intensified to make all members of the body of Christ aware of one another's background, problems, and challenges.

12. While many of the specific concerns of our world are reflected in the above affirmations, the church must keep forever central in her mission the call from sin and death to salvation and eternal life through the once-for-all atonement of Jesus Christ for his people. All of our witness and service must place this dimension in the forefront, so that the planting and growth of the church shall not be diminished or degraded in our life and thought. We call the churches to that task, that she may even see the problems of the world in that relationship to Christ's call to conversion and faith.

REPORT 15
LITURGICAL COMMITTEE
(Art. 59)

The Liturgical Committee devoted its time this past year especially to the following:

1. A discussion of how our churches may learn more effectively to appreciate and take advantage of the history, theology, and practice of Reformed liturgy. Out of this discussion, which took place partly in joint meetings with the Psalter Hymnal Supplement Committee, has grown the proposal printed below.
2. The translation of the form for adult baptism.
3. The preparation of a new marriage form.
4. A determination of the churches' use of two models for the communion service.

This report covers the work done under the above headings. Work in the following areas is still in progress:

1. A collection of public prayers (as directed by the Synod of 1975).
2. A new form for discipline.
3. A new form for the ordination of elders and deacons.

The preparation of these materials has been done in continuing fulfillment of the mandate given to our committee by the Synod of 1964. This mandate reads as follows:

"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" (Acts of Synod 1964, p. 60).

THE QUESTION OF LITURGICAL INSTRUCTION

At this point in its history the Liturgical Committee is becoming more and more aware that its work will not be overly fruitful for the churches unless the churches themselves are motivated by and familiar with the basic aims of Reformed liturgy. The responses of the churches to our work have reflected a very wide spectrum of attitudes and needs. From the committee's point of view the question is arising whether in liturgical matters the churches ought not to come to closer grips with their own heritage.

So far our reports to synod, at least since the early seventies, have more or less assumed that the churches have an interest in the perspective and the criteria for liturgical reform as submitted by the Liturgical

Committee in the year 1968 and as recommended by the synod of that year for study and consideration by the churches. At this point we are wondering whether the time has arrived for our church to try to make its ministers and members more familiar with the 1968 report and its possible implications for our worship practices.

It is not clear from our mandate that we have an obligation to instruct the churches in the history, theology, and practices of Reformed liturgy. It would seem that this is the task of the seminary. But we do have a clear mandate "to advise synod as to the guidance and supervision it ought to provide local congregations in all liturgical matters" (Acts of Synod 1964, p. 60).

Since liturgical music and liturgy are so closely related, the Liturgical Committee has met with representatives of the Psalter Hymnal Supplement Committee for the purpose of hearing its concern in the area of liturgical education. Out of this joint discussion has grown the following proposal:

That synod mandate these two committees and representatives of the Education Committee to devise and present to the Synod of 1978 recommendations for motivating and instructing the membership of the Christian Reformed Church in the history, theology, and practice of Reformed liturgy and music. This mandate should include proposals for ways in which assistance can be provided in liturgical and musical matters for those who desire it.

Grounds:

1. Our Reformed heritage in worship cannot be taken for granted, and without stimulating the general awareness of our people as to the crucial nature of song and liturgy in congregational worship, there is a possibility that our Reformed theology will be undermined by non-Reformed hymnody and liturgy.
2. In our day of pressures toward congregational authority, there is even greater need to foster a common Reforming mind on liturgy and music for worship. So a way needs to be found to give sustained educational leadership to keep liturgical and musical order in the churches.
3. The modest attempts at education in hymnody and liturgy by denominational committees and agencies suffer from being too fragmented. They need to be better coordinated for more effective service.

A FORM FOR THE BAPTISM OF ADULTS (a new translation)

In keeping with the desire of several churches to keep the old forms if only they are made available in a new translation, the Liturgical Committee is now ready to present a fresh translation of the form for the baptism of adults. The committee asks that synod adopt this new translation of the form in full, giving special consideration to those portions not paralleled in the already adopted translation of the form for children's baptism. These portions are printed in bold-face type. The form follows.

FORM FOR THE BAPTISM OF ADULTS (New Translation)

Congregation of our Lord Jesus Christ:

What the Lord has revealed to us in his Word about holy baptism can be summarized in this way:

First: Baptism teaches that we and our children are sinful from the time of conception and birth. 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. Baptism, whether by immersion or sprinkling, teaches that sin has made us so impure that we must undergo a cleansing which only God can accomplish. Therefore, we ought to be displeased with ourselves, humble ourselves and turn to God for our salvation.

Second: Baptism is a sign and seal that our sins are washed away through Jesus Christ. For this reason we are baptized into the name of God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Our baptism into the name of God the Father is his assurance to us that he makes an everlasting covenant of grace with us and adopts us as his children and heirs. Therefore, he surrounds us with his goodness and protects us from evil or turns 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 liberated from our sins and regarded as righteous before God.

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 Christ's work of washing away 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 shall one day be presented without the stain of sin among the assembly of the elect in life eternal.

Third: Because all covenants have two sides, 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, soul, mind and strength. We must abandon the sinful way of life, put to death our old nature, and show by our lives that we belong to God. If we through weakness should fall into sin, we must not despair of God's grace, nor use our weakness as an excuse to keep on sinning. Baptism is a seal and totally reliable witness that God is always faithful to his covenant.

On the basis of the covenant, the children of believers are to be baptized despite their inability to understand its meaning. But adults are not to be baptized unless, having felt their sins, they confess their penitence and their faith in Christ. For this reason John the Baptist proclaimed the baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, in accord with God's command, and baptized those who confessed their sins

(Mark 1:4-5 and Luke 3:3). Similarly, our Lord Jesus Christ commissioned his apostles to teach all peoples, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19). To these instructions he added the promise that he who believes and is baptized will be saved (Mark 16:16). As appears from the book of Acts, the apostles also followed the rule of baptizing only those adults who confessed their penitence and faith. Today also, therefore, only those adults are to be baptized who have come to understand the mysteries of baptism through the preaching of the gospel. Thus, they ought to be able to give an account both of baptism and of their own faith.

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 severely punished an unbelieving and unrepentant world by sending a flood. But you showed your great mercy when you saved and protected believing Noah and his family. Baptism was again signified when you drowned the obstinate Pharaoh and his whole army in the Red Sea and brought your people Israel through the sea with dry feet.

We pray that in your boundless mercy you will look with favor upon this brother/sister who is about to be baptized by bringing him/her into union with your Son, Jesus Christ, through your Holy Spirit. May he/she be buried with Christ into death and be raised with him to new life. Give him/her true faith, firm hope, and ardent love so that he/she may joyfully bear the cross of Christ as he/she daily follows him.

Give him/her the full assurance of your grace so that when he/she leaves this life and its constant struggle against the power of sin he/she 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 Adult to be Baptized

....., since you want to be baptized as a seal of your incorporation into God's church, you are asked to respond without reservation to the following questions, here in the presence of God and his people. Your response will show that you accept the Christian religion, as taught to you and professed by you. Your answers will also confirm your intention, by God's grace, to conform your life to that faith.

FIRST: Do you believe in the only, true God, who is distinct in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit; and do you believe that he has created out of nothing heaven, earth, and everything in them, and that he still upholds and rules them so that nothing happens outside his divine will?

SECOND: Do you believe that you are sinful from the time of conception and birth, and that consequently you are a child of wrath, by nature entirely incapable of doing good and disposed to all evil; and do you declare that you have often broken the Lord's commands in your thoughts, your words, and your actions; and that from the bottom of your heart you are sorry for these sins?

THIRD: Do you believe that Jesus Christ, who is both true and eternal God and true man, and who assumed his human nature from the virgin Mary's flesh and blood, has been given you by God as your Savior; that through this faith you receive forgiveness of sins in his blood; and that by the power of the Holy Spirit you have become a member of Jesus Christ and his church?

FOURTH: Do you agree with all the articles of the Christian religion as they are taught from God's Word in this Christian church; is it your intention steadfastly to persevere in this teaching; at the same time do you reject all heresies and errors conflicting with the doctrine; and do you promise to persevere in the fellowship of this Christian church, both in the hearing of the preached Word and by celebrating the Lord's Supper?

FIFTH: Is it the intent of your heart always to walk as a Christian and to reject the world and its evil attractions, as is fitting for members of Christ and his church; and do you promise to submit gladly to all Christian admonitions?

ANSWER: Yes.

May the good and great God mercifully crown this your holy commitment with his grace and blessing, through Jesus Christ. Amen.

The Sacrament

The minister shall say:

I baptize you, in 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, O Lord, that you will so govern this brother/sister by your Holy Spirit, that he/she will live a Christian and godly life, growing and developing in Jesus Christ. Help him/her see your fatherly goodness and mercy which surrounds us all. Make him/her a champion of righteousness under the direction of Jesus Christ, our only Teacher, King, and High Priest. Give him/her the courage to fight against and overcome sin, the devil and his whole dominion. May his/her life become an eternal song of praise to you, the one only true God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.

A NEW FORM FOR MARRIAGE

The Liturgical Committee herewith presents a new form for marriage. Its intended use and meaning is explained in a preface. The committee recommends that synod approve the use of this form and its preface for a two-year trial period. Synod is requested to urge the churches to submit their reactions to the new marriage form and its preface to the secretary of the Liturgical Committee by September 1, 1978. The form follows.

FORM FOR MARRIAGE

(A New Form)

Preface

This marriage form may be adapted for use according to the desire of those to be married. The form may be incorporated into the liturgy of a church worship service or it may be used in a non-ecclesiastical setting.

Elements of the form which may be omitted from the marriage service are the following: *Parting from Parents*, *Exchange of Rings*, *Promise of Support* and *Pastoral Comments*. Additions to the service may also be made, such as the lighting of a unity candle, musical selections, reading from Scripture, a message from God's Word, and comments by the persons to be married or by others selected by them.

Should items be added to the service or certain elements rearranged, care should be taken that there be a clear progression in the various steps. For example, a musical selection which makes reference to God's will for marriage could appropriately be used just before the *Declaration of Intent*. Should the couple decide to light a unity candle, this may be done just before the *Declaration of Marriage* or just before the minister says the words of Matthew 19:6. A message by the minister could follow the *Institution and Meaning of Marriage* or could follow the *Declaration of Marriage*. The content of the message would probably depend somewhat on its location in the service.

Although some elements of the marriage service are optional, there are others which should not be omitted from a Christian marriage service. The *Declaration of Purpose* is used primarily for good order. However, prayers of invocation and intercession should take a prominent place in a Christian marriage service. There should be a clear and concise statement on what the Bible teaches about the meaning and purpose of marriage. Following this statement, the couple to be married should have opportunity to state their intention to have their marriage be one which is in keeping with the will of God. The marriage vows are, of course, an integral part of the service and should reflect the biblical teaching on marriage.

The *Declaration of Marriage* by the officiating clergyman, by which the couple is pronounced husband and wife, does two additional things. It declares that the requirements of the state for marriage have been satisfactorily met and that the state will recognize these persons as married to each other. It also declares that this was a marriage which took place before the triune God and in conformity to his will. It is therefore a declaration that a new covenant family has been added to the believing community. Should the wedding take place in a worship service, the *Promise of Support* may be reworded so that its words are more reflective of that setting. The wording given in this form has a non-ecclesiastical service in mind and elicits a general response of support and concern rather than a welcome into a specific congregational structure of God's people.

FORM FOR MARRIAGE

Declaration of Purpose

We have come together before the face of God to join.....
and in marriage. We seek to honor the will of God for
marriage, the concern of the Christian church for its well-being, and the
interest of the state for the orderly development of society.

Invocation

God, our Father, we praise you for making and redeeming us to live
together in love. We thank you for the love and trust which bring
..... and to this their marriage day. Favor
them with the honor of your presence at their wedding. Unite them
by your Spirit so that together they may reflect the love of Christ for his
church. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Parting from Parents (optional)

Today and leave their parents to establish
a new home. Do you, their parents, give them to each other and sup-
port them in their marriage?

Parents of the Bride and Groom say in turn:

We give to and support them in their
marriage.

Institution and Meaning of Marriage

In marriage as instituted by God, a man and a woman covenant
to live together in a lifelong, exclusive partnership of love and fidelity
(Genesis 2:18, Matthew 19:5, 6). The apostle Paul calls the union of
husband and wife a great mystery and he sees it as a symbol of the
mystical union between Christ and his church (Ephesians 5:31, 32). If
marriage is to be pleasing in the sight of God, those who enter this cove-
nant of life must share a common commitment to the Lord of life.

In putting his blessing on marriage, God intended that it would
provide:

a context within which husband and wife can help and comfort each
other and find companionship;

a setting within which we may give loving and tender expression of
the desires God gave us;

a secure environment where children may be born, and taught to know
and serve the Lord; and

a structure that enriches society and contributes to its orderly function.

When these purposes are prayerfully pursued in union with Christ, the
kingdom of God is advanced and the blessedness of husband and wife
assured.

The Bible declares that believers are to be "subject to each other out
of reverence for Christ" (Ephesians 5:21). In marriage this requires

that the husband lovingly serve his wife by respectfully guiding and nurturing her toward a fuller expression of the "hidden person of the heart" (I Peter 3:4). It requires from the wife that she lovingly serve her husband by respectfully encouraging him to provide such leadership and to show such consideration as will build the marriage and enrich the life of the family (Ephesians 5:21 ff.; Colossians 3:18, 19; I Peter 3:1, 4, 7).

Our sinful and selfish tendency to break down what God has built threatens marriage with tensions, agony, and even with broken bonds. People who marry in the Lord, however, may trust that he will lead them, help them overcome their problems, and graciously provide for their needs. Love hopes all things. Love never ends (I Corinthians 13:7, 8).

Declaration of Intent

..... and, now that you have heard God's joyful message concerning marriage, do you agree with it and do you commit yourselves to each other in accordance with it?

Each answers: I do.

Exchange of Vows

In the presence of God and before these people I now invite you to exchange your vows.

Groom: I take you,, to be my wife and I promise before God and all who are present here to be your loving and faithful husband, as long as our lives shall last. I will serve you with tenderness and respect, and encourage you to develop God's gifts in you.

Bride: I take you,, to be my husband, and I promise before God and all who are present here to be your loving and faithful wife, as long as our lives shall last. I will serve you with tenderness and respect, and encourage you to develop God's gifts in you.

Exchange of Rings (optional)

Groom:, I give you this ring as a symbol of our union in Christ.

Bride:, I give you this ring as a symbol of our union in Christ.

Declaration of Marriage

As a minister of the church of Christ and by the authority which the state has vested in me, I now pronounce you, and husband and wife, in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen. What therefore God has joined together, let not man put asunder. (Matthew 19:6).

Promise of Support (optional)

Do you who are present here promise to pray for and and support them as times and circumstances may require?

People: We do, God helping us.

Intercessory Prayer (another prayer may be substituted)

We thank you, God and Father of the whole human family,
for making life abound throughout your creation
so that the ever-changing, ever-returning, yet never-exactly-
returning seasons

make our lives at once predictable and adventuresome.

Grant the marriage of these your servants sufficient predictability
that responsibly they may plan life for the future.

Grant this marriage sufficient adventure

that this home may be open to your work of renewal.

We thank you, Lord Jesus, for making life abound by forgiveness.

When these your servants fail to be the one flesh you intend,
grant them—as often as they need it—a fresh start.

When their special relationship threatens to become commonplace,
then change what has become commonplace into celebration,
just as you changed the commonplace water of Cana into choice
wedding wine.

We thank you, Holy Spirit, for making life abound in your church,
where you perpetually renew the marriage bond between Christ and
his bride.

Grant perpetual renewal to this couple.

May their love for each other be fired with love for you.

Oppose with Pentecostal wind whatever in this marriage opposes you.
And loosen the tongues of bride and groom that what ought to be
said,

in love of each other and love of you, may not be left unsaid.

Take this family into your family, the church.

And may this bride and groom and all the children born to them,
O triune God,
celebrate forever the marriage supper of the Lamb
in the family of heaven.

Lord Jesus, come quickly.

AMEN

Pastoral Comments (optional)

(Words of congratulation, presentation of wedding Bible).

Benediction (optional)

MODELS I AND II FOR COMMUNION SERVICES

In 1968 the synod of that year approved for use on a trial basis a model for a communion service. The churches were asked to respond but were not required to meet a deadline (see Acts of Synod 1968, p. 65). The result is that the churches have been able to use the models (a second one in more up-to-date language soon followed) for years without ever submitting an evaluation. This past year the Liturgical Committee set out to discover the mind of ministers and councils as to the value of these models.

By the day of the deadline, 173 of the 650 questionnaires sent to the ministers were returned. A summary of the results follows.

Question 1: Are you familiar with Models I and II? Answer: Yes—126; No—44. Nearly all were familiar with one form, but not with both. Fewer than 10 were unfamiliar with both.

Question 2: Have you used either or both models? Answers: Yes—116; No—57. One "no" was due to the fact that the forms have not been translated into Spanish.

Question 3a: If so, for how long? Answers:

1 year	3
2 years	13
3 years	17
4 years or more	50

Question 3b: How often? Answers:

once or twice a year	39
several times a year	45
always	19

Question 4: What response do you have to the use of these models? Answers:

	excellent	good	mixed feelings	dislike	strongly disapprove
pastor's response	35	69	12	6	5
congregation's	17	59	31	10	5

Question 5: Have you used any variation of the models? Answers: Yes—73; No—85. Of those who said "Yes":

- 22 had their variations attached
- 17 made variations in the music
- 6 indicated some ad-libbing, especially in the prayers
- 6 indicated omission of small parts
- 5 gave no example and no explanation
- 17 indicated on the questionnaire what changes they made

Question 8: If you have not used either model, what were your reasons? Answers:

- 15—satisfied with old forms
- 14—congregations uncomfortable with change
- 5—never saw the forms
- 3—still in process of educating themselves
- 11—difficulty in making it available to the congregation
- 10—very opposed to form and/or content

Question 9: Would you suggest any changes in the models? Answers: About seventy-five responded "yes" and twenty-one "no." Of those who were affirmative, several expressed a desire for a more celebrative form, more joyous music; seven wished for more variety; a few asked for still briefer forms; and four were uncomfortable with the invitation, because it sounded too much like open communion.

The committee is thankful for this response but is not convinced that these sample communion models should be given the status of permanence. It is now looking at the possibility of drawing up a more classic form with parts that are unchanged and parts that are variable.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. *Representation at Synod.* We request that our chairman, the Rev. John Vriend, and a member of our committee delegated to synod, the Rev. Dirk Hart, be given the privileges of the floor when our report is being considered.

2. *Joint Proposal* from our committee and the Psalter Hymnal Supplement Committee: That synod mandate these two committees and representatives of the Education Committee to devise and present to the Synod of 1978 recommendations for motivating and instructing the membership of the Christian Reformed Church in the history, theology, and practice of Reformed liturgy and music. This mandate should include proposals for ways in which assistance can be provided in liturgical and musical matters for those who desire it.

Grounds:

(a) Our Reformed heritage in worship cannot be taken for granted and without stimulating the general awareness of our people as to the crucial nature of song and liturgy in congregational worship, there is a possibility that our Reformed theology will be undermined by non-Reformed hymnody and liturgy.

(b) In our day of pressures toward congregational authority, there is even greater need to foster a common Reforming mind on liturgy and music for worship. So a way must be found to give sustained educational leadership to keep liturgical and musical order in the churches.

(c) The modest attempts at education in hymnody and liturgy by denominational committees and agencies suffer from being too fragmented. They need to be better coordinated for more effective service.

3. *Liturgical Forms. We recommend*

(a) that synod adopt those portions of the form for adult baptism not paralleled in the already adopted new translation of the form for infant baptism (Acts of Synod 1976, pp. 355-357).

(b) that Synod approve for a two-year trial period the churches' use of the committee's new form for marriage and its preface, and that synod urge the churches to submit their reactions to the committee by September 1, 1978.

4. *Nominations.* The terms of office for the Rev. Clifford Bajema and the Rev. John Vriend expire this year. We present to synod the following nominations for a period of three years:

(a) Clifford Bajema* and Donald Postema

(b) John Vriend* and Ronald Wells

(Note: * incumbent)

Liturgical Committee

John Vriend, chairman

Alvin L. Hoksbergen, secretary

(on leave of absence)

Clifford E. Bajema

James A. De Jong

Dirk J. Hart

Nicholas B. Knoppers

Nelle Vander Ark

Nicholas P. Wolterstorff

REPORT 16

MINISTERIAL INFORMATION SERVICE

(Art. 24)

I. PERSONNEL

The committee members are the Rev. William Van Peurse, Mr. George Groen, the Rev. Donald Negen, the Rev. Bernard Niemeyer, Mr. Harm Te Velde, and Mr. Carl Vander Brug.

II. STATISTICS

During the year 1976 we mailed a total of 1265 ministers' profiles to eighty-four vacant churches.

III. SERVICES

The committee continues to provide services primarily in two areas. The first is to mail the profiles of ministers to churches requesting information on specific men in whom they are interested.

The other area of service is to suggest the names of ministers to vacant churches who ask us for such help, and mailing the corresponding profiles to them. In this service the committee seeks to match as closely as possible the desires of the churches and of the ministers. We ask again that vacant churches desiring our services provide us with their church profile for the consideration of the full committee. We have established the first Friday of each month as our regular meeting date. Please have your requests and your profiles in our hands prior to that day. An interim committee does function in cases of particular urgency.

The new pastoral exchange service has already elicited some response. Although no suitable matches have yet come to light we are convinced that this service will be beneficial to the churches and to the ministers when it begins to be more fully utilized.

IV. FINANCES

The operating expenses for the year 1976 were \$1,166.12. An audited financial report will be submitted to the Finance Committee of the Synodical Interim Committee.

V. NOMINATIONS

The terms of George Groen and Donald Negen expire this year. Both are eligible for second terms. We submit the following nominations:

Position 1:

George Groen, incumbent. Currently serving as our vice-president. Principal of the Ontario Christian High School in Ontario, California.

James Vanderploeg. Retired school teacher. Corresponding clerk of the Calvary Christian Reformed Church of Chino, California.

Position 2:

Donald Negen, incumbent. Currently serving as our secretary. Pastor of the Third Christian Reformed Church of Bellflower, California.

John Koopmans, Pastor of the Rehoboth Christian Reformed Church of Bellflower, California.

VI. REPRESENTATION AT SYNOD

The secretary, Donald Negen, is a delegate to synod this year and will attempt to answer your questions.

VII. PRAYER REQUEST

The committee is deeply aware of our dependence upon the Holy Spirit to guide the committee, the churches, and the ministers in making responsible decisions. Therefore we covet your prayers for our work.

Ministerial Information Service

Donald J. Negen, secretary

Bernard J. Niemeyer, assistant secretary

REPORT 17
MINISTERS' PENSION FUND
 (Arts. 50, 72)

I. INTRODUCTION

The Ministers' Pension Fund was established by synod to provide financial support for our ministers who are emeritated, because they have reached retirement age or have become disabled, and widows and orphans of ministers.

A committee of seven men elected by synod, is given the responsibility of governing the fund.

Until December 1976 the committee retained the services of an administrator who was in charge of the day-by-day operations of the fund. The administrator's responsibility included the receiving of quotas and offerings, the making of payments to qualified recipients, general book-keeping, and public relations. Fiscal irregularities were uncovered with respect to the handling of the funds by the administrator and led to the committee's acceptance of his resignation, effective December 17, 1976. A complete investigation is being conducted, but at the time of the writing of this report, the committee is not in a position to give more details.

During the difficulties of the past months, the fund has operated well and the recipients have continued to receive their checks. Committee members have become more directly involved in the operation of the fund and also have enjoyed the assistance of others.

The committee intends to submit a later report to synod which will include requests for quota, individual assessments, a report regarding the Chaplains' Deposit Fund and other matters.

II. DEATHS AND EMERITATIONS

A. Deaths since our last report to synod:

Rev. William Swierenga	January 21, 1976
Mrs. Tracy Schultz	February 15, 1976
Mrs. Jeanette Kort	February 27, 1976
Rev. Edgar H. Smith	March 1, 1976
Mrs. Everdene Vissia	March 4, 1976
Rev. Samuel Brondsema	March 14, 1976
Rev. Richard Frens	April 13, 1976
Mrs. Hattie Trap	June 17, 1976
Mrs. Jeanette Gritter	June 29, 1976
Rev. Jacob R. Kamps	July 2, 1976
Rev. John O. Bouwsma	August 6, 1976
Rev. Benjamin Essenburg	September 19, 1976
Rev. Gerrit H. Rientjes	September 19, 1976

Rev. Peter Dahm	September 30, 1976
Rev. Walter Hekman	October 5, 1976
Rev. John Medendorp	December 5, 1976
Rev. Marvin J. Vander Werp	December 29, 1976
Rev. Lambert Van Haitzma	December 30, 1976
Rev. Klaas Hart	January 20, 1977
Mrs. Margaret Plesscher	February 10, 1977
Mrs. John Medendorp	February 14, 1977
Rev. John Weidenaar	February 14, 1977
Rev. Marinus Arnoys	March 4, 1977
Rev. Peter Lagerwey	March 4, 1977
Rev. Joseph Betten	March 8, 1977

B. Emeritations since our last report to synod:

- Rev. Cornelius Abbas, because of age,
Classis Chicago North, effective December 31, 1976
- Rev. Gerrit B. Boerfyn, because of age,
Classis Central California, effective June 1, 1976
- Dr. John H. Bratt, because of age,
Classis Grand Rapids East, effective June 1, 1976
- Rev. Henry De Mots, because of age,
Classis Chicago South, effective May 1, 1976
- Rev. Allan Dykstra, because of health
Classis Orange City, effective January 19, 1977
- Rev. Henry Exoo, because of age,
Classis Wisconsin, effective April 11, 1976
- Rev. Leonard Greenway, because of age,
Classis Grand Rapids North, effective January 18, 1977
- Rev. George Gritter, because of age,
Classis Grand Rapids South, effective November 1, 1976
- Rev. Donald E. Houseman, because of age,
Classis Sioux Center, effective August 1, 1976
- Rev. Elco Oostendorp, because of age,
Classis Muskegon, effective September 1, 1976
- Rev. A. W. Schaafsma, because of age,
Classis Hamilton, effective February 15, 1977
- Rev. Bud Vermeer, because of health,
Classis Grand Rapids North, effective August 1, 1976
- Rev. Alfred Walcott, because of age,
Classis Wisconsin, effective May 1, 1976

III. FINANCIAL REPORT

CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH IN NORTH AMERICA
MINISTERS' PENSION FUND
STATEMENT OF ASSETS, LIABILITIES & FUND EQUITY

January 31, 1977

<u>ASSETS</u>	UNITED STATES	DOMINION OF CANADA	COMBINED TOTAL
<u>CASH</u>			
Michigan National Bank	\$(129,186)		
Bank of Montreal		\$ 4,603	
TOTAL CASH	\$(129,186)	\$ 4,603	\$(124,583)
<u>INVESTMENTS</u>			
<u>Michigan National Bank</u>			
<u>Agency Account</u>			
Principal Cash	\$ 943,221		
(See note on Schedule A)			
Income Cash	6,559		
Savings Account	135,100		
Cert. of Deposit due 5/20/77 (Bank of Nova Scotia)		\$250,000	
Cert. of Deposit due 8/8/77 (Bank of Montreal)		250,000	
U.S. Treasury Bills(short Term)	243,270		
U.S. Notes and Bonds (intermediate terms)	2,522,376		
Corporate Obligations (Intermediate Terms)	251,384		
Canada Gov't Agencies (Long Term)		69,407	
TOTAL MICHIGAN NATIONAL BANK (AGENCY ACCOUNT)	\$4,101,910	\$569,407	\$4,671,317
<u>National Bank of Detroit</u> (Trustee Account)			
Bonds	4,000		
Common Stocks- Nat'l Bank of Detroit Equity Common Trust Fd.	467,853		
Accruals & Receivables	920		
Cash	117		
TOTAL NAT'L BANK OF DETROIT	\$472,890		\$ 472,890
<u>TOTAL INVESTMENTS</u>			
<u>All investments are reflected at the lower of cost or market as at January 31, 1977 quotation. (see Exhibit A & B attached)</u>			
<u>OTHER ASSETS</u>			
Account Receivable(secured)	\$ 128,649		
Equipment(depreciated Value)	6,485		
Misc. Items			
TOTAL OTHER ASSETS	135,134		135,134
<u>TOTAL ASSETS</u>	<u>\$ 4,580,748</u>	<u>\$574,010</u>	<u>\$5,154,758</u>

CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH IN NORTH AMERICA
MINISTERS' PENSION FUND
STATEMENT OF ASSETS, LIABILITIES & FUND EQUITY

January 31, 1977

<u>TOTAL ASSETS</u>	\$4,580,748	\$ 574,010	\$5,154,758
<hr/>			
<u>LIABILITIES AND FUND EQUITY</u>			
Account. Payable -			
Chaplain Deposit Fund	\$ 130,523		
Miscellaneous	693		
<u>TOTAL LIABILITIES</u>	<u>\$ 131,216</u>		\$ 131,216
			<hr/>
FUND EQUITY	<u>\$4,449,532</u>	<u>\$ 574,010</u>	<u>\$5,023,542</u>
<u>TOTAL LIABILITIES AND FUND EQUITY</u>	<u>\$4,580,748</u>	<u>\$ 574,010</u>	<u>\$5,154,758</u>

STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS, DISBURSEMENTS AND EQUITY INCREASE
Fiscal Year Ending January 31, 1977

RECEIPTS

Quota Contributions	\$1,756,348	
Other Contributions	<u>219,562</u>	
<u>TOTAL CONTRIBUTIONS</u>	<u>\$1,975,910</u>	
Earning Investments	<u>\$ 287,877</u>	
<u>TOTAL RECEIPTS</u>		\$2,263,787

DISBURSEMENTS

<u>Benefit Payments</u>		
Pension	\$1,046,786	
Moving Expense	<u>8,510</u>	
Total Benefit Payments	<u>\$1,055,296</u>	
<u>Administrative Expense</u>		
Administrator's fee	\$ 18,510	
Actuarial trustee and		
audit fees	14,319	
Telephone & supplies	1,888	
Committee meeting expense	644	
Canadian Registration, legal &		
other expense	2,775	
Church and Classis relations	2,380	
Currency Exchange- Canada	<u>1,070</u>	
Total Administrative Expense	\$ 41,586	
<u>TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS</u>		<u>\$1,096,882</u>

EQUITY INCREASE

\$1,166,905

ADJUSTMENTS TO EQUITY

Investments - Market Value		
decline as at 1/31/77		\$ (20,090)
Value of equipment added		
to asset value		<u>6,485</u>

NET EQUITY INCREASE

\$1,153,300

MINISTERS' PENSION FUND
STATEMENT OF CHANGE IN EQUITY FUND BALANCE
February 1, 1976 - January 31, 1977

BALANCE AT BEGINNING OF YEAR		\$3,870,242
<u>ADDITIONS:</u>		
Contributions - all sources	\$1,975,910	
Interest, dividends & other earnings	287,877	
Gains & (Losses) on Investments	(20,090)	
Other Additions(Equipment Value added)	<u>6,485</u>	
TOTAL ADDITIONS	\$2,250,182	
<u>DEDUCTIONS:</u>		
Benefits paid	\$1,055,296	
Operating Expenses	41,586	
Other Deductions	<u> </u>	
TOTAL DEDUCTIONS	\$1,096,882	
NET INCREASE (DECREASE)		<u>\$1,153,300</u>
BALANCE AT END OF YEAR		\$5,023,542

IV. SUPPLEMENTAL ASSISTANCE FUND

The Supplemental Assistance Fund is a separate fund established to provide benevolent assistance to emeritated ministers, widows and orphans who have special need. During the past year, disbursements exceeded receipts. This fund is supported exclusively by offerings and contributions. Churches are requested to remember those who are in unusual circumstances by taking special offerings for this fund.

V. SUPPLEMENTAL FUND FISCAL REPORT

STATEMENT OF ASSETS, LIABILITY AND FUND EQUITY

January 31, 1977

ASSETS

CASH

Michigan National Bank		
Checking account	\$ 5,103.00	
Savings account	1,511.00	
Bank of Montreal	<u>158.00</u>	
Total Cash	<u>\$ 6,772.00</u>	
TOTAL ASSETS		\$ 6,772.00

LIABILITIES AND FUND EQUITY

Liabilities	none	
Fund Equity	\$ 6,772.00	
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND FUND EQUITY		\$ 6,772.00

STATEMENT OF CHANGE IN EQUITY FUND BALANCE

February 1, 1976 - January 31, 1977

BALANCE AT BEGINNING OF YEAR		\$ 8,507.00
<u>ADDITIONS</u>		
Contributions	\$22,465.00	
Interest on Savings Account	<u>78.00</u>	
TOTAL ADDITIONS		\$22,543.00
<u>DEDUCTIONS</u>		
Benefit Payments	<u>\$24,278.00</u>	
TOTAL DEDUCTIONS		\$24,278.00
NET DECREASE		<u>\$(1,735.00)</u>
BALANCE AT END OF YEAR		\$ 6,772.00

Statement of Receipts, Disbursements, and Equity Decrease

Fiscal Year Ending January 31, 1977

RECEIPTS

Contributions	\$22,465.00	
Interest on Savings Account	<u>78.00</u>	
TOTAL RECEIPTS		\$22,543.00

DISBURSEMENTS

Benefit Payments	\$22,278.00	
TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS		<u>\$24,278.00</u>

EQUITY DECREASE

\$(1,735.00)

CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH IN NORTH AMERICA

CHAPLAIN COMMITTEE - CHAPLAINS' DEPOSIT FUND (MPF AGENT)

STATEMENT OF ASSETS, LIABILITIES AND FUND EQUITY

January 31, 1977

ASSETS

ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE

Ministers' Pension Fund \$146,589.00

TOTAL ASSETS \$146,589.00

LIABILITIES & FUND EQUITY

LIABILITIES none

FUND EQUITY \$146,589.00

TOTAL LIABILITIES & FUND EQUITY \$146,589.00

STATEMENT OF CHANGE IN EQUITY FUND BALANCE

February 1, 1976 - January 31, 1977

BALANCE AT BEGINNING OF YEAR		\$108,743.00
<u>ADDITIONS</u>		
Quota Contributions	\$ 35,493.00	
Interest on Receivable due from Ministers' Pension Fund	<u>6,277.00</u>	
TOTAL ADDITIONS		\$ 41,770.00
<u>DEDUCTIONS</u>		
Participant Payments	\$ 3,625.00	
Administrative expense	<u>299.00</u>	
TOTAL DEDUCTIONS		\$ 3,924.00
NET INCREASE (decrease)		<u>\$ 37,846.00</u>
BALANCE AT END OF YEAR		\$146,589.00

STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS, DISBURSEMENTS & EQUITY INCREASE

Fiscal year February 1, 1976 - January 31, 1977

RECEIPTS

Quota Contributions	\$ 35,493.00	
Interest on Receivable due from Ministers' Pension Fund	<u>6,277.00</u>	
TOTAL RECEIPTS		\$ 41,770.00

DISBURSEMENTS

Participant Payments to Ministers' Pension Fund	\$ 3,625.00	
Administrative Expense	<u>299.00</u>	
TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS		\$ 3,924.00

FUND EQUITY INCREASE \$ 37,846.00

CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH IN NORTH AMERICA

MINISTERS' GROUP LIFE & AD & D INSURANCE (MPF AGENT)

STATEMENT OF ASSETS, LIABILITIES AND PREMIUM RESERVE

January 31, 1977

ASSETS

Cash due from Ministers' Pension Fund	<u>\$28,547.00</u>	
TOTAL ASSETS		\$28,547.00

LIABILITIES & PREMIUM RESERVE

Liabilities	none	
Premium Reserve	<u>\$28,547.00</u>	
TOTAL LIABILITIES & PREMIUM RESERVE		\$28,547.00

STATEMENT OF CHANGE IN PREMIUM RESERVE BALANCE		
BALANCE AT BEGINNING OF YEAR		\$14,134.00
<u>ADDITIONS</u>		
Individual Premium Receipts	\$40,345.00	
Annual Dividend & Interest on Policy	<u>38,170.00</u>	
TOTAL ADDITIONS		\$78,515.00
<u>DEDUCTIONS</u>		
Annual Group Insurance Payments	\$63,823.00	
Administrative Expence	<u>279.00</u>	
TOTAL DEDUCTIONS		\$64,102.00
NET INCREASE		<u>\$14,413.00</u>
BALANCE AT END OF YEAR		\$28,547.00

VI. COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The committee consists of seven members (two ordained men and five laymen). Dr. James Harkema and Mr. Alden Walters are both completing two full terms of service. These men have provided an excellent contribution to the work of the Ministers' Pension Fund and they will be missed. The committee now requests that synod elect two committee members for regular three-year terms.

VII. MATTERS FOR SYNODICAL ACTION

1. The committee respectfully requests synod to grant the privilege of the floor to members of the committee when matters pertaining to the Ministers' Pension Fund are discussed.
2. The committee requests synod to elect two committee members for regular, three-year terms from the following nominations:

Gordon D. Dornbush	Richard Knol
Wyoming, Michigan	South Holland, Illinois
H. Kreeft	William Suk
Sarnia, Ontario	Brampton, Ontario
3. The committee requests synod to approve a continuation of the \$2,500 housing allowance for ministerial pension benefits for United States Income Tax purposes [Section 107(2) of the Code].
4. The committee requests that synod approve the Supplemental Assistance Fund of the Ministers' Pension Committee for one or more offerings and further requests synod to urge our churches to increase their offerings for this fund which is in dire need of same for financial assistance of some of our retirees and their widows.

Ministers' Pension Fund Committee

Alden Walters, chairman
 James Harkema, secretary
 Peter Brouwers, treasurer
 Henry DeBolster
 Roger Helder
 Donald Oosterhouse
 John Van Ryn

REPORT 17-A
MINISTERS' PENSION FUND
 (Art. 72)

I. INTRODUCTION

As indicated in Report 17, the committee now wishes to report further regarding quota, individual assessments, Chaplains' Deposit Fund and other matters.

II. REQUEST FOR QUOTA AND INDIVIDUAL ASSESSMENTS

A. Proposed Budget - Calendar Year 1978

	Proposed Budget for 1978
INCOME	
Quota, 64,900 families (Net 61,274 @ \$28.50 per family)	\$1,746,000
Contributions for Other Participating Ministers 216 @ \$1,200 each	259,000
Estimated income on Investments	376,000
Total Income	\$2,381,000
 DISBURSEMENTS	
Benefits based on a maximum ministers' pension of \$4,840, and a maximum widows' benefit of \$3,872, and moving expenses	\$1,140,000
Disbursements to Trust Accounts for future funding of benefits	1,188,000
Agency and Trustee fees	10,000
Administration and Service expenses	43,000
Total Disbursements	\$2,381,000

B. The budget increase is based on the Ministers' Pension Fund Committee's proposal to increase pension benefits of current retirees and their widows and orphans by 10%, effective January 1, 1978. The present benefit of \$4,400 became effective on July 1, 1975. Cost-wise an increase also requires provision for funding for all members in the plan. Accordingly, the committee requests an increase in the annual quota from \$24.50 (in effect since Jan. 31, 1976) to \$28.50 per family. An increase is also requested for contributions from "other" participating ministers from \$1,000 to \$1,200 each. This approximates the ratio increase in the quota.

III. CHAPLAINS' DEPOSIT FUND

Article 84 II. B, Acts of Synod 1975, recommends "That synod mandate the Pension Fund Committee to study the feasibility of consolidating the Ministers' Pension Fund and the Chaplains' Deposit Fund and report to the Synod of 1976." In Acts of Synod 1976, the Chaplain Committee informed synod "that it concurs with the Ministers' Pension Fund and that for the time being, these funds remain separate." Since then the two committees have held meetings to evaluate all the ramifications of consolidating the two funds. While it appears that a merging of the two

funds will be feasible, no definite plan is ready to present to the 1977 Synod. The two committees will continue to work on the resolution of the 1975 synodical mandate with the expectation of making a recommendation to Synod 1978.

IV. CANADIAN REGISTRATION

The committee advises synod that it is working on the requirements involved to qualify for registration of the Ministers' Pension Fund Plan with the Canadian authorities. Some proposed plan changes have been submitted and the authorities required further changes in the plan. These were subsequently submitted for consideration and as of the last meeting of the committee no response had been received. A very difficult difference lies in the area of funding. The Canadian legislation calls for fifteen years amortization of the accrued liability as of January 1, 1970 for the retirement benefits at normal retirement age, while our plan is based on amortization of the initial accrued liability over a forty-year period as allowed under United States legislation.

V. OTHER ACTIONS

Since December 17, 1976, the method of operation has been substantially reorganized to avoid a recurrence of financial irregularities in the future.

On April 1, 1977, the committee employed the part-time services of Mr. Garrett C. Van de Riet to work in and out of the office as Assistant to the committee.

VI. MATTERS FOR SYNODICAL ACTION

1. The committee respectfully requests synod to grant the privilege of the floor to Garrett C. Van de Riet, Assistant to the committee, as well as those mentioned in Report 17, when matters pertaining to the Ministers' Pension Fund are discussed.
2. The committee requests synod to extend Mr. Alden Walters' term on the committee for one additional year.
3. The committee requests synod to approve a 10% benefit increase in pensions for ministers, their widows and their orphans. The maximum annual pension would increase from \$4,400 to \$4,840 effective January 1, 1978.
4. The committee requests synod to approve a quota increase for the Ministers' Pension from an annual \$24.50 to \$28.50 per family effective January 1978.
5. The committee requests synod to approve a contribution increase from other participants from \$1,000 to \$1,200 per year effective January 1, 1978.

Ministers' Pension Fund Committee
Alden Walters, chairman

REPORT 18
SERMONS FOR READING SERVICES
(Art. 79)

Since we are in the midst of our twenty-first year of publication, we wish we had a more substantial or cheerful report for you. Unfortunately what we have to present to you is neither. Last summer we informed synod that our publisher was retiring. Mr. VandeRiet and his wife served us faithfully and punctually for twenty years. It is a matter of great regret to us that so far we cannot say the same thing for their replacement, Mr. D. J. H. VanWyck, of North York Reproductions Ltd. Our new publisher was unable to get out a single sermon until January 1977, in spite of many promises and repeated contacts. It appears that Mr. VanWyck had some adjustment problems while changing over from blue-printing to regular printing. He assures us that this kind of lapse will not occur again and that from now on sermons will be mailed out regularly on a monthly basis as was done previously. He has included in the first mailing a letter of explanation and apology to all our subscribers. We wish to apologize to synod and all churches who suffered inconvenience. We realize that we are responsible as a committee, and cannot hide behind a publisher!

In connection with the gap in publication we would like to request synod to make a change. Formerly synod approved of publication on a June 1 - May 31 basis. We would like very much to switch to a calendar year instead, and therefore request synod to approve the publication of the "Living Word" from January 1, 1978, to January 1, 1979. This will enable our publisher to catch up by simply extending the present subscriptions to the end of this calendar year. This has the further advantage for synod of not approving something now in 1977, which will be carried out in 1980.

Our subscription list as well as cost and remuneration schedules remain unchanged from last year.

The term of one of our members, the Rev. H. Praamsma, is expiring. He is eligible for re-election. To fill out a duo we submit the name of the Rev. M. Lise of the Holland Marsh church. We approach synod once again to endorse our efforts by way of announcements in The Banner and De Wachter.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. That synod approve the publication of the *Living Word* sermon series from January 1, 1978 through January 1, 1979.
2. That synod fill the vacancy on the committee from the nominations above.
3. That synod recommend through announcements in our church papers that our churches subscribe and use the *Living Word* sermons.

4. That synod continue the Sermons for Reading Services Committee.

Sermons for Reading Services Committee

A. Venema, chairman

H. D. Praamsma, secretary

J. W. Postman

REPORT 19
SYNODICAL COMMITTEE ON RACE RELATIONS (SCORR)
 (Art. 24)

Members of the Synodical Committee on Race Relations:

- Rev. Marvin Beelen, Muskegon, MI, 1978
 (Board of Publications representative)
- Ms. Barbara Clayton, Chicago, IL, 1978
- Ms. Elsa Cortina, Grand Rapids, MI, 1978
- Mr. Dennis Crushshon, Chicago, IL, 1977
- Mr. George Fernandez, Miami, FL, 1978
 secretary/treasurer
- Rev. Vernon Geurkink, Grand Rapids, MI, 1977
 chairperson
- Rev. Gordon Negen, Grand Rapids, MI, 1979
- Rev. Virgil Patterson, Grand Rapids, MI, 1977
- Mr. Ray Pinto, Ft. Wingate, NM, 1979
- Mr. Theodore Taylor, Washington DC, 1979
 vice-chairperson
- Rev. Hans Uittenbosch, Montreal, Canada, 1978
 (Board of Home Missions representative)
- Mr. Leon Van Rees, Muskegon, MI, 1977
 (CRWRC representative)
- Dr. Paul Wang, Naperville, IL, 1979

I. INTRODUCTION

A. 1976 was the year that a cabinet member of the United States government was forced to resign because of a racial slur so crass that newspapers were stymied over how to report it. It was the year that a new President was elected with 94% of the Black vote, a President who is a member of a church which disallowed Black membership. It was a year of agony in South Africa, when the Reformed Ecumenical Synod met in Capetown while fires burned in the townships. It was a year unemployment continued to run twice as high in the minority community as in the White, with the rate running as high as 60% for young Black males.

In the denomination it was the year that the North American Presbyterian and Reformed Council decided to hold a conference on race with a Christian Reformed planning committee. It was the year the Roseland Christian Ministry Center began a new Reformed witness in an urban Black community. It was the year that SCORR's quota was cut by 28%.

It was a year of frustration for SCORR members. At times the task seemed overwhelming. SCORR experienced within its own membership the pain of those who found expectations disappointed and hopes deferred, and SCORR's chairman and two other committee members resigned during the past year. SCORR itself struggles; we ourselves face the intense difficulties. We are willing to be the place where the pain and struggle take place. We are and must be a laboratory, a work-

shop. We need the prayers and the support of the church so that we can indeed be the agents of racial reconciliation.

B. *Background*

Now in its sixth year, the Synodical Committee on Race Relations (SCORR) continues under the same mandate which was given to the original Race Commission which started out under the Home Mission Board in 1968: "To design, organize, and implement programs through which the denomination, individual churches, and members can effectively use all available resources to eliminate racism, both causes and effects, within the body of believers and throughout the world in which we live" (Acts of Synod 1968, p. 18).

Though the mandate is the same, some important explication of it was given by the synod when the Race Commission became SCORR. At that time, the synod said that the mandate was to be carried out by such activities as: education of the church through materials, conferences, research; ministry to the church through minority student scholarships, advice, consultation, legal and economic aid assistance, liaison, and encouragement of a private agency (Acts of Synod 1971, p. 114).

To that new committee the synod appointed an even dozen people—Red, Yellow, Brown, White, ministers and laymen from churches scattered all over the denomination. Not classical representation, but racial and geographic representation and expertise regarding the mandate, were to be the criteria for membership on the committee. And the synod said that the committee should have on it representation from the Home Mission Board, World Relief, and the Board of Publications.

Now that committee is in its sixth year. Only one of those original members is still on SCORR. Through its five-year history SCORR has met only quarterly—fully conscious of the cost of convening the scattered committee set up by the synod. At the time of the Synod of 1977, SCORR will have met twenty-four (24) times. Twenty-four (24) times members of the Christian Reformed Church who are Red and Yellow and Brown and Black and White have gathered around a table specifically to talk about how to promote racial reconciliation in congregations and denomination and society. Nowhere else in the denomination is there an agency or a committee constituted with that kind of representation. Nowhere else in the Christian Reformed Church is there a formal and official body so racially diverse. Nowhere else does the institution known as the Christian Reformed Church demonstrate so clearly the unity and diversity of the Body of Christ.

C. SCORR was conceived in the turbulent sixties when society and denomination were in anguish over racial conflict which threatened to rend cities and churches and society itself. By 1971 a synodical committee on race appeared in the Christian Reformed Church; our denomination was responding to events and pressures within the Reformed community and the Christian Reformed Church itself. In March of 1971, the Christian Reformed Church had participated in the North

American RES Regional Conference on Race held in Chicago, and the Synod of 1971 faced again the issues of racial conflict in one of the denomination's own classes.

Mainline denominations had moved quickly and massively in the late sixties to set up social and racial justice agencies. In the seventies that momentum waned in church and society. Budget troubles, new challenges, a recognition that race problems aren't easily solved, all these accounted in part for a retrenching among the agencies for social justice. But during the early '70's the Christian Reformed Church was just getting up its speed. Its committee, young and with no precedent in Christian Reformed Church history, was feeling its way along—trying out how it could be a resource to minority congregations in the denomination and at the same time be educator and motivator for majority members of the Christian Reformed Church. Research, study guides, conferences, seminars, scholarships, characterized those early years. Now as mainline denominations have dismantled much of their social justice machinery, SCORR finds itself with five years of experience behind it, and with some brand new interest in race on the part of the evangelical and Reformed church community.

D. One of the themes that emerges from the six years of SCORR's history is SCORR's search for a strategy, a posture which would make it genuinely effective in promoting racial reconciliation in the denomination. The harsh and painful conflict of the sixties appeared in the early seventies in the Christian Reformed Church as a conflict over Christian education for Black covenant children. It reached its peak at synod and in the courts in 1971. For good or for ill, that agony set the mood for the denomination's feelings about its new committee on race. Out of that context, and out of that very painful and difficult crisis, came SCORR's search for an effective approach. Could this committee, mandated to deal with a particular issue, and an issue intensely controversial at that, find a way to be genuinely effective in the long run in the Christian Reformed Church? How could that be accomplished?

In answer to that, SCORR began to formulate an approach. The committee saw in the 1971 explication of the 1968 mandate an important clue, for synod's explication of the mandate seemed to steer the committee into a supportive, adjunctive approach to carrying out the mandate.

That fit well with something else the committee affirmed with all its heart: no committee could or should *be* the church's total answer to the challenge of racial reconciliation. Instead, the committee must motivate and *assist* the church to address the issue of race relations. The denomination itself—members, congregations, and agencies—must work on racial justice and reconciliation—encouraged and assisted by its committee on race relations. Ideally no church should have or need such a committee; but events in church and society made us painfully aware of the need for the ministry of reconciliation among races. We were forced to see that racial prejudice and discrimination were much

greater problems than we had thought. We were forced to see that racial barriers existed within the body of Christ to a much greater degree than we had known. We were forced to see that the attitudes and practices of the denomination reflected and contributed to far more racial alienation than we had dreamed. And so synod appointed a committee to assist the denomination in attending to that particular pressing problem.

II. ANALYSIS

What has the committee done and what is the situation today? What remains to be done? The answers to these questions will constitute the rest of this report.

A. What has SCORR accomplished over the past year? What results can SCORR point to as it carried out its mandate in 1976?

The most notable accomplishments occurred through the Minority Student Scholarship Fund. This year, for the first time, SCORR received grant requests from all four colleges—Dordt, Trinity, Calvin and RBC. As is usually the case, most of the recipients were Black, with a small percentage of Indian, Spanish, and Oriental young people also included.

According to the rules of the program, minority young people from within our ecclesiastical fellowship who attend colleges affiliated with the denomination are eligible to receive SCORR grants. For five years SCORR has viewed this program as a vitally important one. It opens a door of opportunity for minority young people, it prepares minority leadership; it assists the colleges to have a richer and more diverse student body.

Some of the young people who receive assistance come from Christian homes; some of them have chosen membership in the Christian Reformed Church with no support from their families. Many of them come from urban areas where summer jobs for minority young people are extremely scarce, and where high schools do little to prepare students for college. For these young people money is often a big obstacle to education; family support is minimal, personal savings are nonexistent, and working while attending college is a double burden since their lack of academic preparation makes extra study a necessity. Making it at college is often tough, and it is even tougher when you are one of a few minority students on an almost all-white campus. The Minority Student Scholarship Fund is one of the ways to provide that opportunity to make it.

More government assistance is available for college students in general, these days, but less money is earmarked for minority students. And it is still urgently needed. Society has a way of changing its goals before it has accomplished them. More minority students than ever are seeking admission to college, but assistance to them has been reduced. It is especially important that the church keep its commitment to minority young people who are choosing to attend Reformed colleges.

Last year SCORR assisted a Calvin graduate who had been a reci-

ipient of a grant by helping her to find a teaching position with one of the denomination's institutions for the handicapped.

During the past school year SCORR provided assistance to twenty students at Calvin, Dordt, RBC and Trinity. Those students received \$15,500.00 from the fund. SCORR is very glad to be able to report that last year contributions to the fund were up by 30%.

B. The beginning of the new ministry in Roseland, Chicago, called the Roseland Christian Ministry Center, was an accomplishment that was especially important to SCORR. That urban ministry center is the result of the dreams and hard work of a number of people—classical committees, a local board, and the three Chicagoland classes, as well as the Home Mission Board, World Relief and SCORR. As early as 1974 the Back To God Hour had reported to synod that it had been in contact with SCORR about its move out of its urban Black community. At SCORR'S suggestion, the BTGH apprised the denomination's inner city churches of its intentions and received responses from them. The BTGH requested synod to authorize them to make the building available to the Home Mission Board and World Relief with a view to developing an inner city ministry there. In response synod charged the BTGH "to exercise every means to find a user or users for the present building who will use the building for a Christian ministry to the neighborhood, giving first preference to CRC denominational agencies . . ." (Acts of Synod 1974, Art. 54, p. 53).

As the result of BTGH efforts to carry out that responsibility, the three Chicagoland classes formed a committee to study the feasibility of beginning an urban ministry in the BTGH building. That committee requested advice and assistance from a variety of resources, including SCORR. In the fall of 1975 SCORR held its meeting in the BTGH building to see the building and the community first-hand and to demonstrate its interest in that dream of a Reformed urban ministry there. At that meeting SCORR approved a grant of \$10,000.00 for the new ministry center—the first solid commitment of funds the center had from any source. Since that time a local board, made up of representatives from the three classes, has begun the work there, and in the fall of 1976 the Rev. Anthony Van Zanten accepted the call to be the missionary pastor at the center. The World Relief Committee and the Home Mission Board along with SCORR are providing support to complement the quotas passed by the three classes. The entire operation will be re-evaluated in three years, and we anticipate the phasing out of SCORR funding at that time.

We report on that process at length because it is our conviction that the importance of what is happening at the Roseland Christian Ministry Center can hardly be over-emphasized. It is an example of cooperation between local groups, classes, and denominational agencies in beginning a new urban ministry in a minority community. Nothing quite like it exists elsewhere in the denomination.

It is a ministry that provides opportunity for channeling denominational resources into a minority community in an urban setting. It is a

new arena for the CRC to work out the ministry of reconciliation in the area of race relations. It is a new opportunity for the denomination to demonstrate the unity of the body of Jesus Christ; it is a ministry particularly well suited to teach us new insights into urban ministry and to provide a training ground for new leadership in urban ministry. SCORR was perhaps the single most important supportive force in making the Roseland Ministry Center a reality as a cooperative, comprehensive ministry.

C. An urban ministry involvement of a somewhat different sort is SCORR's new relationship with the Baxter Community Center in Grand Rapids. Begun several years ago by the Eastern Avenue CRC, the Baxter Center is located in the old Baxter Christian School and serves a Black neighborhood in the central city. In the course of its history the Baxter Center acquired an independent status, with its own board of directors, and moved away from church support and affiliation, toward government support. The board's stated purpose of ministry to the neighborhood in the name of Jesus Christ remained unchanged. Last year the board began reassessing the Christian character of the center and its increasing distance from church support. The board decided to make some changes in programming, funding and staffing that would highlight the distinctively Christian nature of the center. In that context the board began talking with SCORR about a grant to enable them to hire a staff person who could act as spiritual advisor to staff and community people. After extensive conversations with the Baxter board about their intentions and about the job which such a person would perform, SCORR approved a grant to the Baxter Community Center for this purpose. In late 1976 Baxter hired a new theologically trained staff person.

SCORR notes that Baxter has potential for being a place where the Christian Reformed Churches in Grand Rapids can engage in exchanging resources with the Black community. It has been that in a small way in the past. The Center continued its ministry to its Black urban neighborhood through the early '70's while the denominational commitment to such a ministry waned. Now it seeks to renew its relationship to the church community and SCORR supports that effort to renew its potential. We affirm that neighborhood centers in minority communities afford a valuable vehicle for cross-racial contact, for the exchanging of resources, and for the changing of attitudes.

D. A fourth major SCORR accomplishment during 1976 was a response to a request from the Chicago West Side Christian School Association for advice and assistance in bringing to reality their dream of a neighborhood Christian school. Churches in urban minority communities find that the availability of a neighborhood Christian school is doubly valuable for their ministry. Schools and churches in Grand Rapids, New Jersey, Chicago's south side, Miami, Detroit, Denver, and no doubt others, are discovering the potential of Christian education as a contribution to urban ministry, and what is more, are discovering the value of a school closely tied geographically to the church's ministry.

Black parents on Chicago's west side had been juggling a variety of Christian education options since movement of the nearest Christian school to a farther suburb. One of the options they had created was a tiny Christian kindergarten in the neighborhood Catholic school.

Last year they decided that the time had come to put a foundation under their vision of a Christian school to serve their Black urban neighborhood. Last year SCORR reported to synod that we had granted some funding to Chicago West Side for planning and development, and that we anticipated a proposal from them for help in implementing their plans. We thank God for his blessings on their trust and obedience. This past school year a Christian school with twenty-eight students in grades K-3, one and a half full-time teachers and an aide, operated in the Garfield Church. Plans for next year include new facilities, another teacher, and a large increase in enrollment. SCORR is pleased to report that we were involved with this effort with advice and a grant of \$5,000.00. We are anticipating that assistance from SCORR will be needed for one more year.

SCORR notes with gratitude to God these signs of health and growth in the Lawndale and Garfield congregations. Their ministries in their urban Black communities strengthen, and are in turn strengthened by the Christian training available to their children. By thus providing support to Christian education in a Black community, SCORR carries out its mandate to eliminate the effects of racism. Our prayer is that, through such exciting efforts as these, God may provide to our church the increasing racial diversity that enriches our fellowship, breaks down the walls of partition, and builds the kind of unity by which the world may know Jesus Christ as Lord.

E. Another involvement was SCORR's work in depth with Calvin Seminary. Over a period of many months SCORR worked closely with the seminary on two concerns: resolving a difficult situation involving a minority student, and finding ways that the seminary could better prepare students for ministry in multi-racial settings.

Perplexing questions continue to plague the Christian Reformed Church about minority leadership and leadership in minority congregations. How can the denomination address the need for Black and Yellow and Red and Brown pastors? How can a denomination with only a 1% minority membership take seriously the need for minority pastors? How does a denomination that is so identifiably white and Dutch effectively train pastors for ministry in minority congregations?

Clearly one place where these questions need to be addressed is in the seminary. SCORR rejoices that last fall the seminary faculty decided to set specific goals for itself to meet these needs. We see the need for a serious and coordinated address to this problem by the Home Mission Board, the seminary, the colleges, and the minority congregations. Christian schools in minority communities, the Minority Student Scholarship Fund, and urban ministry centers must address this issue also.

F. During the past year SCORR reviewed the racial content of Education Department materials in cooperation with the Education

Department staff. This was something of an experiment, designed to see whether there was a way in which the racial content, both specific and cumulative, of the church's educational materials could be monitored effectively for racial sensitivity. In this experiment, SCORR set up a panel to review materials and then discuss the racial content of those materials with the staff. We are pleased that as a result of that review, the Education Department is making plans for a continuing review process which will include a review of the racial contents of their materials.

G. A brief report to synod last year indicated that we were seeking to put race on the agenda of the North American Presbyterian and Reformed Council (NAPaRC), with a possible conference on race as a way to begin. SCORR requested our denomination's Interchurch Relations Committee to offer SCORR's services to NAPaRC in planning a NAPaRC conference on race. Last year such a request was presented to NAPaRC and NAPaRC responded affirmatively. During the early months of 1977 SCORR worked with the planning committee of that conference. By the time synod meets that NAPaRC conference on race will have been held (in March).

So far as we have been able to learn no other NAPaRC denomination has a committee that parallels our denomination's committee on race relations. It is our prayer that as the churches of NAPaRC seek to work together and learn from each other, SCORR will be able to be of service to the other churches.

H. During 1976 SCORR also became involved with some of the racial concerns of the Reformed Ecumenical Synod (RES). The RES met during 1976 in Capetown, South Africa, while Capetown was experiencing the agonies of violent racial conflict. SCORR sent its chairman to be an observer at that synod. As the result of one of the decisions taken at that synod, a special meeting of the RES Interim Committee will be held in conjunction with the RES regional conference on race in Potchefstroom in April. In response to a request from our Christian Reformed Church Interchurch Committee, SCORR has agreed to guarantee the major portion of the cost of that meeting. With the approval of the Synodical Interim Committee and the Interchurch Relations Committee, SCORR will be making a special appeal to the congregations to help us meet those costs. It is SCORR's conviction that all available resources within the RES must be employed to bring about justice and reconciliation in South Africa's racial conflict. Our brothers and sisters in the Reformed faith in South Africa must be assured that we want to stand with them in building the kingdom of love and justice.

I. Last year SCORR worked extensively with the Young Calvinist office and with the multi-racial churches to build minority participation in the SWIM program. Primarily our concern was to encourage the participation of minority young people in SWIM and to work out ways that churches requesting minority or multi-racial teams could get their

requests met. We are pleased that in recent years increased numbers of minority young people have participated in SWIM, and the United Calvinist Youth Office has been very responsive to the requests for minority SWIMers. This summer there are requests for twenty (20) minority young people to serve on teams.

J. SCORR also made contributions in the area of race in assisting two multi-racial congregations. The first was Crenshaw in Los Angeles. Undertaking what was to become a well-publicized and massive settlement of Vietnamese refugees, that small congregation looked for assistance to many sources, including SCORR. SCORR provided a grant for them to hire an Oriental staff person to work exclusively with the large group of refugees for whom they had assumed responsibility. In the second case the Madison Square Christian Reformed Church in Grand Rapids had in God's providence discovered a talented Black Christian who was immediately available to join their ministry in youth work. A quick response from SCORR in the form of a grant enabled them to hire this young Black Christian immediately and pay him until routine funding could be set up. SCORR affirms the vital importance of multi-racial congregations acquiring minority staff people, and we are thankful that we can report to synod that we are able to play a small but important role in meeting two such opportunities.

III. SCORR REVIEW

A final, unique accomplishment of SCORR during 1976, which we report at length, is the results of a SCORR review. SCORR is one of the youngest agencies in the denomination—it is now in its sixth year and at the end of its second three years. It is time for synod to take another close look at its committee on race relations.

In order for SCORR to consider responsibly what we might recommend to synod for the future, the committee undertook to look carefully at its own history and goals for the future, and also to listen carefully to what some others said by way of evaluation, advice and hopes for the future. Two things in particular we include in our report to synod: the results of a questionnaire which we sent out concerning SCORR, and the results of the work of the Review Committee which we set up to serve us with advice.

A. *The Questionnaire*

We sent an open-ended questionnaire to a carefully selected group of people in the denomination. The persons who received questionnaires were those most likely to be familiar with the work of SCORR and most involved in race relations. We asked them to write to us about how they saw a denominational committee on race, our mandate, our successes and failures, and what they thought we ought to be doing. Almost all those who received the questionnaire were pastors or staff persons in the denomination's urban and multi-racial churches.

The responses provided us with much data which will be useful to us in planning for the future. A large majority of the respondents told

us they believed it was important for the denomination to have a committee on race. One respondent wrote as follows: "This racism of ours shows too much blatant prejudice, too much subtle and even unconscious discrimination, and the temptation to ignore this emotion-laden and difficult area of our lives is too powerful to believe that by ourselves we are able to live godly, honest, and peaceable Christian lives in our times in the field of race relations. Thus if our Christian Reformed Church is serious about continuing to be true to the biblical and confessional character in the contemporary world, it needs a standing committee on race relations To do less in the field of race relations in our times would, I fear, bring our church dangerously close to the unbiblical position of wishing to have Jesus as Savior without wanting him to be Lord of our lives" Wrote another, ". . . the realities of our place in twentieth century North America make such a committee a standing requirement among us."

Many respondents indicated some degree of frustration, and urged the committee to do much, much more. By far the most frequently noted failure was that SCORR had failed to make itself known; SCORR had failed to capture the interest and support of the church.

On the other hand, the most frequently noted success was the Minority Student Scholarship Fund.

When talking to us about what they thought our goals should be, respondents were widely diverse in their answers. Hosts of suggestions were made; perhaps the most significant thing to be said about this large collection of ideas is that the goals are equally divided between those aimed at removing the *cause* and those aimed at removing the *effects* of racism. This is important because that dilemma has been a continuing one for SCORR. Is our task primarily to bring about change among whites, or primarily to provide resources and assistance to minorities? Do we relate primarily to minority congregations within the denomination, or primarily to white congregations within the denomination? The easy answer is *both*, and theoretically that's correct. But in practice, trying to do both is difficult. Very quickly the committee gets to be *perceived* in one of two ways—either as the expression of minority concerns, or as the expression of majority concern; and in the very nature of the case, those two things are quite different. Put rather baldly, but accurately, a committee like SCORR is usually expected by the majority to do something *FOR* the minority (which the minority sees as paternalism), and is expected by the minority to do something *TO* the majority (which the majority sees as an attack). These expectations are typical of race relations, and they do characterize to a large extent the denomination's expectations of SCORR. SCORR has carefully tried to avoid (not always successfully) doing anything *to* anybody or *for* anybody. We have tried to carry out our mandate *WITH* those who shared our goals of racial reconciliation. By doing that, SCORR has failed to meet a lot of expectations, and that may account *in part* for why SCORR so often failed to generate support, as so many of the questionnaires noted.

The questionnaires were valuable in another way also. They became

one part of the data which was studied by the Review Committee. It is to that Review Committee that we now turn.

B. *The SCORR Review Committee*

As we noted earlier, part of what SCORR did to prepare its report for synod was to appoint a committee of nine people, none of them SCORR members, who were asked by SCORR to review and analyze the mandate and work of SCORR and to report to SCORR with their recommendations.

This committee, under the chairmanship of Dr. Fred Klooster, reviewed SCORR's mandate, its reports to five synods, all its minutes, all the questionnaires, and other related materials. The first main heading of the Review Committee's report is "The Racial Situation Today." That section begins as follows: "The Review Committee is convinced that the racial situation in North America continues to warrant the special assignment of the Christian Reformed Church to SCORR for another three-year period."

That committee then reported its considerations and its recommendations to SCORR, and two representatives from the committee met with SCORR to discuss the report. That report is available upon request. It forms an important part of the background for SCORR'S planning, setting of goals, and recommendations to synod.

IV. GOALS

A. *Reporting*

Both the questionnaires and the review committee were very clear about the fact that SCORR needs to attend to a communication problem. SCORR has not adequately informed the church about what it is doing. It must start doing so. SCORR has already taken one action to accomplish this—we have identified a person in each classis who will be a liaison for SCORR in the classis. SCORR does not have classical representatives; we are hopeful that this method will provide regular reporting to and communication with the churches. More will need to be done. SCORR will need to improve its newsletters, increase its mailings, and make better use of The Banner to improve communication with the church.

B. *Programs*

As we have often said to synod in our reports, SCORR has deliberately chosen a low-key, behind the scenes approach to carrying out its mandate. SCORR took seriously the kind of role suggested to us by Synod 1971 in its explication of our mandate. SCORR avoided setting up new programming that was identifiable as SCORR programming. We chose rather to work with and through other agencies and groups. Our review process suggests very clearly that we need to rethink that decision. SCORR lacks visibility and identity in the eyes of the church; there is a need for more visible activity to provide support and encouragement to those who are looking to their denominational committee for leadership, and there is a need to provide more avenues for involve-

ment and challenge for those who seek such avenues. So SCORR needs to consider carefully how to develop programming that invites support and involvement, especially at the individual and congregational level.

C. *Minority Leadership*

An issue that we have already mentioned briefly in this report is that of minority leadership. We refer to the issue of recognizing and utilizing competence wherever it is found, making sure that our normal patterns of recruitment and employment do not result in discrimination against minority people. We need to be alert to the importance of including minorities into participation in paid staff positions in the denomination and its affiliated institutions. SCORR remains one of the rare places where the church at the denominational level has achieved significant minority participation. There are a multitude of facets to this concern, and SCORR affirms the urgent need for a planned address to this issue. We will be reporting to synod next year on how our denomination can better address this matter.

D. *Education*

The questionnaires and the Review Committee have indicated to us in a rather urgent way that more needs to be done by way of educating the denomination about the subtle forms and expressions of racism in the 70's and how the resources of the church may be deployed to address that racism. For example, our study indicates that the educational level of minority members of the denomination tends to be equivalent to that of white members. Yet unemployment among minority members of our churches runs eight times as high as that of white members of the CRC. Furthermore, in spite of educational equality minority members of the denomination are less likely to hold white-collar jobs and more likely to hold blue-collar jobs than white members. That situation, existing as it does within the very household of faith, ought to motivate us to renewed obedience and vigilance in the area of race relations. But the dramatics of race are history; our sensitivities, rubbed raw by the open agony of the 1960's, have grown calloused very quickly. SCORR must find new ways to sensitize the church and to call it to discipleship in race relations, and must do so with more firmness, as well as with wisdom, grace, and charity.

E. *Churches in Racially Changing (and changed) Communities*

As a denomination we have hardly made a beginning at learning how to minister faithfully at the congregational level when the church's neighborhood changes racially. Worse, we have a history of relocating churches and church-related institutions out of changing communities. That momentum is hard to stop and it works against what we profess about the church's task in race relations. The review committee has challenged SCORR to address this particular issue and SCORR is committed to put forth every effort to find ways to assist congregations in racially changing situations. One recent action of SCORR that addresses that need is the work begun on a manual for churches and church members in integrated neighborhoods.

F. Leadership in the Reformed Community

As we noted earlier in this report, SCORR is of the opinion that new opportunities may be opening for the Christian Reformed Church to take a leadership role with respect to race relations within the Reformed community. Our denomination has faced questions, come through experiences, and gathered knowledge which other Reformed denominations have not. It is vital that we make ourselves available to other denominations; it is important for our church to recognize the contributions she can make and the responsibilities she must take. The review committee has challenged SCORR on this account, and SCORR is committed to be sensitive to this opportunity and to serve in this way the Reformed ecumenical community. We must be careful to see the NAPARC conference on race as a beginning, and not as an end.

V. SUMMARY

In summary and in brief, SCORR believes that there is much that remains to be accomplished by a denominational committee on race relations. We believe that we have accomplished much in the way of carrying out our mandate, but that the task is by no means finished. We therefore make the following *recommendations* to Synod 1977:

- A. That the privilege of the floor be given to SCORR staff and the chairman of the committee when SCORR matters are discussed.
- B. That synod continue the mandate of SCORR for a period of three years.
- C. That synod approve the requested quota of the committee for 1978 at \$1.60.
- D. That synod approve the reappointment of Karl J. Westerhof as Executive Secretary of SCORR for three (3) years.
- E. That synod appoint five (5) new SCORR members from the nominations presented to the advisory committee by SCORR, to replace retiring and resigning committee members.

Synodical Committee on Race Relations
Karl J. Westerhof,
Executive Secretary

SYNODICAL COMMITTEE ON RACE RELATIONS

Receipts and Disbursements - 1976

Budgets - 1977 and 1978

	<u>1976</u>	<u>1977</u>	<u>1978</u>
INCOME:			
Bal. 1-1	14,420.32	11,049.74	-16,000.00
Quota	80,864.61	53,000.00	85,148.80
Scholarship Contrib.	10,253.28	15,000.00	20,000.00
Misc.	<u>2,596.84</u>	<u>6,000.00</u>	<u>4,000.00</u>
	108,135.05	85,049.74	93,148.80
EXPENDITURES:			
<u>Staff (Ex. Sec'y & Clerical)</u>			
Salaries	23,288.92	26,000.00	28,000.00
Pension	5,418.48	2,600.00	2,900.00
Hosp.	773.20	850.00	950.00
FICA & Comp. Ins.	1,438.51	1,700.00	2,000.00
<u>Operating Expenses</u>			
Staff Travel	817.66	1,000.00	1,500.00
Office			
Coordinated Serv.			
Serv. Equip., Suply, Mat'ls	2,964.53	3,500.00	4,000.00
Telephone System	1,669.01	-0-	-0-
Occupancy	1,553.46	1,600.00	-0-
Other Office Expense	1,675.93	2,000.00	2,000.00
Meetings	3,819.28	5,000.00	5,500.00
Ministry Assistance			
Baxter Comm. Ctr (G.R.)	2,500.00	7,500.00	-0-
Chi. W. Side Chr. Schl (Chi.)	3,500.00	4,000.00	2,500.00
Crenshaw CRC (L.A.)	4,200.00	-0-	-0-
Evangelical Concern (Denver)	1,000.00	-0-	-0-
Madison AVE CRC (Pat., NJ)	1,140.00	-0-	-0-
Madison Sq. CRC (G.R.)	5,000.00	-0-	-0-
Roseland Chr. Min. Ctr. (Chi.)	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00
Scholarships			
Calvin	12,761.25	12,000.00	12,000.00
Dordt	1,648.00	2,000.00	2,000.00
RBC	910.00	3,000.00	4,000.00
Trinity	1,000.00	3,000.00	3,000.00
Promotions			
Church Relations	330.15	500.00	600.00
Scholarships	4,738.51	5,000.00	6,000.00
Education			
Materials (Prod. & Distr.)	2,721.86	5,000.00	4,000.00
Conferences	2,216.56	5,000.00	1,000.00
Research	-0-	-0-	-0-
	<u>97,085.31</u>	<u>101,250.00</u>	<u>91,950.00</u>

REPORT 20

**SYNODICAL INTERIM COMMITTEE
CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH IN NORTH AMERICA
CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH SYNOD TRUSTEES**

(Art. 49)

During this past year the Synodical Interim Committee, meeting corporately as the Christian Reformed Church in North America and the Christian Reformed Church Synod Trustees, has met regularly and carried on its work as well as the special mandates committed to it by the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church. In the following report we shall seek to highlight some of the activities we have carried on in behalf of synod during the interim between the Synod of 1976 and 1977.

I. ORGANIZATION

Your committee members and trustees during the past year consisted of the following: Rev. L. Dykstra, Mr. E. Z. Blankers, Dr. P. Y. DeJong, Mr. H. Vermeer, Dr. M. De Vries, Mr. W. Sytsema, Jr., Mr. F. Hollebeek, Mr. B. Sevensma, Rev. O. Breen, Rev. A. Vander Griend, Dr. G. Stob, Rev. P. Van Egmond, Rev. J. Van Harmelen, Mr. M. Van Wijk, and the Stated Clerk, Denominational Financial Coordinator, and Synodical Treasurer serve as *ex officio* members.

The Synodical Interim Committee elected the following officers for the year: president, the Rev. Oliver Breen; vice-president, Mr. Fred Hollebeek; and recording secretary, Dr. Marvin De Vries.

The Trustees of the Christian Reformed Church in North America and the Christian Reformed Church Synod Trustees, respectively, elected the following corporation officers: president, the Rev. Oliver Breen; vice-president, Mr. Fred Hollebeek; secretary, the Rev. William P. Brink; assistant secretary, Dr. Marvin De Vries; treasurer, Mr. Lester Ippel; and assistant treasurer, Mr. Ronald Moll.

In accord with the rules, the Synodical Interim Committee elected the Rev. Alvin Vander Griend as the Alternate Stated Clerk for the year 1976-77.

The following subcommittees have functioned for the Synodical Interim Committee:

Church Polity and Program Committee—Oliver Breen, Fred Hollebeek, Marvin De Vries, Alvin Vander Griend, and John Van Harmelen, with Anthony Vroon and William P. Brink as *ex officio* members. Mr. Jerry Jonker serves as general alternate.

Finance Committee—Fred Hollebeek, Marvin De Vries, Jerry Jonker, Herman Petersen, Bernard Schelten, William Sytsema, Arthur Van Tuinen, Michael Van Wijk, with Anthony Vroon and William P. Brink as *ex officio* members.

II. NOMINATIONS FOR SYNODICAL INTERIM COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

SIC members retiring in 1977 are as follows:

Rocky Mountain to Mississippi River—Dr. Peter Y. De Jong
Rev. Siebert Kramer, alternate

Central United States—Dr. Marvin G. De Vries
Mr. Jerry Jonker, alternate
Mr. Berton Sevensma
Mr. Arthur Van Tuinen, alternate
Rev. Oliver Breen
Rev. John Verbrugge, alternate

Western Canada—Rev. Peter Van Egmond*
Rev. Nicholas Knoppers, alternate*

Eastern Canada—Mr. Michael Van Wijk
Mr. Peter Feddema, alternate

* Eligible for reelection

SIC has consulted the classes of the various districts and received suggestions for nominations. It should be observed that the non-ministerial members and alternates of SIC serve on the Finance Committee of the Synodical Interim Committee and should be competent in finance and administration as well as willing to devote the necessary time for this work.

SIC requests that the nominee in each bracket not elected as a regular member be placed on the ballot for the election of an alternate where indicated.

We hereby present to synod the following nominations (a statement of information regarding each delegate will be presented to synod):

A. Rocky Mountain to Mississippi River (ministerial)

Regular Member	Alternate Member
Paul Bakker	John Geels
James Kok	Henry Petersen

B. Central United States (non-ministerial)

Regular Member	Alternate Member
Clare Ackerman	Nominee not elected Regular Member
Martin Ozinga	Larry Fredricks
Regular Member	Alternate Member
Ira Slagter	Nominee not elected Regular Member
Dr. William Spoelhof	David Vander Ploeg

C. Central United States (ministerial)

Regular Member	Alternate Member
Clarence Boomsma	John De Kruyter
Leonard Hofman	Henry Vander Kam

D. Western Canada (ministerial)

Regular Member	Alternate Member
Peter Van Egmond*	Nominee not elected Regular Member
Nicholas Knoppers**	Sidney Greidanus

* Incumbent regular member, eligible for reelection

** Incumbent alternate, eligible for reelection

E. *Eastern Canada (non-ministerial)*

Because of insufficient information with respect to candidates, it is decided to defer action on this nomination until the May meeting of the Synodical Interim Committee.

III. PROGRAMMING STUDIES AND ACTIVITIES

A. *Denominational Programming*

During the past year a considerable amount of time has been spent by the Synodical Interim Committee staff and committees in the study of the total program of our denomination and the mandates and programs of the various agencies of synod. These studies have involved the history and growth of denominational work as described in the reports and decisions of all of our synods. A proper understanding of our programming demands an examination of the history of synodical ideals, programs, and mandates and an insight into the development and status of our current program both through synodical action and agency performance.

In accord with the Rules of the Synodical Interim Committee and the decision of the Synod of 1976 with respect to *program planning, coordination and the setting of priorities* (Acts of Synod 1976, p. 51) the Synodical Interim Committee has "formulated in consultation with each of the agencies a set of guidelines to be used by each agency for analyzing its own mandate and programs." Each of our six major agencies met with the entire Synodical Interim Committee at its meeting on March 3. Further consultations will be held with agencies involved in the programming of synod.

During the year our staff and committees have held many conferences and consultations with executive staff members and board/committee representatives of our many agencies. These meetings have assisted in promoting cooperation and coordination in denominational programming.

SIC appreciates the cooperative spirit of all our agencies and we are confident that the mandate of the Synod of 1976 (p. 51) will be carried out, assisting both synod and its agencies in "long-range planning and the setting of priorities."

In keeping with its synodical mandate the Synodical Interim Committee will seek to provide our synodical gatherings "with periodic analysis and overall review of the programs and resources of the denomination after consultation with the agencies." SIC will also "evaluate budget requests in the light of current projects and goals and make appropriate recommendations to synod" (Rules for SIC, VI, F).

B. *Accredited Causes*

The Synodical Interim Committee has studied the *programs and financial reports* of the agencies recommended by synod for financial support. New requests for placement on the list of recommended causes have also been studied.

The charts which have been compiled setting forth the purposes, programs, plans and areas of coordination have also been reviewed and updated. Where problems have appeared, consultations have been held with the agencies involved.

SIC presents to synod at this time the following reports re accredited causes:

1. AMERICAN CALVINIST FELLOWSHIP

History

The Synod of 1976 decided "that the American Calvinist Fellowship be placed on the list of accredited causes recommended for support." The synod also stipulated as a ground: "The SIC will consult with the American Calvinist Fellowship, TELL and the Spanish Literature Committee to review the request of the American Calvinist Fellowship" (Acts of Synod 1976, Article 67).

Consultation with ACF revealed their feeling that "their materials are geared for the student world and as such are different from the materials of TELL and the Spanish Literature Committee."

The ACF members expressed their willingness to work with SLC or TELL if there is a guarantee that their materials will reach the student world and can be expanded beyond the use of the Spanish language.

At a meeting of representatives of the ACF and SLC discussion was held with respect to three major areas of concern: 1) the need for *coordination* of effort among foreign publication agencies, including the ACF; 2) the importance of honoring the integrity of the *programs* of the agencies involved, including the ACF; and 3) the desirability of *financial stability* for carrying out these programs, including the program of ACF.

The following agreements were made by all of the agencies involved in foreign literature publications:

- a. ACF will refrain from future publishing projects in Spanish and leave the Spanish area to SLC.
- b. ACF is worthy of being placed on synod's approved list for offering and contributions.

Grounds:

- 1) ACF's concern for university-level Reformed literature is a valid one.
- 2) ACF is not in competition with SLC and its programs.
- c. The Board for Christian Reformed World Missions will make proposals to synod re a Major World Languages Literature Coordinating Committee.

- 1) That a Coordinating Committee, composed of representatives of the various agencies involved be organized to coordinate these publication activities.

- 2) That clearly understood divisions of labor and policy guidelines for the various agencies involved be developed jointly within the structure of this Coordinating Committee.

3) That via this Coordinating Committee provisions be made for an equitable appropriation and allocation of funds among these agencies.

NOTE: BCRWM adopted a proposal to this effect at its annual meeting in February 1977.

- d. The following interim steps of implementation are recommended:
- 1) That the proposed Coordinating Committee begin to function in accord with points c, 1), 2), and 3) above.
 - 2) That the ACF be recommended to synod as an approved cause for continued support in the form of offerings in our churches.

Recommendations

- a. SIC recommends that synod list the American Calvinist Fellowship as a recommended cause for financial support for one year.
- b. SIC endorses the concept of a Coordinating Committee for publications of Reformed literature in major world languages under the sponsorship of the Board of World Missions.

2. WYCLIFFE TRANSLATORS

History

In 1975, the Wycliffe Translators applied for recognition as a synodically accredited cause. The Synodical Interim Committee reported the following to synod: "In view of the fact that Wycliffe workers work on a 'faith' basis, whereby all workers must gain their own individual support, the Synodical Interim Committee judges that it is not advisable within the framework of our policy to place the Wycliffe organization on the list of recommended causes for all the churches of our denomination" (Acts of Synod 1975, p. 406).

In 1976, Classis Grand Rapids East requested synod to include Wycliffe on the list of non-denominational causes recommended for financial support because of the "service Wycliffe Bible translators render to the cause of evangelical missions in general and the Christian Reformed Church in particular." Synod decided to "take grateful recognition of the ministry carried on by the Wycliffe Bible Translators, and note the support given by individuals and congregations to this cause" and "to refer the request for support for the Wycliffe organization to the Synodical Interim Committee for review and report to the Synod of 1977." A ground for the latter recommendation was that "the doctrinal basis and financial posture and processes have not been adequately studied by synod."

SIC has reviewed the doctrinal basis and financial posture and processes of Wycliffe Bible Translators. We deeply respect the Wycliffe organization for its diligence and effectiveness in translating the Bible into so many languages. It is noted that several of our congregations are supporting Wycliffe organization translators on an individual basis and that missionaries under the employ of our World Mission Board have done some service for the Wycliffe Translators. It is our desire that Wycliffe will continue to work cooperatively in the

fulfillment of its purpose along with our missionaries on many foreign fields.

Recommendation

SIC recommends that synod not place the Wycliffe Bible Translators on the list of recommended causes.

Grounds:

- a. Support of individual workers or projects by congregations is not dependent on our denomination's accrediting the parent organization. Several congregations are supporting Wycliffe translators on an individual basis and can continue to do so.
- b. Individual congregations are in the best position to decide which Wycliffe workers are deserving of their support. Supporting the entire Wycliffe organization could result in our churches supporting Wycliffe workers not distinctly Reformed, since Wycliffe's standards for acceptance of translators is broadly evangelical.
- c. Synodical endorsement of Wycliffe would tend to draw funds from our own members and congregations which would otherwise be contributed to the boards and agencies of our denomination, which are carrying on the mission task from our own confessional viewpoint.
- d. The Wycliffe organization does not have a great need for support since all Wycliffe workers secure their own support directly and the administrative expense of the organization is covered by a ten percent assessment on the income of all workers. This assessment adequately covers administrative costs.

C. Liaison Representatives

Synod has for many years appointed persons to serve as liaison representatives to various accredited agencies. SIC has made an in-depth study of the rule for these representatives and will report its findings and recommendations to synod as soon as studies are completed.

IV. SPECIAL SUGGESTIONS OF SYNOD OF 1976 (Acts of Synod 1976, p. 51, Item 6)

A. In response to the suggestion that SIC restructure its meetings in such a way that all its members will be able to share more fully than at present in its contacts, deliberations, and decisions, SIC has made arrangements for interviews with boards and agencies with the entire Synodical Interim Committee wherever feasible. The members of the Synodical Interim Committee also are requested to make all final decisions with respect to studies and recommendations that are presented to synod.

Due to the restructuring above the SIC meeting in March was scheduled for two days and the discussion proved very helpful.

B. The Synodical Interim Committee appreciates the suggestion of synod that "prior to submitting to synod nominations for filling vacancies on it," SIC "solicit suggestions from the classes in the respective areas." SIC has adopted this suggestion as a part of its regular

procedure with respect to nominations suggested to this and future synods.

C. The Synod of 1976 also suggested that SIC clearly delineate the lines of authority concerning the staff of Coordinated Services. The lines of authority on Coordinated Services' functions are established and maintained under the direction of the Coordinated Services Committee, consisting of all the business heads of the denominational boards and agencies. The committee meets regularly to establish continuing guidelines and to review Coordinated Services' needs and requirements as to management and other operational procedures.

V. APPOINTMENTS

During the past year the Synodical Interim Committee was asked to approve the following appointments to boards and committees where memberships have been vacated.

A. The Synodical Interim Committee approved the following appointment of synodical functionaries:

Boards	Classis	Appointments
Synodical Deputy.....	Cadillac.....	Rev. G. Heyboer, delegate Rev. B. VanAntwerpen, alternate
	Chatham.....	Rev. G. J. Heersink, delegate
	Hackensack.....	Rev. B. Van Someren, delegate Rev. A. Stienstra, alternate
	Northcentral Iowa.....	Rev. F. Walhof, alternate
	Sioux Center.....	Rev. H. Vanden Heuvel, alternate
	Calvin Board of Trustees...Alberta North.....	Cadillac.....	Rev. H. DeMoor, delegate Rev. C. Tuininga, alternate
Hackensack.....		Mr. H. Boehm, alternate Mr. G. Monsma, delegate
Minnesota South.....		Rev. P. Holtrop, alternate
Northcentral Iowa.....		Rev. J. Van Stempvoort, alternate Rev. F. Einfeld, delegate
		Rev. L. Kuiper, alternate
World Missions.....		Cadillac.....	Rev. F. Van Dyk, alternate
	Chatham.....	Rev. S. Van Daalen, delegate
	Hackensack.....	Rev. C. Niewenhuis, delegate Rev. J. Rickers, alternate
	Minnesota South.....	Rev. W. Van Hal, alternate
	Sioux Center.....	Rev. R. Blauw, alternate
Home Missions.....	Hackensack.....	Rev. A. Rienstra, delegate Rev. A. Arkema, alternate
	Kalamazoo.....	Mr. B. Sharpe, alternate
	Orange City.....	Rev. J. Coöper, alternate
	Member-at-large	
	Southwest Ontario.....	Mr. H. Nieman
Board of Publications.....	Alberta North.....	Rev. G. Pols, delegate Rev. S. DeWaal, alternate
	Cadillac.....	Dr. J. B. Koops, delegate Rev. G. Heyboer, alternate
	Central California.....	Miss M. Van Dyken, delegate
	Hackensack.....	Miss D. Kelder, delegate Miss W. Knoll, alternate
	Minnesota South.....	Rev. H. Baak, alternate
	Quinte.....	Mr. W. Vos, delegate Rev. A. De Jager, alternate

CRWRC.....	Atlantic NE.....	Mr. A. Jackson, delegate
	Hackensack.....	Mr. G. Kuipers, delegate
		Mr. A. Statema, alternate
	Hamilton.....	Mr. J. Kerkhof, delegate
		Mr. K. Mantel, alternate

B. The committee also made the following appointments:

Education Committee of the Board of Publications—Mrs. Joanne Knierim

Church Help Fund—Mr. Martin Breems

Psalter Hymnal Supplement Committee—Liaison with Liturgical Committee—Dr. Nicholas Wolterstorff

Synodical Interim Committee Alternate for Eastern District—Rev. Donald Wisse

Study Committee on Capital Punishment—Dr. Henry Stob; Dr. Hessel Bouma, III; Dr. Stephen Monsma; Dr. Clarence Vos; Dr. Andrew Bandstra. Dr. Bandstra asked to be relieved of the duties of this committee and the Synodical Interim Committee appointed Dr. Louis Vos in his place.

VI. PUBLICATIONS

A. Acts and Agenda—The Acts of Synod of 1976 and the Agenda for Synod 1977 were edited and prepared by the Stated Clerk with the assistance of his staff. In order to curtail the size of the printed Agenda and to make it more readable to all delegates, editorial changes have been made and further studies are underway. In the board reports, by common consent of the agencies, the long list of the names of delegates will not appear. It should be noted that the listing of the membership of all boards, committees and appointees is contained each year in the Acts of Synod in the report of the advisory committee on appointments. Furthermore this complete listing appears in the Yearbook of the denomination.

Study is also being given to the role which representative reports ought to play in the printed Agenda, and a report on this item will appear in our Supplementary Report.

It will be noted also in the case of some of the overtures presented to the Synod of 1977 that when classical or committee studies not specifically addressed to synod are sent along as supplements, these will not ordinarily appear in the printed Agenda, but will be presented when requested by a classis without editorial revision. It is urgent in all reports that are sent to synod that the materials be presented simply and pointedly, without excess verbiage or unnecessary elaboration.

B. The Yearbook—The Yearbook 1977 was published under the editorial surveillance of the Stated Clerk and the directorship of Mrs. Mary Braat of the Synodical Office staff whose services were loaned to the Publications Committee for work on the Yearbook. It is regrettable that some of our churches failed to meet the deadlines for the presentation of materials for the Yearbook.

We recommend that synod urge all of our congregations, classes and agencies to be prompt in meeting the deadlines so that each year we

may present complete and up-to-date statistics, and at the same time meet the urgent demands of our churches for the early appearance of the Yearbook.

C. Handbook of the Christian Reformed Church—During the past year the Synodical Interim Committee once again updated the material for the Handbook of the Christian Reformed Church entitled, "Your Church in Action." This book contains six sections which should be helpful to every consistory and congregation of our denomination:

1) *Quotas and Offerings*—financial data and a description of the program carried on by all our boards, agencies and recommended causes. Suggestions are made here with respect to special offerings, their scheduling, suggested announcements for use when such offerings are received.

2) *Denominational Insights*—a brief statement of some of the principles of our church government and how our church operates, with detail on the business of assemblies and particularly the work of synod. Suggestions are also given for a well organized consistory. Many of our consistories this year have requested additional copies of this material and have used it for organizational improvements.

3) *Ministers' Compensation Survey*—Since 1974 the Synodical Interim Committee by mandate of synod has presented a compensation guide for ministers of the Word. This compensation guide is updated annually. It is based upon officially approved statistics, surveys, and compensation levels for all areas and many cities both of the United States and Canada. This survey is approved by synod each year and is sent to our congregations with the urging that it be used in computing a fair salary for the ministers of our denomination. Worksheets are included for use of the Finance Committee of each church in computing the minister's salary.

4) *Sight-Sound Programs*—a directory of sight-sound programs featuring the work of all of our denominational agencies. Every congregation should avail itself, when looking for program materials or information, of the wealth of artistic and effective presentations of the work of the Lord being carried on by our denomination through its agencies.

5) *Doctrinal and Ethical Decisions*—a complete statement of all synodical decisions on doctrinal and ethical matters, this section is indispensable for all who wish to know the stand of the Christian Reformed Church. This material is updated annually. It is also available in pamphlet form from the Christian Reformed Publishing House.

6) *Your Church in Action, a slide/cassette program*—This program is designed for the use of every congregation in its congregational meeting or in other meetings of the church. Our members should become more completely informed about the work being carried out by our denomination and the blessings of the Lord given upon the work we do together through our denominational quotas. A large number of our churches have indicated how they have used the slide/cassette program and that they have received it with enthusiasm. They have

urged that further materials be provided for congregational meetings and for other meetings in the church so that we may together share the work that God has committed to us as a denomination.

The Handbook for Christian Reformed Churches was first sent to the pastor or clerk of every Christian Reformed Church in 1974. In 1975 and again in 1976 new refills for the looseleaf notebook were sent to our churches. In each of these three years a new slide/cassette program was also sent.

While we are deeply grateful for the enthusiastic reception of this book in a large number of our churches, it is a cause of disappointment that in some churches the Handbook has been placed on the shelf of someone's library and forgotten, and has not been used profitably by the consistories and their committees. Some congregations inform us that they long to hear about the work of the denomination, but they have never been shown the slide/cassette program. We are grateful that during the past year we have had a large number of orders from consistories who wanted the material, but through some carelessness or accident have never received it.

We recommend that synod urge all of our consistories to make full use of the Handbook for Christian Reformed Churches and make every effort to keep all their members fully informed about the work of the Lord to which we are committed as a denomination.

D. Index for Synodical Decisions—In October 1976, the Synodical Interim Committee through the Stated Clerk's office published the index of Christian Reformed Church Synodical Decisions 1857-1976. This Index is a completely revised work and makes available its decisions under a carefully indexed system of topics to our consistories, members and all others who are seeking to know the history or position of the Christian Reformed Church. Each decision is also identified as to its subject matter under the topic involved. Any person using this Index should be able to survey all decisions on a given topic made by the Christian Reformed Church during its first 120 years of existence. Our consistories should try to have in their church libraries or consistory rooms a complete set of the Acts of Synod of the Christian Reformed Church. With the Index it is also possible to request a given page from the Acts of Synod by letter to the office of the Stated Clerk.

We ask that synod take note of this publication and urge its use as a resource document for the understanding of the decisions of the Christian Reformed Church.

E. Manual of Christian Reformed Church Government—The Synodical Interim Committee is happy to report that the Stated Clerk and Dr. Richard R. De Ridder of the seminary are cooperating in the production of a Manual of Christian Reformed Church Government which will be a vital part of a publication of the Education Committee of the Christian Reformed Board of Publications. The Education Department and several of our boards and agencies are cooperating in the publication of a volume which will give needed and requested

help to our consistory members and leaders for the enrichment of the ministries of the various offices in the church. The Synodical Interim Committee is grateful for the excellent leadership of Mr. James Heynen of the Education Department and the coordinated efforts of the agencies in producing a much needed book to assist in the work of all the offices in the church of Christ.

VII. STATED CLERK'S REPORT

The Stated Clerk has edited and prepared for printing all official publications authorized by synod and the Synodical Interim Committee. His office has also processed all correspondence, surveys, questionnaires, reports, minutes, and materials produced for synod, and all of these items have been placed in the files of synodical materials.

In behalf of the denomination the Stated Clerk has carried on a wide spectrum of correspondence. The Stated Clerk has had contacts with national and regional and local government officials, churches and leaders of other denominations, numerous organizations, agencies and movements in the United States and Canada, inquiries from many persons who wish to know more about the Christian Reformed Church have been answered, correspondence is carried on regularly with all of our committees, and with many individuals both within and outside of our churches. In addition to the correspondence numerous telephone calls are handled daily from individuals and organizations throughout our denomination and elsewhere.

To the best of his ability the Stated Clerk has given advice and information to all who have written or called with respect to the provisions of the Church Order and the decisions of our synods.

During the course of the year the Stated Clerk has received progress reports and/or minutes from all of the committees that have been appointed by synod. He has provided them with help or information whenever requested.

Conferences with representatives of all of our boards and agencies are frequent in the office of the Stated Clerk and a large number of callers are received regularly for consultation. The Stated Clerk is grateful for the opportunity that is given with great frequency to provide advice to our classes, consistories, committees and to all of the members of our denomination seeking his assistance.

Reports and minutes of our classes have been sent to the Synodical Office by the stated clerks of the various classes. These have been surveyed by the Stated Clerk and the Synodical Interim Committee has been kept abreast of various decisions, activities and problems of the denomination.

The Stated Clerk has many opportunities to represent the position of the Christian Reformed Church in contacts with other denominations as well as with the general public. He serves as an *ex officio* member of the Interchurch Relations Committee and has represented our church at numerous interchurch gatherings and the assemblies of other denominations.

During the course of the year the Stated Clerk has responded to a large number of invitations to speak, to conduct seminars, to meet with groups of officebearers and members of our churches, and to preach in many of the pulpits of our denomination. He is happy to represent the Christian Reformed Church wherever opportunity and schedule allow.

The Stated Clerk counted it a privilege to meet with the Council of Christian Reformed Churches in Canada, meeting November 9-11, 1976, where he was cordially received both in advisory committee and plenary sessions.

A large number of meetings have been held during the year with representatives of agencies and study committees to assist in the coordination efforts mandated by synod and sought by SIC as well as our boards, standing committees, and several study committees. The Stated Clerk takes this opportunity to express his gratitude for the excellent teamwork and cooperation of all of our boards and committees, and in particular with all the executive secretaries as we have together sought to strengthen the coordination and unity of our denominational witness and effort.

During the past year the Interagency Advisory Council adopted the following statements of purpose:

"The Interagency Advisory Council consisting of the executive heads of all denominational boards and agencies will meet periodically to provide a forum for exchanging ideas, enhancing long-range functional relationships among all boards and agencies and assisting the potential for and effectiveness of cooperation among all agencies."

"It is agreed that our participation in the Interagency Advisory Council in terms of the above definition shall be shared with our respective boards and committees."

VIII. MANDATE OF SYNOD RE EFFECTIVE DATE OF MINISTERIAL RESIGNATIONS

The Synod of 1976 in dealing with an appeal of a former Christian Reformed Church minister for pension benefits was confronted with the question of whether or not there are rules that have bearing on the declaration of an effective date of the resignation of a minister. In the case in point, the appeal of the Rev. Gabe Rienks, the following decision was made: "Motion is made that synod defer action on the above recommendation and refer this matter to the Synodical Interim Committee, asking that body to determine whether or not there are rules that have bearing on declaring the effective date of resignation. If there are none, SIC is asked to draft appropriate rules, taking also into consideration applicable Canadian laws, and report to the Synod of 1977" (Acts of Synod 1976, p. 88).

While there is no specific mention in the Church Order and synodical regulations pertaining to resignation from the ministry and the denomination, the Church Order makes it clear that *the determination of the effective date of termination from the ministerial office is the specific prerogative of the assemblies involved*. Thus Article 89, d, states, "The appropriate assembly shall determine whether, in a given instance, depo-

sition of office shall take place immediately, without previous suspension."

Article 90 designates that a consistory has the right to impose the suspension of a minister with the concurring judgment of the consistory of the nearest church in the same classis. In practice consistories faced with suspension, have designated the time when the suspension shall take place with the concurrence of neighboring consistories.

Likewise Article 90 of the Church Order specifies that "the deposition of a minister shall not be effected without the approval of classis together with the concurring advice of the synodical deputies." It is well recognized in the deposition of a minister that when the classis has acted with the concurring advice of the synodical deputies, the deposition takes place on the date specified by the classical assembly, even though the advice of the synodical deputies is later presented to synod for approval.

When we apply the rule that the termination of ministerial office is determined by the assemblies of the church involved, it becomes apparent that the date designated by the consistory receiving the resignation and by the classis approving the resignation is the effective date of a resignation.

Applying the criteria above to the case of the Rev. Gabe Rienks, it should be evident that the effective date of his resignation from the ministry of the Immanuel Christian Reformed Church of Simcoe and from the ministry of the Christian Reformed Church must be established as November 16, 1969. The Synodical Interim Committee observes that this is the date specifically stated by the consistory of the Immanuel Christian Reformed Church of Simcoe, Ontario at its meeting on November 10. Furthermore, the church visitors representing Classis Hamilton were present at the meeting of the consistory on November 10 and apparently both proposed and consented to the action of the consistory "that Rev. Rienks would be relieved from all his duties as a minister of Simcoe Christian Reformed Church effective November 16, 1969."

Classis Hamilton was further involved in the approval of the termination date when its Classical Interim Committee adopted the following announcement which appeared in *THE BANNER* of November 28, 1969: "The Classical Interim Committee of Classis Hamilton informs the churches of our denomination that Rev. Gabe Rienks, pastor of the Christian Reformed Church of Simcoe, Ontario, has severed his ministerial relationship with the Christian Reformed Church and is planning to join the Presbyterian Church of Canada. As of November 10, 1969, Rev. Rienks is no longer active in the ministry of the Christian Reformed Church, and the church of Simcoe has become vacant."

The confirmation of the termination on November 16, 1969, of the ministerial status of the Rev. Gabe Rienks both as the pastor of Simcoe and a minister of the Christian Reformed Church was finalized when Classis Hamilton on January 21, 1970, approved the work of its church visitors (minutes of Classis Hamilton, January 21, 1970, Article 11, d,) and the work of its Classical Committee.

The fact that the consistory of Simcoe demonstrated its love and generosity by granting its former pastor the privileges of the free use

of the manse and a termination salary for two months does not alter the fact that all of the assemblies and their representatives involved (the consistory of Simcoe, the church visitors and Classical Interim Committee of Classis Hamilton, and Classis Hamilton) fixed the date of termination of all the duties of the Rev. Mr. Rienks and the effective date of his "resignation from the Christian Reformed denomination" (minutes of Classis Hamilton, January 21, 1970) as November 16, 1969 and informed the entire denomination of this fact in *THE BANNER* of November 28, 1969.

It would appear that the only real question that arises in the appeal of the Rev. Mr. Rienks is whether the love and generosity shown by the Immanuel Simcoe consistory in granting the free use of its parsonage and two month termination salary now obligates the denomination to grant exceptional treatment to Mr. Rienks by waiving the rules of the Ministers' Pension Fund.

The rules of the Ministers' Pension Fund as adopted by the Synod of 1969, clearly define the eligible class benefits: "An individual . . . is eligible at any time if: he is a minister, and a member of the Christian Reformed Church." The pension fund rules also clearly speak of the termination of a participant as "on the date he (the minister) ceases to be in the eligible class for reasons other than death or retirement (includes retirement on account of disability)."

Since the ministerial status of the Rev. Gabe Rienks terminated on November 16, 1969, he ceased to be in the eligible class after that date and was terminated as a participant.

The Ministers' Pension Fund has not been registered as yet in the Dominion of Canada, therefore, no Canadian laws are applicable to this situation.

In the light of the report above SIC recommends:

1. That synod declare that the ministerial status of the Rev. Gabe Rienks in the Immanuel, Simcoe, Ontario congregation and in the Christian Reformed Church terminated on November 16, 1969;
2. That synod rule that when a minister of the CRC resigns, his ministerial status in the CRC shall terminate on the date on which his consistory and/or classis determines that his resignation shall become effective.
3. That synod declare that the report and decisions above constitute its answer to the appeal of the Rev. Gabe Rienks.

IX. DENOMINATIONAL FINANCIAL COORDINATOR'S REPORT

A. *Denominational Building*

1. The denominational building is now occupied by the following:
 - Christian Reformed Church Home Missions
 - Christian Reformed Church in North America Offices
 - Christian Reformed Church in North America, Ministers' Pension Fund
 - Christian Reformed Church in North America, Coordinated Services
 - Christian Reformed Church Publications Offices
 - Christian Reformed Church World Missions

Christian Reformed Church World Relief

Christian Reformed Church in North America, Chaplain Committee
Christian Reformed Church in North America, SCORR

During the year 1976 the combined cost of occupancy paid for by the occupants was \$92,924 or \$1.77 per square foot. (For detail see attached occupancy report.) The building and grounds are in excellent condition and we feel that our operations are on an efficient and economical basis as evidenced by the low per square foot costs referred to above.

2. During the year we purchased adjacent property, improved by a small home and garage, in order to give us unbroken frontage on the 28th Street side of our property. Purchase price was \$40,000, financed through sale of additional First Mortgage Bonds in like amount increasing total indebtedness from \$695,500 to \$735,500 as permitted under the issue.

3. As to denominational building indebtedness, we have curtailed same as of November 1, 1976 by \$127,000, reducing our First Mortgage Bonds outstanding from \$735,500 to \$608,500.

4. Of particular importance to synod is the notice we have received from the City of Grand Rapids indicating that our denominational building property is being placed on the City of Grand Rapids' Tax Roll effective in 1977 at an assessed valuation of approximately \$626,650, up from \$212,250, or an increase of \$414,400 in assessed value. Based on the proposed assessment our taxes will be approximately \$30,000 per annum compared to present amount of \$11,000. The new assessed value is under appeal with the City Tax Commission, Mr. Berton Sevensma acting as our attorney in the matter.

B. Ministers' Pension Fund

The recent discovery of financial irregularities on the part of the Pension Fund's Administrator was reviewed at length by the SIC particularly in its capacity as the Christian Reformed Church in North America Board of Trustees under whose corporate name the Ministers' Pension Fund operates. It is noted that the CPA firm of Seidman and Seidman have been retained as examiners and auditors of the fund for the purpose of determining the full extent of the irregularities. To date the amount of irregularity has not been fully determined. Seidman and Seidman report that due to the poor condition of the accounting records of the fund, they have encountered difficulties in arriving at an accurate conclusion. At present, it appears that our bond coverage plus assets pledged by the former administrator is sufficient to provide reasonable but not absolute assurance of recovery of the final loss, its determination still being under audit and investigation by the auditors assigned.

Subsequent reports on this subject will be made coordinately with the Ministers' Pension Committee.

The Synodical Interim Committee informs synod that the operation of the Ministers' Pension Fund is continuing without interruption. Necessary steps have been taken by the Ministers' Pension Committee to

assure good checks and balances in the handling of funds. These and other matters related to the fund have received the concentrated attention of the Ministers' Pension Committee for which we express our gratitude.

C. Development of Improved Financial Control Systems.

The Synodical Interim Committee through its Finance Committee has in the past made various efforts to improve on the accounting systems of our denominational boards, agencies and committees. Beginning in 1970 the Standing Advisory Budget Committee discussed with our boards, agencies and committees improved accounting systems, reasonable checks and controls of receipts from churches, classes and other sources of revenue, and accountability of their stewardship of denominational funds and other assets to synod and our people.

In the past three years the SIC has taken action to assure protection of the funds and assets of the denomination through internal coordination, internal audit and review of bond coverage. While the efforts of the Finance Committee of SIC along these lines has made some progress, it has been difficult to convince some of our boards, agencies and committees of the need for a uniform coordination system of fund handling and asset protection.

In the past two years two of our agencies have encountered financial irregularities on the part of one of each of their employees. Realizing that synod can no longer permit conditions to prevail that do not reasonably assure protection of the funds and assets of the denomination, the Finance Committee of SIC with the concurrence of SIC itself retained the CPA firm of Seidman and Seidman to evaluate the procedures and internal controls presently in existence among our boards, agencies and committees for the receipt, disbursement and recording of funds and to prepare a conceptualized design of a system to provide improved controls and procedures for the handling of funds and assets of the denomination. A summary report of recommendations will be prepared by the CPA firm and same will be discussed with key agency heads. Thereafter the findings and recommendations will be presented to the Finance Committee for review and recommendation to SIC and to synod. Upon approval of all recommendations by synod, Seidman and Seidman will be pleased to assist us in the implementation of the control and procedures among all boards, agencies and committees.

The SIC realizes that the objective of good procedures for the handling of funds and assets and internal controls is to provide the best possible assurance as to the safeguarding of funds and other assets against loss from unauthorized use or disposition, but unless strong steps are taken in this respect we stand to undermine the confidence of our churches and membership in our entire denominational outreach.

X. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- A. That synod honor the request of the Synodical Interim Committee

that its president, the Rev. Oliver Breen, along with the Stated Clerk and Denominational Financial Coordinator, represent the committee at synod when matters pertaining to SIC are discussed; and that Mr. Fred Hollebeek and Dr. Marvin De Vries, chairman and secretary of the Finance Committee, also represent the committee when matters of finance are discussed.

B. That synod receive the nominations and resumés for SIC members contained in Report 20 and Supplementary Report 20A for processing and election (Section II).

C. That synod adopt the recommendations re the American Calvinist Fellowship (Section III, B, 1).

D. That synod adopt the recommendation of SIC re the Wycliffe Translators (Section III, B, 2).

E. That synod approve the reports of SIC with respect to restructuring of its meetings, receiving nominating suggestions from the classes and the delineation of the lines of authority of the staff of Coordinated Services (Section IV, C).

F. That synod approve the interim appointments of SIC to various boards and committees (Section V).

G. That synod adopt the recommendation re meeting the deadline for the Yearbook (Section VI, B).

H. That synod adopt the recommendation re the use of the Handbook for CRC Churches (Section VI, C).

I. That synod adopt the recommendation re the Index of Synodical Decisions (Section VI, D).

J. That synod adopt the recommendations re the effective date of ministerial resignations (Section VIII).

Synodical Interim Committee
William P. Brink, Secretary, Stated Clerk

CONSOLIDATED BALANCE SHEET
CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH IN NORTH AMERICA

DECEMBER 31, 1976

ASSETS		
CURRENT ASSETS		
Cash in Banks	\$22,058.91	
Accounts Receivable	62,714.13	
Inventories	<u>11,913.81</u>	\$96,686.85
FIXED ASSETS		
Land	\$415,000.00	
Building	1,430,443.85	
Equipment, Furniture & Fixtures	<u>118,228.95</u>	<u>1,963,672.80</u>
TOTAL ASSETS		<u>\$2,060,359.65</u>

LIABILITIES AND EQUITY

CURRENT LIABILITIES

Accounts Payable	\$ 14,898.94	
Wages, Insurance and Payroll Taxes	1,979.18	
Inter-Agency Loans	<u>37,400.00</u>	
		\$ 54,278.12

LONG-TERM LIABILITY

First Mortgage Bonds-Denominational Building		<u>608,500.00</u>
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TOTAL LIABILITIES

662,778.12

EQUITY

1,397,581.53

TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY

\$2,060,359.65

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF INCOME AND DISBURSEMENTS
CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH IN NORTH AMERICA
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 1976

ORDINARY INCOME

Denominational Quotas-Synodical Office Expense	\$280,549.19	
-Denominational Building	93,691.60	
Interest and Miscellaneous Income	13,288.37	
Income from Agencies-For Services Rendered	269,184.30	
-For Building Occupancy	<u>92,924.52</u>	
TOTAL ORDINARY INCOME		\$749,637.98

OTHER INCOME

Inter-Agency Repayments		149,728.06
Proceeds of Sale of First Mortgage Bonds - Denominational Building		<u>40,000.00</u>

TOTAL INCOME

\$939,366.04

DISBURSEMENTS

ORDINARY EXPENSES

Staff Salaries and Wages	\$ 72,491.87	
Fringe Benefits	10,433.26	
Dues and Subscriptions	9,033.00	
Staff Travel and Miscellaneous Expenses	10,152.42	
Synodical Expenses	132,825.25	
Church in Action Program	8,459.64	
Legal and Audit Expenses	817.30	
Office Expenses	29,685.33	
Interest on Bond Issue and Trustee's Fees	58,032.43	
Disbursements for Inter-Agency-Services	269,184.30	
-Building Occupancy	<u>92,924.52</u>	
TOTAL ORDINARY EXPENSES		\$694,039.32

OTHER DISBURSEMENTS

Inter-Agency Transfers	44,737.12	
Estate Planning for Deferred Giving	27,035.87	
Purchase of additional Property	40,000.00	
Building Improvements	3,245.35	
Equipment, Furniture and Fixtures	812.54	
Retirement of First Mortgage Bonds	<u>127,000.00</u>	

TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS

\$936,870.20

INCOME OVER DISBURSEMENTS

\$ 2,495.84

DEFICIT, JANUARY 1, 1976	\$(4,884.34)
LESS: EXCESS OF INCOME OVER DISBURSEMENTS	<u>2,495.84</u>
DEFICIT, DECEMBER 31, 1976	<u>\$(2,388.50)</u>

CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH IN NORTH AMERICA

OCCUPANCY REPORT

<u>INCOME</u>	<u>JANUARY THRU DECEMBER, 1976</u>
World Missions	\$ 15,040.02
Home Missions	20,194.64
Publications	17,511.37
C.R.W.R.C.	9,532.42
S.C.O.R.R.	1,553.46
Chaplains' Committee	917.98
Christian Reformed Church in N.A.	5,860.66
Ministers' Pension Fund	<u>128.85</u>
SUB-TOTALS	70,739.40
Publications' Plant & Insurance	21,048.12
C.R.W.R.C. - Insurance	<u>1,137.00</u>
TOTAL INCOME	<u>\$92,924.52</u>
<u>EXPENSES</u>	
Management Overhead	\$10,160.16
Janitors' Salaries and Supplies	11,136.56
Utilities	17,247.13
Repairs and Maintenance - Building	19,095.78
Repairs and Maintenance - Grounds	5,896.83
Taxes	523.69
Insurance	6,394.25
Fees	<u>285.00</u>
TOTAL OCCUPANCY COSTS - AGENCIES	70,739.40
(Dec. - \$2.23 per sq. ft.)	
(Jan. thru Dec. - \$1.77 per sq. ft.)	
Publications' Plant: Janitor Salaries, etc.	2,841.78
Utilities	15,496.74
R. & M. - Building	1,722.60
Insurance	987.00
C.R.W.R.C. - Insurance	<u>1,137.00</u>
TOTAL EXPENSES	<u>\$92,924.52</u>

REPORT 20-A
SYNODICAL INTERIM COMMITTEE
CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH IN NORTH AMERICA
CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH SYNOD TRUSTEES
 (Arts. 49, 61, 72, 73, 79)

I. NOMINATIONS FOR SYNODICAL INTERIM COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Due to the fact that Mr. Calvin Nagel requested that he be removed from our nomination for Central United States alternate member, the Synodical Interim Committee submits the name of Mr. Larry Fredricks for this nomination.

The committee also submits the following additional nominations:

A. Eastern Canada (non-ministerial)

Regular Member

Sidney Harkema

William Posthumus

Alternate Member

Nominee not elected regular member

David H. Bakker

B. Central District

Mr. Bernard Scholten, an alternate serving on the Finance Committee, found it necessary to ask the committee to accept his resignation. SIC has accepted his resignation and hereby submits the following nominations to replace Mr. Scholten as alternate: Gary J. Raterink and Edgar Westenbroek.

Information with respect to ministerial nominees for SIC is available in the Yearbook of 1977. Resumes providing information re non-ministerial delegates will be submitted to the Advisory Committee on Appointments and placed on the ballots.

II. REPORT ON SYNODICAL LIAISON REPRESENTATIVES

A. History

The SIC has in the past year received inquiries from synodical liaison representatives regarding the various aspects of their positions. In attempting to answer their questions we have become aware that there is a lack of uniformity in the pattern of synodical representatives, as well as a lack of clarity regarding their purpose.

In an effort to understand the role of synodical representatives, SIC solicited responses from all current representatives. Personal contacts were also made with agency heads regarding this matter of receiving synodical liaison representatives.

B. Observations

1. Synod has never taken the initiative in appointing representatives but recognizing the indigeneity of the agencies has responded to their requests for representatives.
2. Synod has at no time clearly defined the role of its liaison representatives.
3. The accredited organizations requesting synodical representatives make use of them and relate to them in differing ways.

4. Synod has left the question of reporting procedures to the determination of individual liaison representatives.
5. Synodical liaison representatives differ greatly in their appraisal of the value of their positions.

C. Recommendations

1. That the *purpose* of synod's liaison representatives be defined as follows:

"Synodical liaison representatives to accredited agencies should represent the Christian Reformed Church (and synod) to the agencies by keeping the agencies informed of pertinent denominational information, concerns, and policies and should represent the agency to the Christian Reformed Church by keeping synod and the church informed of pertinent information, policies and needs of the agencies. The representative should further serve the denomination with an annual report appraising the agency and its ministries and should serve the agency with advice and counsel as requested and with assistance if possible."

2. That synod adopt the following procedures for *selecting and appointing* synodical liaison representatives:

- a. That SIC shall instigate the nomination proceedings when a request is made or a vacancy occurs.

- b. Both SIC and the organization requesting a representative shall suggest and agree upon a list of nominees for the position, with a net of not less than two, to be presented to synod.

- c. Nominees shall be sought who have the following qualifications:

- 1) are able and willing to be involved and give time,
- 2) have an interest in the cause for which they receive appointment,
- 3) have a good knowledge of the CRC and are able to articulate the Reformed faith,
- 4) have the ability to make the appraisals which are requested of them,
- 5) be proximate to the central location of the organization to which they are sent,
- 6) are reasonably sure of being able to complete the normal period of a three-year appointment.

- d. Nominees shall be contacted in advance of their appointment and agree to serve if elected.

3. That synod establish the following *reporting procedures* for all non-denominational causes recommended for financial support. Each agency shall supply:

- a. A financial statement to be reviewed by the Finance Committee of the CRC.

- b. A statement of policy and programs which shall include:

- 1) A statement of purpose of the organization.
- 2) Attachment of constitution, by-laws, officers, etc.
- 3) Evidence of their continuing basis of classification under IRS exempt status - 501(c)(3).
- 4) A list of areas of service and percentage of budget allocated to same.

- 5) An indication of changes in program during the past fiscal year and percentage of budget allotted to change.
 - 6) Percentage of budget actually attributable to program service, and supportive services
 - 7) Any long range plans which might indicate change of program or direction in the future.
 - 8) Any input to justify accreditation denomination-wide.
4. That synod adopt the following procedures for obtaining and utilizing reports from agencies and/or representatives.
- a. Liaison representatives' reports to synod shall be duplicated and presented to synod. They will not be placed in the printed Agenda or Acts of Synod.
 - b. With organizations served by synodical liaison representatives the above mentioned reporting forms shall be completed by the representative, submitted to SIC and summarized in the denominational handbook. For organizations not served by synodical representatives, information from the agency shall be received directly by SIC and summarized in the denominational handbook.
 - c. Brief reports from accredited non-denominational agencies may be supplied for distribution to synodical delegates.
5. That those appointed be *notified* by the Stated Clerk and receive guidelines for synodical liaison representatives from the Stated Clerk's office. They shall also be oriented to their new position by the organization receiving them.
6. That the agencies requesting liaison representatives be expected to *reimburse* them for expenses incurred in serving them since representatives are appointed at the request of the agency. Should synod or its interim committee request the presence of a representative at one of its meetings it will assume responsibility for expenses incurred.
7. That heads of denominational youth agencies (Calvinettes, Cadets and Young Calvinist) and heads of affiliated educational agencies (Dordt College, Trinity College and Reformed Bible College) be invited to submit brief *reports to synod* for inclusion in the Agenda and Acts of Synod on an annual basis. These reports will replace those of the liaison representatives.
8. That *synod* inform all agencies now having representatives of the above synodical decisions and also inform them that the representatives will be discontinued unless the agencies, on the basis of the decisions above, elect to have representatives.

III. PRESS ARRANGEMENTS FOR SYNOD

During this past year the Synodical Interim Committee has given study to the relationship of our denomination and its assemblies to the press. As a result of these studies the Synodical Interim Committee recommends that synod request SIC to make arrangements for press representation and releases at the Synod of 1977 and all future synods.

Grounds:

A. The processing of press releases is specifically part of the Stated Clerk's job description which states - "The Stated Clerk, as agent of the Synod-

ical Interim Committee or synod, shall prepare news or information bulletins for the news media which will inform the public of the work and witness of the church."

B. The appointment of synodical delegates to serve as a committee for press relations is an undue burden for delegates who are themselves busy with many assignments and fails to do justice to the importance of our relationship with the press.

C. Preplanning and the use or appointment of persons with expertise in communications and press relationships would be helpful to our public presentation of the work and witness of the Christian Reformed Church.

D. Preplanning for press relationships is particularly urgent in view of the prospect of the concurrent synods meeting on the Calvin Campus in 1978.

IV. PROGRAM COORDINATION PROGRESS

The Program Study Report presented in Report 20, Section III, A, has been followed up by further consultation with the agencies and SIC has approved a general form of functional analysis of the programming of our agencies. The forms developed for this analysis are being studied by the various agencies and further modifications which appear helpful are being made.

The input of our various denominational agencies has been very helpful in developing a format for systematic study of the total denominational program.

V. APPRAISAL AND COST JUSTIFICATION MANDATE

The Synod of 1976 adopted the following mandate: "That synod instruct SIC and the agencies to provide the Synod of 1977 with an appraisal and cost justification of supporting staff of agencies in the denominational building and of SIC, including Coordinated Services." The Coordinated Service Committee adopted a motion "to request SIC to inform the Synod of 1977 that with respect to synod's instructions . . . the appraisal and cost justification cannot at this time be intelligently and fairly evaluated by all of the agencies since a sufficient time of experience with coordinated services' efforts has not been enjoyed by all. Therefore, the denominational building agencies request a one year extension for completion of synod's request referred to above." It is decided to forward the request of the agencies, through the Coordinated Services Committee, to synod.

VI. ACCREDITATION OF CHRISTIAN LAYMEN'S LEAGUE

In accord with the recommendation of the Church Polity and Program Committee, the Synodical Interim Committee adopts a recommendation contained in CPM 600 and Appendix B of the minutes of May 11, 1977. The following report is adopted and will be sent to synod:

The Synodical Interim Committee has received additional clarifications with respect to the three stipulations which the Synod of 1976 placed on the continuing approval of the Christian Laymen's League on the list of non-denominational causes recommended for support.

A. The Synod of 1976 decided that the League be asked to clarify its relationship to Christian Reformed laymen as stipulated in the CLL constitution.

Indications have been given that the CLL is devising some plans to implement the involvement of a broader base of laymen in its activities.

B. In view of many changes of program in the history of the CLL, the League was requested by the Synod of 1976 not to adopt new programs before presenting them to the SIC for evaluation.

The CLL has given the subcommittee of SIC firm assurances that they will check with SIC before considering the adoption of any new programs.

C. Synod of 1976 mandated SIC to urge the CLL, in accord with its constitution, to relate and coordinate its programs with those of the boards and agencies of our denomination.

SIC has been assured that CLL representatives are seeking further contacts and coordination with the Back to God Hour, the Home Mission Board, and the World Mission Board.

Recommendation: The Synodical Interim Committee advises synod that the stipulations laid down are being pursued, but that continued approval be given to the Christian Laymen's League for accreditation with the understanding that they continue working on these stipulations, and that their progress be reviewed annually by the SIC.

VII. MISSION PRINCIPLES REPORT (Agenda 1977, Report 42)

After a study of the Mission Principles Study Report, the Synodical Interim Committee calls to the attention of synod that the specific recommendation appearing in IV, C, p. 432, with respect to the restructuring of the Interagency Advisory Council, in the judgment of SIC, is in conflict with the preceding recommendation regarding the Synodical Interim Committee and the various agencies of the denomination.

VIII. PROGRESS REPORT ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF IMPROVED FINANCIAL CONTROL SYSTEMS

A. *Background*

The Finance Committee of the Synodical Interim Committee, with the concurrence of SIC, retained the Certified Public Accounting Firm of Seidman and Seidman to conduct an independent review of the financial systems and internal control procedures of our denominational boards, agencies and committees. Seidman and Seidman was asked to focus its review on the internal controls presently in existence for the receipt, disbursement and recording of funds and to present recommendations for the handling of the funds and assets of our denomination.

Seidman and Seidman staff met and conducted interviews with representatives of the following boards, agencies and committees:

Back to God Hour

Board for Christian Reformed World Missions

Calvin College and Seminary

Christian Reformed Board of Home Missions

Christian Reformed Board of Publications

Christian Reformed World Relief Committee
Chaplain Committee
Church Help Fund
Fund for Needy Churches
Ministers' Pension Fund
Synodical Committee on Race Relations
Unordained Employees Pension Fund Committee
Synodical Interim Committee

As a result of these discussions Seidman and Seidman identified four major goals and objectives that set the proper framework to evaluate their recommendations.

1. Synod has the obligation and responsibility of assuring all members of the church that all funds forwarded to an approved board, agency or committee are properly used for the intended purposes.
2. The capability of the boards, agencies and committees to carry out the activities mandated to them by synod is a key factor in the success of the agencies. No systems or procedures should be instituted which interferes with the agencies distinctive ability to carry out their mandates.
3. No system, procedure or policy should be developed which hinders an agency's fund raising ability.
4. The source of funds represents generous giving by the members of the church. Consequently, all recipient organizations must maintain strict systems of checks and balances to assure maximum standards of stewardship for funds.

Seidman and Seidman staff who conducted the reviews met with the Finance Committee on May 10, 1977 and with representatives of most of the boards, agencies and committees on May 17, 1977, and with SIC on May 24, 1977 to present their report and recommendations. The recommendations in summary are:

1. Institute a common depository and master cash account for the receipt of all funds designated for the boards, agencies and committees.
2. Develop a policy manual for all boards, agencies and committees concerning internal control for all cash disbursements. Each board, agency or committee would determine the procedures necessary to adhere to the policies.
3. Give the Finance Committee the responsibility of selecting and retaining auditors for all boards, agencies and committees. The selection process should include competitive bidding and a thorough evaluation of the auditing firms qualifications.
4. Adopt a policy which requires each organization to disclose annually any financial activities with related parties and/or organizations related to active board members.
5. Develop a standardized reporting format along program lines.

Most of these recommendations must be studied in greater depth by the boards, agencies and committees before specific recommendations can be made to synod. Meanwhile a written evaluation will be made immediately by Seidman and Seidman of each of the boards, agencies' and committees' current procedures for control of the receipt, disbursement and recording of funds. These evaluations will include some suggestions for change.

B. Recommendations:

1. That synod accept this progress report from the Synodical Interim Committee and instruct SIC to submit a final report with its evaluations and recommendations to the Synod of 1978.
2. That synod acknowledge the importance of providing maximum assurance concerning the safeguarding of denominational funds and other assets, and request all boards, agencies and committees to work closely with SIC in implementing new procedures where needed to improve internal control.

IX. FINANCIAL MATTERS

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 overall 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 potential.

As an initial step in this process, a comparison was made of 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 1977. The requested and recommended total quota for 1978 also is included.

Denominational Quotas Comparison of Requested, Recommended and Actual

Year	Total Requested by Denominational Agencies	Increase as a Percent of Last Year's Actual	Total Recommended Finance Committee*	Increase as a Percent of Last Year's Actual	Actual Approved by Synod	Increase as a Percent of Last Year's Actual
1978	\$234.95	9.76	\$230.70	7.78		
1977	215.95	14.78	212.95	13.18	\$214.05	13.76
1976	193.67	11.88	188.15	8.67	188.15	8.67
1975	175.58	9.12	168.80	4.91	173.10	7.58
1974	166.65	6.42	159.40	1.79	160.90	2.75
1973	156.00	6.41	155.50	6.07	156.60	6.82
1972	152.63	12.73	145.00	7.09	146.60	8.27
1971	140.16	10.71	134.60	6.32	135.40	6.95
1970	125.56	8.01	120.10	3.31	126.60	8.90
1969	126.50	15.63	115.75	5.80	116.25	6.25
1968	109.13	9.68	107.60	8.14	109.40	9.95
1967	102.98	8.86	98.75	4.39	99.50	5.18
1966	94.35	6.49	92.75	4.68	94.60	6.77
1965	87.60	6.31	87.60	6.31	88.60	7.25
1964					82.40	
Average percent increase						
1965-1977		9.77		6.20		7.64
1973-1977		9.72		6.92		7.92

*Before 1971, the Standing Advisory Budget Committee

Source: Acts of Synod, various issues

The total requested by the denominational agencies, the total recommended by the Finance Committee and the actual 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 thirteen-year period of 1965-1977, the average yearly increase in total requests was 9.77 percent. This compares with an average recommended increase of 6.20 percent and an average adopted increase of 7.64 percent. An analysis of more recent history, the last five years (1973-1977), gives results similar to the twelve-year historical experience, except for recommended and synodically approved quotas. The average increase in quotas recommended by SIC and approved by synod during the twelve years is somewhat lower than the average over the last five-year period of time.

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. (See "Are Synodical Quotas too High?" *The Banner*, November 12, 1976.)

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 each program request or recommendation before it takes final action on any quota.

This year, as in the past, the committee's task was difficult since the quota requests from the various denominational agencies for 1978 totaled \$234.95, or an increase of \$20.90 (9.76 percent increase) over the 1977 quota. The Finance Committee and the Synodical Interim Committee sympathize with the agencies requesting these quota increases as we all realize what inflation has done to the dollar and to purchasing power. The committee feels, however, that it is impossible to recommend an increase in quota by this amount in one year since quotas have been increasing at an average of 7.92 percent the last five years and deflated income has been increasing at a considerably lower rate. It was felt, therefore, that some of the agencies should not 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 the other denominational agencies.

In support of the contention that a 9.76 percent increase in the denominational quota is not practical, the committee analyzed current statistics of average annual family income (U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, "Current Population Report: Consumer Income"). It was found that average annual family income increased approximately 10.0 percent in 1976. Inflation, however, in 1976 as measured by the Consumer Price Index cost the average family 5.8 percent. We decided, therefore, that an increase in the quota at a rate of 9.76 percent as requested by the agencies would work a hardship on most families and especially on many small or low-family-income churches. Furthermore, the local or regional church, Christian school, or classical programs may have difficulty raising funds when the denominational quotas increase too rapidly. And 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 and the Synodical Interim Committee are recommending a per family quota increase of \$16.65 for existing agencies and programs. This represents an overall 7.78 percent increase above the 1977 quota. *In this regard, we request, as in prior years, that synod consider all denominational agency budget requests before acting 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 neither doctrinally sound nor have any 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 their program demands, and in turn, reduce their dependence on the denominational quota.

A. Denominational Quotas

	1975 Quota	1976 Quota	1977 Quota	Quota Request 1978	SIC Recom. for 1978	Percent Change
Back to God Hour	\$ 18.00	\$ 20.00	\$ 23.00	\$ 25.00	\$ 25.00	+ 8.7
Television			10.00	10.00	10.00	0.0
Board of Publications						
The Banner	1.00	2.00	1.50	.75	.75	-50.0
De Wachter .....	.50	.50	.50	.25	.25	-50.0
Unified Church-School						
Curriculum	3.00	4.00	4.00	3.00	3.00	-25.0
Calvin College and Seminary ..	31.83*	34.00*	36.00*	38.40*	38.40*	+ 6.7
Calvin Seminary Building Addition (until 1979)	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.0
Chaplain Committee	1.00	1.00	1.65	1.95	1.95	+18.2
Chaplains' Deposit Fund .....	.50	.50	.50	.50	.50	0.0
Denominational Services						
Synodical Assembly & Comm.'s						
Synodical Offices	4.05	5.00	5.50	6.10	6.10	+10.9
Estate Planning for Deferred Giving (At request of all denominational agencies) ..			1.65	1.65	1.65	0.0
Denominational Building	1.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	0.0

World Missions	32.00	35.25	41.25	45.75	45.75	+10.9
Fund for Needy Churches	13.50	13.50	13.50	12.50	12.50	— 7.4
Home Missions	41.10	43.00	46.00	55.00	51.00	+10.9
Ministers' Pension Fund	22.75	24.50	24.50	28.50	28.50	+16.3
SCORR	1.40	1.40	1.00	1.60	1.60	+60.0
Spanish Literature .....	.50	.50	.50	1.00	.75	+50.0
TOTAL	\$173.13	\$188.15	\$214.05	\$234.95	\$230.70	+ 7.8

*Allocated on an area basis

B. *One or More Offerings*

1. Denominational Agencies

- a. Armed Forces Fund of Home Mission Board (U.S. churches only)
- b. Back to God Hour - 1) above-quota needs, 2) CRC-TV
- c. Back to God Tract Committee
- d. Committee for Educational Assistance to Churches Abroad
- e. Home Missions for above-quota needs
- f. Minority Student Scholarship Fund
- g. Supplemental Assistance Fund of Ministers' Pension Fund
- h. World Missions for above-quota needs

2. Denominational Benevolent Agency

Christian Reformed World Relief Committee

3. Denominational Youth Agencies

- a. Calvinettes (division of United Calvinist Youth)
- b. Calvinist Cadet Corps (division of United Calvinist Youth)
- c. Young Calvinist Federation (division of United Calvinist Youth)
- d. Young Calvinist Servicemen's Ministry

C. *Nondenominational Agencies for Financial Support* - recommended for support *but not necessarily for one or more offerings (any amount or offering(s) to be given is a matter that each council should decide)*

1. Benevolent Agencies

- a. Bethany Christian Services
- b. Bethesda Hospital
- c. Calvary Rehabilitation Center
- d. Christian Health Care Center (formerly Christian Sanatorium)
- e. Christian School Employees Relief Fund (only when requested)
- f. Elim Christian School
- g. Luke Society
- h. Pine Rest Christian Hospital Association (includes Children's Retreat)

2. Educational Agencies

- a. Association for the Advancement of Christian Scholarship
- b. Canadian Christian Educational Foundation (NUCS)
- c. Christian Schools Educational Foundation (NUCS)
- d. Dordt College
- e. National Union of Christian Schools
- f. Reformed Bible College
- g. Roseland Christian School
- h. Trinity Christian College
- i. Westminster Seminary

3. Miscellaneous Agencies

- a. American Bible Society (U.S. churches only)
- b. American Calvinist Fellowship
- c. Canadian Bible Society (Canadian churches only)
- d. Canadian Home Bible League (Canadian churches only)
- e. Christian Labour Association of Canada (Canadian churches only)
- f. Christian Laymen's League
- g. Faith, Prayer and Tract League
- h. Gideons, International (Bible distribution)
- i. InterVarsity Christian Fellowship
- j. Lord's Day Alliance of Canada (Canadian churches only)
- k. Lord's Day Alliance of the U.S. (U.S. churches only)
- l. New York International Bible Society (NIV translation only)
- m. TELL (The Evangelical Literature League)
- n. World Home Bible League

X. DENOMINATIONAL FINANCIAL COORDINATOR'S REPORT

Ministers' Compensation Survey

The updated survey and review of ministers' compensation for the year 1976 and estimated 1977 is published in pamphlet form for distribution to all delegates of synod. If approved by synod it will be distributed as a section of "Your Church in Action" - CRC Handbook to be used as a guide for the consistories on ministers' compensation.

Synod is again requested to urge all of our church consistories to follow the guidelines referred to in the survey report, particularly the Cost of Living indicators published in the survey for each region in the United States and Canada as they relate to average compensation of ministers in various regions.

The recommended FNC minimum compensation for ministers serving churches subsidized by FNC is \$12,000 plus \$500 for each eligible child. Applying the criteria as published by the Bureau of Labor in its Cost of Living index for family of four (man, wife, child of 13 years and child of 8 years) the total compensation would be:

Minimum Cash Salary	\$12,000
Child Allowance 2 @ \$500	1,000
Housing and Utilities Estimate	3,000
Total Compensation	\$16,000

The United States Bureau of Labor, middle income average median Cost of Living Index for the urban family of four in the United States as published in our survey data for 1977 is \$16,300, suburban is \$19,600. The Canadian average family household Middle Income Quintile is \$16,500. These figures are of the preceding year, 1976, both in the United States and Canada and do not reflect increase cost of living data for 1977. As guide for use in 1978 they should be updated by percentage of increase or decrease as published in daily news media or obtained from the nearest Bureau of Labor Office. In Canada information may be obtained from the nearest Statistics of Canada office.

The average 1977 compensation estimates in the various church-size categories in the various regions (as shown in the 1977 Compensation

Survey summaries), when compared to the cost of living indicators reflected in the regional summaries, is quite favorable in larger churches and not so favorable in smaller churches.

In conclusion we would state that our churches, with a few *outstanding exceptions*, appear to be making use of synod's guidelines as reflected in the annual compensation survey. We are grateful to our pastors for supplying the needed survey information. *However it is urgent that all of our pastors respond on the annual survey questionnaire.* Obviously this cooperative effort is beneficial to all who serve the churches as God's messengers.

XI RECOMMENDATIONS

- A. That synod add to the prior SIC nominations the names presented in Section I.
- B. That synod adopt the recommendations of SIC re Synodical Liaison Representatives. (See Section II.)
- C. That synod adopt the recommendation of SIC re press representation and releases. (See Section III.)
- D. That synod note the program study progress reports of SIC contained in Report 20, Section III, A, and in Report 20-A, Section IV.
- E. That synod grant the request of the agencies of synod as forwarded through the Coordinated Services Committee, for a one-year extension for the appraisal and cost justification study. (See Section V.)
- F. That synod adopt the recommendation of SIC re the accreditation of the Christian Laymen's League. (See Section VI.)
- G. That synod note the progress report and adopt the recommendations re the development of Improved Financial Control Systems. (See Section VIII.)
- H. That synod adopt the recommendations of the Finance Committee and the Synodical Interim re Financial Matters (quotas, offerings and financial support) as presented in Section IX of this report, noting with respect to the quotas that synod consider all denominational agency budget requests before acting on any one of them.
- I. That synod approve the updated Ministers' Compensation Survey (to be distributed as a section of the CRC Handbook - "Your Church in Action") and urge all of our consistories to follow the guidelines in the survey particularly the Cost of Living Indicators published in the survey for each region of the United States and Canada as they relate to the average compensation of ministers in various regions.

Synodical Interim Committee
William P. Brink, Stated Clerk

REPORT 21
UNORDAINED EMPLOYEES' PENSION FUND
(Art. 72)

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, some Classical Home Mission Committees, and several churches. The Relief Fund administered by your committee continues to provide support for former employees or their dependents in cases where there is no pension or a pension is inadequate.

The committee has interpreted the minimum pension as approved by Synod of 1973 to apply to all agencies.

Pursuant to the system of rotating representation of the agencies on the committee, the term of the CRWRC representative will expire September 1, 1977, and is to be replaced by a Back-to-God Hour representative.

The committee recommends amendment of the plan to permit an early retirement date without the requirement of 17 years of continuing service and to eliminate the discrimination on the basis of sex as to the minimum age for early retirement. The present plan requires age 55 for females and 60 for males.

The financial report for 1976 is submitted herewith.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION BY SYNOD

1. Your committee requests that any member of the committee be accorded the privilege of the floor when the recommendations for action are considered by synod.

2. Your committee recommends that Don Dykstra be appointed to the committee for a three-year term as the Back-to-God Hour representative.

3. Your committee recommends the following plan amendments:

a. Paragraph 3.2 to read as follows:

“With the consent of the Pension Committee, a Participant may elect an Early Retirement Date which shall be the first day of any month subsequent to the date of election but not before January 1, 1968 nor before the attainment of age 55. In the event of such an election, the Participant's retirement annuity shall commence at his Early Retirement Date.”

b. Paragraph 8.6 to read as follows:

“A Participant who is entitled to receive a monthly annuity under Articles 8.2, 8.3 or 8.4 and who has attained age 55 may elect an Early Retirement Date which shall be the first day of any month subsequent to the date of election but not before January 1, 1968. In the event of such an election the Participant's retirement annuity shall commence at his Early Retirement Date.”

c. Paragraph 22 which is a list of participating employers will be brought up to date.

Unordained Employees' Pension
Fund Committee

Donald F. Oosterhouse, chairman
Lawrence D. Bos
Lester Ippel
Merle Grevengoed
Allen Van Zee

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN FUND BALANCES

UNORDAINED EMPLOYEES' PENSION COMMITTEE

CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH

Year ended December 31, 1976

	<u>PENSION AND INSURANCE FUND</u>	<u>RELIEF FUND</u>
FUND BALANCES, January 1, 1976	\$ 92,042.61	\$ 7,756.23
ADDITIONS		
Premiums from employing agencies	301,938.89	-0-
Collection of prior years write-offs	250.50	-0-
Interest on investments	-0-	4,802.22
Total additions	<u>302,189.39</u>	<u>4,802.22</u>
DEDUCTIONS		
Amounts deposited with insurance company:		
Pension	249,158.62	-0-
Insurance	52,199.84	-0-
Administrative expenses	954.44	-0-
Refund	306.68	-0-
Relief payments	-0-	8,983.00
Total deductions	<u>302,619.58</u>	<u>8,983.00</u>
NET DEDUCTIONS	<u>(430.19)</u>	<u>(4,180.78)</u>
FUND BALANCES, DECEMBER 31, 1976	<u>\$91,612.42</u>	<u>\$ 3,575.45</u>

STATEMENT OF ASSETS, LIABILITY AND FUND BALANCES

UNORDAINED EMPLOYEES' PENSION COMMITTEE

CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH

December 31, 1976

ASSETS

Cash			\$ 1,615.81
Accounts receivable from participating agencies			20,447.06
Investments - at cost:			
Certificates of deposit and saving receipts	\$ 50,000.00		
Calvin College and Seminary notes	<u>25,000.00</u>		<u>75,000.00</u>
			<u>\$97,062.87</u>

LIABILITY AND FUND BALANCES

Account payable			\$ 1,875.00
Fund balances:			
Pension and Insurance Fund	\$ 91,612.42		
Relief Fund	<u>3,575.45</u>		<u>95,187.87</u>
			<u>\$97,062.87</u>

NOTE: Accumulated Pension Fund assets at December 31, 1976 had a market value aggregating approximately \$1,620,000.

REPRESENTATIVES' REPORTS

REPORT 22

AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY

(Art. 32)

In the fall of our Bicentennial year, the American Bible Society completed and published the Good News Bible in Today's English Version. It was the society's gift to the American people. This publication was the culmination of years of precise, painstaking translation work. It is the goal of the American Bible Society to make the Good News Bible available to the more than 600 million English speaking people throughout the world.

The purpose of the American Bible Society has remained unchanged throughout the years—the translation, publication, and distribution of Scriptures without doctrinal note or comment and without profit. Since 1816, the American Bible Society has been making God's Word available to spiritually hungry people everywhere. At least one book of the Bible has been translated into more than 1600 languages as of December 31, 1976.

Here are a few of the highlights of what the American Bible Society and its partners in the Bible cause did in 1976 to meet the challenge.

GOOD NEWS FOR NEW READERS—THREE YEARS AND STILL GOING

Just over three years ago, *Good News for New Readers* was launched in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The goal of the Bible Society was to provide Scripture portions and selections on graded levels for new readers in one hundred languages. At the end of 1976 work was going on in 286 languages. Not only are these selections available in languages like English, Spanish, French and Portuguese, but you can also find them in Dangme, Isizulu, Mbukushu, and Jalcateco. In Africa alone, there are seventy-nine *Good News for New Readers* projects.

At a recent workshop in Banglamung, south of Bangkok, for the translation of the New Reader selections, a Lisu participant expressed his feelings of the program: "This workshop is a concrete answer to our prayers. For years our churches have been waiting for something like the New Readers Scriptures to reach the young and the marginal readers." This report is typical of the response by church leaders around the world.

LIVES FILLED WITH HIS LOVE

In 1976, the American Bible Society released a new filmstrip entitled "Lives Filled With His Love." This color filmstrip was filmed on location in Brazil, Bolivia, Guatemala, and Mexico, and shows the

progress the *Good News for New Readers* program is making in the lives of new readers in South America and around the world. There were 611 bookings for the filmstrip in 1976, making this one of the most popular of all the American Bible Society filmstrips.

SCRIPTURE DISTRIBUTION

Scripture distribution in the United States during 1976 reached a total of 114,769,046 copies. This is an increase of 5,299,265 over 1975. One million copies of the *Good News Bible* were distributed in the month of December alone, one month after publication. Bible Society officials expect distribution of this Bible to soar to a record of ten million copies within the first year.

NEW PUBLICATIONS

"Selected Passages from the Bible" was published containing the New Testament and selected passages from the Old Testament in the King James Version. This book was designed for those who need large print Scriptures as a result of the repeated requests for the Bible in large print.

BICENTENNIAL PUBLICATIONS

ABS distributed 10,441,368 selections, including *One Nation Under God; Plead My Cause, O Lord; Call to the Nation; Celebrate and Proclaim Liberty*, to commemorate our country's 200th birthday. The latter, which proved to be one of the most popular, was printed in the shape of the Liberty Bell.

SCRIPTURE REPRINTS

Custom and imprinted Scriptures constitute a significant part of the society's national distribution program. Requested especially by individuals and church organizations, these Scriptures are circulated in a variety of life situations including sporting events, state and county fairs, and programs of evangelistic outreach. There were 15,005,900 Scripture Imprints produced by the American Bible Society in 1976.

BIBLE-A-MONTH CLUB

Some of the most faithful in the support of the American Bible Society are the Bible-a-Month Club members. The 208,427 members enrolled pledged to contribute at least \$3.00 per month to provide the Word for those who need it.

VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES

A new program was launched to find volunteers willing to represent the American Bible Society to their own local church. The response to this has been extraordinary and by the end of the year 9,650 church representatives were enrolled. The number of American Bible Society volunteers is increasing daily. By the end of December, there were 25,382 men and women serving the Bible cause. They are bringing Scriptures to churches, hospitals, nursing homes, schools, and businesses all over the country. Volunteers now operate 1,545 Scripture Courtesy Centers, with at least one Good Newsstand in every state.

BIBLE SOCIETY ACTIVITIES ABROAD

The American Bible Society contributed \$5,649,892 to the United Bible Society World Service Budget in 1976 thus giving crucial support to the Bible cause throughout the world. More and more of these funds are being used to undertake local production of the Scriptures in Latin America, Africa, and Asia. World Scripture distribution by the United Bible Societies totalled 340 million copies of Scripture in 1976.

Here are just a few of the ways the Bible Society is assisting the missionary activities of the Christian Reformed Church:

Mexico—The churches of Juarez, Mexico joined in distributing 667,000 copies of the selections “Eucuentros” (Encounters) and “Marginados” (Outcasts) earlier this year. A group of 1,800 volunteers from 65 churches took an active part in this campaign, under the direction of church leaders from Juarez.

Brazil—Deputy Ivan Espindola de Avila presented a copy of the common language Portuguese New Testament, recently published in Brazil, to each of his colleagues in the Legislative Assembly of the State of Sao Paulo, Brazil, during the celebration of Bible Day. In addressing the assembly, the Brazilian legislator said, “The Bible is the world’s best seller because it has a message for all men, in all places, and in any circumstance. To speak of the Bible is a very pleasant task for me, as I am privileged to be a minister of the Gospel and a member of the Bible Society’s Brazilian staff . . . I am giving a copy of the Popular Version New Testament to each of you. This book was produced by the Bible Society, which desires to provide a common language Bible to all people.”

Liberia—Translation of the New Testament in Mano has been completed and the manuscript has been forwarded to London for publication. Mano is spoken by 50,000 people in Northern Central Province of Liberia and in adjacent areas of Guinea. When this New Testament is published, a total of four local languages will have their own complete New Testaments.

EASTERN EUROPEAN UPDATE

Scripture translation and distribution has posed special problems in eastern Europe. In spite of these problems, the Bible cause is advancing. At present, there are 12 translation projects in these countries. In the last decade, almost four and a half million Scriptures have been distributed throughout Eastern European countries. Most of these are complete Bibles or New Testaments.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

The Bible Society thanks the Christian Reformed Church for its part in making 1976 a good year. The budget for 1976 was the largest ever in the history of the American Bible Society: \$13,625,000—an increase of \$675,000 over 1975. Income from churches was also greater than previous years. A total of \$1,739,194 was received. The Christian Reformed Church contributed \$12,191 or an increase of 3% above 1975. This amounts to 4¼¢ per member per year.

Contributions from the Christian Reformed Church since 1965 have been as follows:

1965	\$11,000	1969	\$10,882	1973	\$ 9,405
1966	11,359	1970	11,446	1974	10,499
1967	8,366	1971	8,346	1975	11,832
1968	10,804	1972	10,123	1976	12,191

These gifts show a fairly consistent pattern but do not show any significant growth in support at times when inflation is driving up the costs and the demands for Scriptures are increasing. If the Christian Reformed Church were to raise their level of support to \$.10 per member, total giving would reach approximately \$29,000 per year. This increase is needed to help make certain that the Bible Society will have the Scriptures needed by the Christian Reformed Church for its ministries around the world.

Douglas Bush,
Synodical Representative

REPORT 23
CANADIAN BIBLE SOCIETY
(Art. 32)

The Canadian Bible Society has two main responsibilities—Scripture distribution within Canada, and the raising of funds for the translation, publication, and distribution of the Scriptures throughout the world through the United Bible Societies organization.

In 1976 the total World Service Budget of the UBS exceeded \$11 million, with the CBS contributing more than \$1 million. The number of languages into which at least one book of the Bible has been translated is now approaching 1600. However, the need for more translation work is still there, and the UBS are planning 113 new translations of the Bible and 147 translations of the New Testament within the next five years. To assist in this work, and in the printing and world-wide distribution, the CBS expects to raise its contributions to the UBS by \$200,000.

Within Canada, the great concern is to continue to promote Scripture distribution and to provide for all who desire the Scriptures in their own language. During 1976, a total of 5,507,589 Scriptures were distributed, a sizable increase over the 3.6 million recorded in 1975. The Olympic games in Montreal provided the opportunity to reach large numbers of people from many parts of the world, and special Scripture portions were prepared for the athletes and the other visitors to Montreal. Olympic distribution alone numbered close to 1.4 million.

Of the total distribution, over 1.2 million were in French, with one half of those as part of the Olympic program. The other half reflects the continued growth in French work that has seen the figures more than double in the past five years. Most of these French Scriptures went out in the province of Quebec, but more than 140,000 went to other areas of Canada where there are French-speaking populations.

Distribution in languages other than English and French totaled 63,753. A reading of the list of the eighty-six languages, with the numbers distributed in each is an impressive indicator of the CBS's service to its native people and its new immigrants. Over the years the CBS has provided Scriptures in Canada in 179 languages.

Some of the language groups reflected in the 1976 figures are no surprise. Others show the impact of world events: Afrikaans—20 (3 in '75), Spanish—9215 (3019 in '75), Arabic—1028 (250 in '75), Vietnamese—259 (2045 in '75). Still others show the ministry to the native groups: Coastal Cree—7519, E. Arctic Eskimo—564, Northern Ojibway—410.

In all of this, the CBS is dependent on the gifts of God's people. I recommend the CBS to our Canadian churches as very worthy of their continued prayer and financial support. I would also encourage our Canadian churches to become more familiar with the wide variety of

REPORT 24

CHRISTIAN LAYMEN'S LEAGUE

(Art. 79)

I am happy to make the following report, not only because it is a part of my mandate as a synodical representative, but because I am pleased with the Christian ministries conducted by the Christian Laymen's League. This report presents a summary of the purposes and programs of the league.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Christian Laymen's League can best be defined as it is set forth in their Articles of Incorporation: "*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 purpose set forth is extremely ambitious. At first I doubted the wisdom of the wide scope given to the purpose of the league. As I continue to meet with the Christian Laymen's League Board, I find that these goals are held up before them at each meeting and that these goals have become the goad which prods them into action for a long-range attainment of the original purpose.

Beginning with the fiscal year, February 1, 1977, opportunity to become a member of the Christian Laymen's League will be given to each person who makes a contribution of \$20.00 or more. The donor receives a certificate of membership, a quarterly newsletter, the right to vote and a challenge to promote the various divisions of the Christian Laymen's League in his particular area with promotional materials supplied by the Christian Laymen's League.

They are planning the organization of local chapters, or committees, to be organized along classical areas. The purpose of the chapters is the promotion of the Children's Television ministry and the personal follow-up of all the children who write in so that each child will be invited to attend the Bible clubs sponsored by the local church. Several classes have been selected where this outreach program will be introduced during 1977. We pray that this will activate a very large number of lay people and that this will give them the necessary tools to share Christ effectively with others.

PROGRAMS

Two major programs are being developed at the present to make the ideals of the league a reality. They are *Children's Christian Television Ministries* and *Project Bibles for Mexico*. The backyard Bible clubs pro-

gram has been made a part of the television outreach and has been incorporated into that division of the Christian Laymen's League.

PROGRESS

Children's Christian Television Ministries

In this age of astronomical figures it has become so easy to speak very glibly about our millions. Please stop to consider for a moment and praise God for the fact that the Christian Laymen's League can actually say that they have witnessed to millions of boys and girls in America on major television outlets, which include the ABC, NBC, and CBS affiliates.

They now have produced a new series of Christian shows, with another exciting format, under the title "Let the Sunshine In." Since their shows are produced by the ever-popular World Wide Sports, the quality of their productions are of a network quality. By the time this report is presented to the synod their shows will be seen on more than a hundred stations from coast-to-coast. It is very exciting to know that God guided the Christian Laymen's League to produce this type of show just at a time when concerned adults are pressuring the networks to provide decent programming for children.

During the showing of their last series, the mailbag was averaging 400-500 letters each week. They are again preparing for a very large mail response.

The Christian Laymen's League is also investigating the possibility of producing their series of shows using Canadian children, Canadian facilities, Canadian settings, and so make it possible to use the Canadian Cable System to carry their shows. Pray that this door will open!

The Christian Laymen's League has become an unheralded, but a most effective pioneer in the field of Christian television for children. This is their fifth year of paving the way to present Christ to boys and girls by means of the most effective vehicle available for the furtherance of the message of the Gospel. They are certainly committed to their purpose and have every intention to extend their boundaries into every state, province, and country possible. It is not at all unlikely that the Christian Laymen's League will become an international organization, with chapters and committees functioning in many different areas.

Mr. Martin Keuning is director of the children's ministries of the Christian Laymen's League.

Project Bibles for Mexico

During the year of 1968 God laid a burden upon the hearts of several individuals to prepare a project for the distribution of God's Word in Mexico. Since that time, more than 2,000,000 Bibles and New Testaments have been hand-distributed throughout Mexico. This effort involved thousands of Mexican lay Christians who felt a deep concern for the salvation of their fellowmen.

It is a joy to report that God is blessing this vast ministry and thousands have come to know Christ as their Savior. This report of the effectiveness of this Bible distribution project is not done by guesswork. The Mexican Home Bible League in Mexico keeps a record on file of those

Christians who have made commitments for Christ and who have been baptized. They are trained and taught by fellow Christians and are led to become members of local evangelical churches in Mexico.

Mr. Willis Timmer devotes a great deal of his time directing the affairs of this volunteer ministry. The burden upon the members of the Christian Laymen's League is their goal to reach the 40,000,000 Mexicans who are yet without the Gospel. They hope to accomplish this by providing every home in Mexico with a copy of the Spanish Bible. The Christian Laymen's League hopes to continue their ministry in Mexico faithfully by distributing the Word of God as they are given the financial means to do so by God's people.

The present Board of the Christian Laymen's League consists of the following members: Mr. Kenneth L. Jordan, Mr. Herman Petersen, Mr. Willis Timmer, Mr. Jerry Van Solkema, Mr. Lee Plas, Mr. Arie Ver Kaik, Mr. Peter Yff, and Mr. Al Buckner.

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.

Douglas R. Vander Wall,
Synodical Representative

REPORT 25

DORDT COLLEGE

(Art. 26)

It is our privilege to report to the Synod of 1977 concerning Dordt College. The Christian Reformed Church and Dordt College have very close, real connections via CRC students and families, public relations and programs, and not least, through the very structure of the Board of Trustees. The board broadly represents denominational constituency, but is so constituted as to provide the college a very close tie-in with the CRC. In terms of that close relationship, this report of necessity has a real interest for synodical delegates.

ENROLLMENT AND ATTENDANCE

In this twenty-second academic year of Dordt College, the 1976-77 enrollment of 1,001 has passed the thousand mark for the first time (1974-75: 987; 1975-76: 976). Approximately 85% (some 850) of the 1976-77 enrollment come from CRC homes. Of interest, also, is the fact that approximately 20% of CRC students are educated at Dordt College. Of great practical interest to our delegates to the synod of the CRC and to the denomination is that at least half of the students are enrolled in programs of study for elementary and secondary education, aiming to teach in Christian schools.

In terms of the broader Reformed community, Dordt is privileged to serve some 76 students from other churches of Reformed persuasion: Orthodox Presbyterian, 27; Protestant Reformed, 10; Reformed Church in America, 19; Reformed Church in the U.S., 14; Netherlands Reformed, 6.

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT AND PROGRAMS OF STUDY

Dordt College as a mid-west school is located in a geographically vast agricultural area, often referred to as the "Bread-Basket." It is with real propriety, therefore, if for location only, that Dordt College should be introducing an Agriculture Department among its programs of study. That this program of study is being introduced in this Christian/Calvinistic college is academically exciting, for this area of study also belongs under the scrutiny of the Scriptures and the claims of Christ's kingship. Plans are to open the department this fall, 1977. Program and curriculum have been approved. Consultations are continuing to obtain a person academically and spiritually qualified and willing to serve as instructor.

Art and drama are being expanded as programs of study. The college is enlisting two additional staff people, one for each. This program expansion will enable the college through the disciplines of art and drama to increasingly provide skilled teachers for local Christian schools, and also give our students and constituency growing sensitivity to the aesthetic and the ideals of the scripturally beautiful, through its studies and programs.

CAMPUS DEVELOPMENT

The new Chapel/Music Center could be the most important project here reported. It is the most noticeable project on or off campus because of the building program already begun and the "Forward Thrust" program in progress. The location, the visibility and the usage of this new facility will make this building a focal point on the campus. This Chapel/Music Center, its design and furnishing, will enhance and inspire the worship of students during their academic week, so much the more because the present facilities are neither conducive to worship nor adequate for such a large student body. This same facility so suitable for chapel worship is designed for concerts as well as for other public gatherings, such as commencement ceremonies. It will supply multi-purpose needs while having primary purposes. Since music and worship so singularly inspire and epitomize the spirit and purpose of the Christian academy, this Chapel/Music Center will be a real boon to the student community, and to the public community as well.

The foundations for the new Chapel/Music Center are to be completed by March 1, 1977, and plans are to begin using the new facility in January, 1978.

The "Forward Thrust" program for financing the Chapel/Music Center has been successful beyond expectations. The goal was set at \$1,500,000. By January 1977, the million dollar mark had already been reached. Response to "Forward Thrust" has been excellent across the country, and most gratifying and encouraging to the board and administration.

In view of the new Chapel/Center, other buildings and rooms will be released to facilitate expanding curriculum needs in the Drama, Art, Business, and Agriculture Department. A limited amount of the \$1,500,000 goal has been allocated for remodeling and furnishing these building facilities.

STUDENT COMMUNITY

While a sizable number of students come from the regions around Sioux Center, Iowa, the student body represents a cross-section of our CRC constituency, east, west, north and south; e.g., according to attendance figures of selected classes, British Columbia has some 60 students in attendance, California South, 31; Florida, 5; Hamilton, 24. Additional students from other denominations and countries add flavor to the mixture. The cross-section provides an advantageous atmosphere for intellectual stimulation, and appreciation of cultural, regional, national, and social differences under the positive leadership of the staff.

Observing student life, one easily comes to make a very positive appraisal of the students. Speaking generally, they are serious, dutiful, cooperative, respectful, young Christians. Any young person who seeks as a student the intellectual stimulation, the social engagements, the Christian companionship, the spiritual assistance and concern that a Christian campus and student body should provide, can find plenty of room on Dordt's campus and among the college's students.

CHURCH AND COLLEGE

A close relationship has been established with local churches to provide worship and fellowship for students. The college and local churches continue consultations so that the spiritual and ecclesiastical needs of the students may be met. Student membership in local churches is arranged according to student preferences. Consistory-student family visits and pastoral care are provided. The students attending worship services of local churches add color to congregational worship. The college itself provides a spiritual ministry through the office of the Dean of Students.

COLLEGES IN COOPERATION

Dordt College has been in cooperative consultation with our other two colleges, Calvin and Trinity. The presidents of our three colleges meet twice a year to study, among other things, rising costs of college education, to find solutions cooperatively in a denominational context for the financial problems each school faces. A committee constituted of the business managers and development office representatives of each college has been appointed to study problems of finance, inflation and rising costs, and report their conclusions to the meetings of the presidents.

Another purpose of the meetings of presidents is to seek ways by which to encourage and increase the attendance of CRC young people at one of our own colleges.

FINANCE

As already suggested above, the financial support of Dordt College by our CRC constituency has been very gratifying. Quota relief and free-will offerings are generously given, especially in the six-classes area surrounding Dordt College. The giving of the supporting constituency must be very good and the stewardship of the college must be very careful, in view of the fact that Dordt receives a small percentage of the "denominational" dollar and yet educates such a sizable percentage of the denomination's students, maintaining a comparatively low tuition requirement.

CHRISTIAN/CALVINIST ACADEMY

The Dordt College community is a Calvinistic intellectual community in action, study, fellowship, and worship. Here Christian/Calvinistic perspective is provided. There is determined effort to have qualified and spiritually committed staff to implement learning according to our Reformed tradition and Calvinistic world-and-life view. To conclude this report is to heartily commend to the 1977 Synod of the CRC this institution of learning as committed to the preservation, promotion, and improvement of our Calvinistic heritage, requesting synod again officially to recognize Dordt College as worthy of the continuing support of our churches.

John Fondse,
Synodical Representative

REPORT 26
FAITH, PRAYER AND TRACT LEAGUE
(Art. 63)

The ministry of the Faith, Prayer and Tract League grew only modestly in 1976. But a modest growth for the league meant an increase of two million tracts sent out. For the first time in our fifty-four year history over thirty million tracts were sold. In addition, fifteen million were sent out free, making a total distribution in excess of forty-five million.

The Lord has led us into India, Spain, and Indonesia, and the needs of these countries exceed all our resources. Yet when requests come in from other countries, it is difficult to refuse assistance. So we have increased our printings in Portugal and are sending tracts from there to Brazil. And in late 1976 we made arrangements to print tracts here in the Tiv language and send them to our people in Nigeria.

All aspects of the league's operations are done efficiently. Although our annual budget is nearly a half million dollars for 1977, there are only two full-time employees. The 1976 expenses of \$442,000 were met in spite of inflation—and an extra \$5,000 was paid on the mortgage.

It warms our hearts when we receive letters telling how our tracts have been used by the Lord to open hearts. It is a real challenge to produce tracts that are written and illustrated in such a way that they can compete for the attention of the unbeliever in a world of television and slick advertising, and yet present the real condition of sinful man and the only solution to his plight. We receive many letters stating that our tracts fulfill these criteria better than those from other major sources. All denominations buy from us, including many Catholic individuals, priests, and institutions.

So the collections of \$29,000 from our Christian Reformed Churches are used to bring the gospel to millions of people throughout the world. We feel that we are good stewards of these monies and ask that we be recommended to our churches. The audited financial report has been sent to the proper committee.

Herbert Kramer,
Synodical Representative

REPORT 27

LORD'S DAY ALLIANCE OF CANADA

(Art. 32)

Your representative has attended four board meetings of the alliance in 1976. On November 10, 1976 I reported to the Canadian Council of Christian Reformed Churches at its meeting in Toronto, and recommended that all the Canadian churches become a member of the alliance.

The Lord's Day Alliance of Canada was formed in 1888. It is an incorporated non-profit charitable organization with an unlimited voting membership whose stated purpose is "to preserve Sunday as a national day of rest and leisure." Its objectives are:

1. to preserve Sunday, the Lord's Day, as a national day of rest, with its attendant opportunity for common worship;
2. to affirm the physical, moral, and spiritual values of the Lord's Day;
3. to cultivate the conviction of the Canadian people that the preservation of Sunday as the national weekly day of rest is necessary for the well-being of the individual and of the nation;
4. to watch and examine carefully all legislation concerning Sunday and to take whatever action may be necessary. It shall be understood, however, that where such action is of particular concern to any one province, the Provincial Board concerned will be consulted;
5. to unite in a strong and effective organization all societies and groups that share in these objectives;
6. to promote, support and assist other bodies that have as their purpose the need for a national, weekly day of rest.

It was not until March 1907, after public pressure on the governments of Canada to enact legislation for several years, that the Lord's Day Act of Canada was proclaimed law.

In 1975 the minister of justice asked the Law Reform Commission of Canada to review Sunday observance legislation. The Lord's Day Alliance sent in a brief in which it stated its views on the matter of Sunday observance.

The Law Reform Commission report was released in May 1976 and made the following recommendations to the federal government:

- "1. The Lord's Day Act should be repealed.
2. The provinces and territories should be free to enact independent secular measures respecting the observance of Sunday and other holidays as desired.
3. Before undertaking the wholesale repeal of the Lord's Day Act, the federal government should indicate its intention to do so in such a way as to allow all the provinces and territories sufficient time to review, amend or introduce their own secular and comprehensive measures concerning Sundays and other holidays.

4. However, this commencement of the orderly transition from federal to provincial law should not be long delayed, if confusion and hypocrisy are to be avoided.

5. The federal power to regulate interprovincial trucking on Sunday, now exercised by the Canadian Transport Commission under section II (x) of the Lord's Day Act should, as an interim measure, be included in the provisions of the federal Motor Vehicle Transport Act when provision could be made to empower the commission to consider traffic congestion and safety as well as undue delay."

The alliance was alarmed at the recommendation of the wholesale repeal of the Lord's Day Act and held several meetings to prepare a protest against such proposed legislation. It was sent to the Honorable Ronald S. Basford, Minister of Justice and to the Department of Justice. The submission states that "a continuing federal presence in the area of Sunday observance legislation is required to serve the needs of Canadians in all parts of Canada."

The following argument and reasons were presented:

1. The Federal Act provides for commonality between the provinces which is necessary for interprovincial commerce and for sharing a common quality of life.
2. Some present Provincial Acts have opting out provisions for municipalities which would leave them without control if there were no federal legislation.
3. The emphasis of the present law compels the provinces to act to soften federal legislation. With repeal the same uniqueness will not be retained.
4. The International Labor Organization Convention number 14 requires federal action if Canada is to remain a signator. Only the Federal Government can deal with international labor standards.
5. There is a federal obligation to safeguard the civil rights of unorganizable people.

In the 1976 report we stated that the Maritime Provinces, Quebec and Ontario have enacted update legislation on Sunday observance, but such is not yet the case with those provinces west of Ontario.

There were several good developments in these provinces during 1976. In British Columbia a draft copy of new Sunday legislation for the province is prepared, and will be ready for presentation to the legislature any time after the beginning of the next session in 1977. The reason that new legislation was not introduced was that only eighteen complaints had been registered during the last year and a half, and therefore the attorney general felt that there was no problem about Sunday observance in British Columbia. As a matter of fact, more than 145 complaints had been made during that period but most of them were not considered valid. In order for a complaint to be valid it must be received from a citizen living in the area, who is not a habitual complainer, nor a member of a self-interest group. Thus a complaint from a church, ministerial association, council of churches, or an ordained minister, or even a group like the Lord's Day Alliance is not considered

valid. For this reason citizens are now urged to express their concern directly to the attorney general.

In Alberta an organization known as Alberta Interfaith has taken up the matter of Sunday observance and will voice the opinions and complaints of Alberta residents and other organizations to the government. The Rev. M. Starr is the contact man for this organization, located at St. John's Anglican Church, 11111 - 57 Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta.

In Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, a provincial committee of the Lord's Day Alliance was organized in November 1976. This action was deemed necessary because of the federal government's possible plans to turn responsibility for Sunday legislation over to the province. The purpose of this committee is to preserve Sunday as a common day of rest and leisure for as many people as possible in Saskatchewan. The Rev. John Kaiser is secretary. His address is 2210 Preston Avenue, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan.

In Manitoba the government's plan is to introduce new Sunday retail shopping legislation in the present session of the legislature. This plan is being made in response to public pressure on the government to do something to halt the developing trend of large commercial businesses operating on Sunday.

Finances

The financial picture of the alliance was brighter in 1976. The income was \$27,920.00 and expenditures were \$28,521.00. Contributions by thirty-seven Christian Reformed Churches in Canada amounted to \$3,327.91 in 1976. This is an increase of \$1,164.93 over 1975.

It was a rewarding experience to represent synod in the Lord's Day Alliance of Canada and it is our hope and prayer that this organization may continue to serve for the preservation of the Lord's day for our nation. We solicit the prayers of the denomination for this cause.

Recommendations:

1. That synod continue to place the Lord's Day Alliance of Canada on the list of recommended causes for 1978.
2. That synod maintain representation in the alliance for 1978.

John Zantingh,
Synodical Representative

REPORT 28

LORD'S DAY ALLIANCE OF THE UNITED STATES

(Art. 32)

The Lord's Day Alliance is located at 2930 Flowers Road South, Atlanta, Georgia, in the Baptist Convention Center. The alliance is controlled by a Board of Managers composed of representatives of seventeen denominations and six other organizations. The alliance is the only national organization whose sole purpose is the maintenance and cultivation of the first day of the week as a time for rest, worship, Christian education and spiritual renewal. Denominations that are in harmony with the objectives of the alliance are welcome to nominate representatives to the board.

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 Rev. James P. Wesberry, conducts the business of the alliance from offices in the Baptist Center, Suite 107/2930 Flowers Road, South, Atlanta, Georgia 30341. The officers of the alliance are as follows: The Rev. Charles A. Platt, S.T.D., pastor emeritus, Presbyterian Church, Ridgewood, New Jersey, president; the Rev. Andrew R. Bird, D.D., First Presbyterian Church, Norfolk, Virginia, vice-president; Mrs. Wm. A. Fickling, Jr., Atlanta, Georgia, secretary; Mr. Larry Eidson, Trust Company of Georgia, Atlanta, Georgia, treasurer; Mr. John Nix, Atlanta, Georgia, counsel; Mr. Julius B. Poppinga, Newark, New Jersey, counsel. The denominational representative of the Christian Reformed Church, Mr. Fred Fisher, Associate Professor of Sociology, University of Tampa, Florida is a member of the executive committee of the alliance.

The year of 1976 has been a year of various changes within the workings of the alliance. At the meeting held in Philadelphia in October of 1976, we accomplished action that had been sought by a number of individuals serving on the executive committee. At that meeting it was resolved that each of the five standing committees extend their responsibilities to specifically include review and discussion on a definitely assigned topic, and that each committee meet prior to the two annual meetings and then obtain "input" from each of the committee members via the mails and the telephone on these definitely assigned topics. Some of the areas for special study are as follows: one group to study and re-formulate the theological basis for the alliance; another group to review the program and plans of the alliance in terms of specific objectives and goals; yet another group to spend time exploring methodology to achieve these objectives and goals; another group to seek out ways

of enhancing the relationship of the Lord's Day Alliance to other denominations, and then a final group to explore possible new avenues of funding for the alliance. All of the committees met in groups at our meeting held in Atlanta on February 9 and 10 of this year. Out of these meetings we now have many new ideas and plans for extending the work of the alliance. These will be touched upon as we report on the work of each of the committees.

The executive director reports that the year of 1976 has indeed been a busy year for him. Over 10,000 letters with the alliance literature enclosed have been mailed out. In addition, he has answered hundreds of letters from all over the country and abroad on almost every imaginable subject and shipped materials far and wide. He has been able to obtain 298 new givers to the rolls of the alliance. He has traveled across the nation visiting many board members, denominational leaders and denominational gatherings. He has personally made over twenty appearances, arranging exhibits, displays and thus distributing literature. During this year three other denominations have joined the alliance, making the total now seventeen denominations and six organizations. New pamphlets have been printed and over 50,000 copies of two new pamphlets have been published. New tapes by Norman Vincent Peale for distribution to radio stations have been produced. These tapes are used for spot announcements emphasizing the importance of Sunday as a day of rest and worship. The executive director continues as the editor of the "Sunday" magazine.

The Communication Committee has the responsibility for the publication, preparation and dissemination of all media of the alliance. This committee is preparing an up-to-date bibliography relative to the Lord's Day for distribution. The committee feels that a history of the alliance needs to be written in a simple, attractive, readable form and are seeking funding for this purpose. The committee recommends publishing several large ads in appropriate newspapers expressing appreciation and commending businesses that close on Sunday and people who do their shopping during the week. Special designated gifts are being sought for this purpose. The committee further recommends that approval be given to the executive secretary and the executive committee to award certificates of commendation and appreciation to be presented to businesses that make it a policy of closing on Sunday.

Our SUNDAY magazine carries the message of the alliance with excellence. The January/March 1977 issue is perhaps the finest issue yet produced. Distribution of this magazine has increased and many new subscribers have been added so that approximately 9,000 copies are mailed each quarter. If any individual or church is interested in receiving this magazine, simply write to the office of the alliance stating your desire and it will be forwarded to your address.

The State and National Affairs Committee continues to be concerned about continued and increased lack of observance of the Lord's Day across our land. The committee reports that Sunday laws are being flaunted and violated. In some areas of the country test cases have

been filed challenging the constitutionality of these laws. This committee recommends that the alliance undertake the following:

1. communicate with appropriate denominational leaders, and particularly of those denominations represented on the board, to urge a letter writing campaign from the grass roots calling for an appeal to the business community to conserve energy by voluntarily limiting nonessential business and commercial activity to six days per week;
2. prepare a packet containing reasons for such curtailment and suggested form letters; and
3. prepare a list of suggested recipients of the letters such as state public utility commissioners, state and national energy officials, local, state and federal political figures, newspaper editors and radio-TV stations.

This committee urges that this project be given high priority so as to capitalize on the current awareness of the energy shortage and of the need of positive measures to conserve its use. The committee feels that our relationship to denominations can be enhanced by our willingness to provide information to assist any person encountering job discrimination because of Sunday employment demands. Thus, materials for this purpose are being prepared so that information is available upon request.

The Committee on Extension realizes the necessity of extending to many other denominations the invitation to join in the efforts of the alliance. Continuous efforts are being made to contact in person and by mail, leaders of other denominations with a view to getting them to join hands with the alliance in our efforts to preserve the Lord's Day in our country. During this past year the alliance was privileged to present its work at various gatherings. Attractive exhibits of materials are effectively used in as many ways as possible to further the work of the alliance. The extension committee, therefore, is eager to educate local communities as to the nature and work of the alliance. It feels a great need to answer the question: "WHAT IS THE LORD'S DAY ALLIANCE?" The committee therefore is spending considerable time exploring methodology to achieve the goals established by the alliance.

The Finance Committee manages the Lord's Day Alliance investment programs, plus the handling of the financial records. During the year of 1976 churches of various denominations contributed a total of \$25,070.98 to the alliance. It is with much pride that I report that the Christian Reformed Churches contributed the second largest portion of this amount. A total of \$5,531.43 was given by our churches in 1976, with the Presbyterian Church in the United States contributing \$4,525.88. However, the total amount contributed by churches during 1976 was larger by about \$9,000.00 than during 1975. Individual contributions likewise have increased during the year of 1976. Income from investments had increased in 1976 over the year before. As a result of the economic increases in almost every area, our expenses during 1976 also increased. The finance committee had proposed a budget in the amount of \$51,000.00 for 1976. Our income, however, amounted to \$57,259.08 during 1976. Increased costs, however, expanded our total expenditures to \$57,610.23, leaving a deficit for 1976 of about \$300.00.

From a financial standpoint the year of 1976 was a good year, and it is the hope and prayer of the board that the coming year will show even greater financial gains as this committee is endeavoring to find new sources of funds for the work of the alliance. The board is grateful to individuals and to the churches for their continued and increased support in this area. Efforts will continue to be made to expand the "Fellowship of One Hundred." This fellowship is made up of those individuals and churches who contribute \$100.00 or more to the alliance.

Since the work of the committees of the alliance has been expanded, much has been accomplished, but much more remains to be done. I would like to report that positive action is being realized as a result of the enlarged functions of the committees. The following resolution was acted upon at our meeting on February 10 of this year: "To assure the people of the United States the benefits of a day of rest and physical and spiritual renewal, and to conserve energy which is so vital to the present and future welfare of the nation, The Lord's Day Alliance of the United States resolves that appeals be made to leaders and public bodies as follows: to the President and Congress of the United States, and to the Governors and Legislatures and Assemblies of the several states, that efforts be made to avoid the use of Sunday for transacting public business, and that legislation be enacted to protect one day in seven as a day of rest and renewal for the people of the nation; to the leaders and members of the several labor unions of the nation, that efforts be made to protect Sunday as a day of rest and renewal for the working people of the nation; to the leaders of commerce and industry, that steps be taken to organize the working schedules of their respective enterprises to limit the days upon which work is done to not more than six in seven days each week to conserve vital energy and to protect Sunday as a day of rest and renewal for the people of the nation; to the leaders of the several religious bodies and church congregations, to initiate renewed efforts to encourage the observance of Sunday as the Lord's Day in worship, rest and family fellowship, and to introduce additional instructional materials into their educational curricula, and opportunities for study of the religious and social importance of observance of the Lord's Day, that the Lord's Day Alliance direct its efforts, energies and resources toward the realization of these objectives."

The above resolution, I believe, will show some of the direction in which the alliance is now headed. We pray for God's blessing on these objectives, and for the wisdom now to employ the methods by which we may realize our goals.

It is indeed a pleasure for me to serve as the synodical representative of the Christian Reformed Church to the Lord's Day Alliance. I was appointed by the Synod of 1971 and re-appointed by the Synod of 1974. I am happy to be able to serve my God and my church in this way. I attended the semi-annual meeting in Philadelphia in October 1976, and the regular board meeting in Atlanta in February 1977. During these meetings I served on several committees of the alliance. As a member of the executive committee, I attended four meetings with this committee. I feel that I was able to realize some of the objectives and

goals that the alliance is presently actively seeking to attain, while serving on the executive committee. The alliance continues to need the support of our churches, individuals and organizations. It is my hope and prayer that during 1977, the Christian Reformed Church can become more involved with the alliance, both from a financial standpoint and from a role as intercessor in prayer, and with suggestions that would benefit the alliance in its present tasks. Any individual, any church that has suggestions for the alliance please contact the executive director or your representative by phone or by mail. I wholeheartedly recommend the Lord's Day Alliance of the United States to both the church and to individuals as a cause worthy of our support.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO SYNOD:

1. That synod continue representation to the Lord's Day Alliance Board.
2. That our churches and individuals within our denomination, continue to support, both with prayers and monies, the work of the Lord's Day Alliance so that the renewed objectives and goals may be put to work for the King of the Church.

Fred Fisher,
Synodical Representative

REPORT 29

THE LUKE SOCIETY, INC.

(Art. 43)

The Luke Society is happy to report favorable progress in its activities during the past year. For twelve years we have enjoyed the blessing of God and the good-will of his church. Our work is focused in two areas;

(1) the indigent in Mississippi where Dr. Peter Boelens and his staff are doing a yeoman's task,

(2) the Rehoboth Hospital in New Mexico where medical help is given to the Indians, Spanish and other Americans in and around Gallup.

The Luke Society now consists of 230 physicians and dentists of the Christian Reformed Church plus fifty-five interested affiliate members. Periodic mailings keep society members informed about our projects.

Our office is in the suburbs of Denver where Mrs. Barbara Waller and her able assistants handle all correspondence, accept contributions, and handle the day to day business of our society. The address of the Luke Society is:

THE LUKE SOCIETY, INC.

3401 South Bannock, No. 213

Englewood, Colorado 80110

There are seven members on the Board of Directors; their names are affixed to this report. The newly elected members (Melvin Gesink, M.D. of Denver and Donald Sikkema, M.D. of Grand Haven, Michigan) were chosen by the Society for a three-year term. They replaced Gary Ritsema, D.D.S. of Denver and Marvin Vanden Bosch, M.D. of Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Four board meetings are held annually. Two of these are held at the site of our projects, i.e., Cary, Mississippi and Gallup, New Mexico. The other two are usually held in Grand Rapids and Denver.

REHOBOTH CHRISTIAN HOSPITAL

The hospital is governed by a local Board of Governors elected by the Luke Society Board. It consists of twelve people, seven of whom are Christian Reformed and five of whom are Christians from the local community. The present hospital board includes the following:

Tom Weeda, president
 Ron Polinder, vice-president
 Julius Den Bleyker, secretary
 Robert Adamson, treasurer
 Arthur Bosscher
 Edward Carlisle

Lyle Carney
 John Klein
 Phyllis Tempest
 Lucille Thomason
 Mary Jane Thompson
 Roy Roder

The Medical Arts Building adjacent to the hospital is a beehive of activity—with seven physicians seeing hundreds of patients daily. The latest physician to join them is Dr. Bruce Schuurmann, a radiologist.

Mrs. Ann Schauman is the Hospital Administrator. Under her "regime" the hospital has improved financially though it sorely needs the financial support of the Luke Society and the church at large. Our dream is to have every Christian Reformed Church take at least one collection per year for the Luke Society and its synodically-approved, God-honoring missionary projects.

Every hospital covets approval by the Joint Commission of Hospital Accreditation. We are happy that this commission has approved the Rehoboth Christian Hospital for two more years.

There is something new at Rehoboth Hospital. Three renal dialysis machines have been installed to help purify the blood when a patient's kidneys fail. This is the first kidney dialysis therapy in the Gallup area and the program is self-supporting.

For years the Luke Society has believed that a full time chaplain was needed at Rehoboth Hospital. After much prayer and work we are happy to report that the Rev. Peter Winkle is the new hospital chaplain. He began his work January 14, 1977. The calling church was the Bethany Christian Reformed Church of Gallup. We feel this is an important milestone in the hospital's history.

The Rev. Rolf Veenstra's service was excellent as part time chaplain. He continues to serve as chaplain of the local school and pastor of the Rehoboth Christian Reformed Church. We were desirous of presenting Jesus Christ to the thousands that go through the hospital and Medical Center each year and also provide spiritual leadership to the seventy-five hospital employees.

RETREAT TO NEW MEXICO

In September 1976 the Luke Society in conjunction with the Christian Reformed Home Mission Board sponsored the second eight-day retreat to the Indian mission field. Thirty-nine people enjoyed the tour which began and ended in Albuquerque. The tour leaders were Everett and Rose Van Reken. The retreat was educational, inspirational, and stimulated new interest in medical missions. The people on the retreat were well received by the residents and the local people. Plans are being made by the Home Mission Board to hold a similar retreat in September of 1977.

MISSISSIPPI EVANGELISTIC MEDICINE

Cary Christian Health Center is the nucleus of the Mississippi Evangelistic Medicine project. The medical and dental missionary work is practiced in Cary, Mississippi in a renovated school building. The medical clinic continues to meet the needs of the poor with over five thousand visits in 1976. Every opportunity is taken to present Christianity in word and deed with the result that lives are being changed.

The Center also continues to serve as a training ground for medical students and nurse practitioners. Some Christian Reformed medical students obtain their senior year of training in pediatrics at the Center. This past year Dale Andringa from the University of Iowa and Rick Kruis of Wayne University were able to do this very thing.

The Center also is a beehive of other activities such as Bible classes, crafts, arts, and sewing. The nurses conduct educational classes such as prenatal, maternal and child stimulation.

A dental clinic was established at the center in July 1976. Dr. Gary Cheslek, the dental missionary, is extremely busy with appointments scheduled far in advance. There is a real need for dentists in this area. The dental clinic has been completely equipped and built at a minimum of cost by using volunteer labor and donated material from Christian Reformed people, and dental equipment was donated by retiring Luke Society dentists. Dental Supply Companies opened their hearts by donating over \$10,000 worth of supplies. God has certainly blessed this phase of our work.

Miss Marla Bouma from Denver, Colorado is the new Business Coordinator.

The Kuhn Memorial Hospital is located forty miles south of Cary in Vicksburg, Mississippi. It is a Joint Commission accredited hospital and any patient seen in the Center that needs hospital care is admitted to Kuhn. Poverty is rampant among the people who are served by the Center. Eighty percent of all patients hospitalized by the Cary Christian Health Center have no source of payments (insurance, welfare or medicaid). One can see how important this hospital is for the work of the Center.

CHRISTIAN ECONOMIC CORPORATION

This corporation was formed to conduct the business of the non-medical aspects of the Mississippi Evangelistic Medicine program. It operates under a board of three businessmen and one Luke Society member. This corporation continues to grow. Presently there are three full-time persons employed in making Delta crafts. Markets are found in various Mississippi stores and among Christian Reformed constituency. Many of the people who come to the Center are unemployed and the Christian Economic Corporation tries to fill their need for jobs.

THE SPIRITUAL WORK

The spiritual work continues to grow. There are one hundred fifty children in grades 1-8 in Bible classes which utilize the Christian Reformed Sunday school material. Students of nearby Reformed Theological Seminary help teach sixty teenagers in Bible studies using World Home Bible League materials. These teenagers are also encouraged in various Christian Service projects. Small groups of Bible study are conducted by staff members. Dr. Boelens says, "We have seen lives changed and come into the family of God. Praise God!"

MEDICAL MISSION TRAVEL FUND

This fund was established to aid the Luke Society members to go on a long or short term mission trip to fill in where there is a need. This year the Luke Society helped to send Dr. Norman Boeve (an orthopedic surgeon) to Taiwan for three months to perform special orthopedic surgery at the Children's Hospital in Taiwan. Drs. Mark Cichowski, Terry

De Groot and Fred Veenstra were partially supported when they each served a short term in Nigeria during the last year.

MEDICAL MISSIONARY SCHOLARSHIP FUND

This fund is particularly available to students preparing to work in medical missions. Two people have received aid: Cherolee Rickey and Dale Peerbolte.

EXTERNS

Every year externs are encouraged to spend off-quarters of their senior medical school year either in Mississippi or New Mexico. So far one extern has applied for 1977; two have applied for 1978. It is our prayer that externs who now serve may have their spirits stimulated for further service for God and his kingdom.

As synodical representative I recommend that:

1. Synod grant a Luke Society representative the privilege of the floor when the report is under consideration.
2. Synod continue to place the Luke Society on the approved list of denominational causes regarding financial support.
 - a. The continued need for free care, medical equipment and mortgage payment assistance at Rehoboth Christian Hospital.
 - b. The need for personnel, medical and dental medicines and equipment in the Mississippi Evangelistic Medicine program.
 - c. The continuation of the Medical Mission Scholarship program and funds to assist in staffing Christian Reformed projects.
 - d. Medical Mission Travel Fund to provide quick monies to send physicians, dentists, or students to emergency disaster areas or to provide relief in mission hospitals.
 - e. Full-time Chaplain at Rehoboth Christian Hospital.
3. Elect one of the submitted names to the Luke Society Board as a synodical representative: Dr. Ray De Haan and Dr. Norman Boeve.
 Everett Van Reken, M.D.,
 Synodical Representative

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Gary Vander Ark, M.D., president
 Charles Van Dyken, D.D.S, vice-president
 James Biel, D.D.S., secretary
 Harry Holwerda, M.D., treasurer
 Donald Sikkema, M.D.
 Melvin Gesink, M.D.
 Everett Van Reken, M.D., synodical representative

REPORT 30
REFORMED BIBLE COLLEGE
(Art. 26)

As Synodical Representative for Reformed Bible College, I respectfully submit the following report on the work of this college from March 1976 to February 1977. God has blessed this school since its incorporation in 1939, and significant gains took place in the year past.

1. *Function*—RBC provides specialized training for the unordained worker in church and mission. Students have a choice of study courses: four year Bachelor of Religious Education degree, two year Associate in Religious Education degree, one year Certificate of Biblical Studies for college graduates, and special courses for other students.

2. *Direction*—RBC is administered by a Board of Trustees consisting of 30 members drawn from Canada, the United States, and Mexico. Calvin Bolt serves as board chairman, Dick L. Van Halsema as RBC President, Harold Bruxvoort as Academic Dean, William Jansen as Business Manager, and Mark Vander Ark as Vice-President for Development.

3. *Enrollment*—In January 1977, winter semester registration showed 211 students, an increase from fall semester enrollment of 196. About 150 other students attended evening classes on the campus as well as in Zeeland and Muskegon.

4. *Graduates*—At commencement in May 1976, BRE degrees were awarded to twenty-five four year graduates, ARE degree to ten two year graduates, and Certificates of Biblical Studies to four graduate students. Commencement speaker was Dr. David M. Howard, Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship missions director. Numerous openings are available to RBC graduates on church staffs and mission fields.

5. *Faculty*—As the Rev. Timothy Monsma joined the faculty to teach anthropology and missions, the faculty grew to fifteen members, including president and librarian. The Rev. Addison Soltau accepted an appointment at Covenant Theological Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri, effective in the fall of 1977.

6. *Students*—The college draws students from Christian Reformed, Reformed, and several other denominations. Overseas students came from Greece, Ghana, Indonesia, Mexico, Nigeria, Rhodesia. The majority of students come from the United States and Canada.

7. *Mexico Summer Training Session*—1976 was the ninth season for Mexico STS, with a record number of sixty-one participants from the United States and Canada, served by a staff of twelve persons. The group included single persons, married couples, and families (including the Rev. and Mrs. Verlyn Verbrugge and children from Kalamazoo,

Michigan). STS members completed field training assignments in Mexico, Guatemala, and Nicaragua.

8. *Training and Service Corps*—This two-year program for college graduates and others who have completed Mexico STS began in the fall of 1976. Four adults entered language study in Mexico City and look forward to training assignments by summer of 1977 as teachers of the Word, assisting churches and missions in Latin America. A candidate semester for new applicants is offered at RBC in the fall of 1977, after which participants may enter language study in the country of their choice.

9. *Facilities*—With gratitude to God, RBC dedicated Schaal Residence Hall on January 15, 1977, providing space for seventy-two students. After construction costs are covered completely (\$84,000 remaining to be paid in February), work is to be started on Walters Campus Center, housing food service, bookstore, and offices. Hundreds of local church representatives and other friends worked with RBC staff and national appeal chairman, Martin Ozinga, to request gifts for these buildings.

10. *Finances*—We thank God for income from tuition, congregational offerings, and personal contributions. An audited financial report has been submitted to synod. We respectfully request continued endorsement for one or more offerings.

Reformed Bible College covets the continued prayers of the Christian Reformed people as part of the covenant community committed to "spread through all the earth abroad the honors of (Christ's) Name."

Dick M. Stravers,
Synodical Representative

REPORT 31

THE EVANGELICAL LITERATURE LEAGUE (TELL)

(Art. 43)

It is a pleasure for me to make this annual report to you concerning the work of TELL. Not only is this true because TELL is meeting a specific need in the distribution of Christian literature in Latin America, but because it is also enjoying the evident blessing of God upon this work. The daily responses to literature received and its effect upon the lives of individuals is only one reason for gratitude. The willingness of thousands to join in this work gives us the needed incentive to be busy for the Lord.

We are happy to note that the work of TELL, now in its fifteenth year, has again expanded. Even though the growth is not phenomenal by business standards, more literature was distributed in 1976 than in any previous year. Over forty thousand books were distributed to more than twenty Latin American countries. In addition to the books, more than four million tracts were sent free of charge to these same countries.

The publication of books has continued at a good rate this past year. More than a dozen new books were added to our sales list. The translation and proofreading of these before they can be printed takes many hours of painstaking work. Often it is difficult to find qualified people to carry out these tasks. After more than three years of labor we have been able to add the complete set of the Erdman 17-volume New Testament Commentary to our list. These are being received with eagerness throughout the Spanish-speaking world. The three books on which we have been working more than a year are now ready to go to print. They are Dr. Edward Young's INTRODUCTION TO THE OLD TESTAMENT, Dr. William Hendriksen's MORE THAN CONQUERORS, and Rev. Louis Berkhof's MANUAL OF CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE.

Many of TELL's more popular books had to be reprinted again this year. The amazing sale of Berkhof's SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY has necessitated a fourth reprint of this book in the past six years.

TELL has again worked in close cooperation with the Spanish Literature Committee of the Christian Reformed Church. We have been handling all of its distribution while that committee has concentrated on publication. This mutual arrangement has proved to be a blessing for both organizations and has eliminated any competition in similar work.

TELL continues to enjoy the goodwill and trust of thousands of donors who faithfully help us in the work. In addition to the individuals, most churches have been willing to aid us with at least one offering each year. For all of this we are grateful.

To those involved in the administration and daily activities of TELL an expression of thanks is due: a dedicated board of laymen, the director, Mr. Hubert Van Tol, Mrs. Joanne Pecor as secretary, and not least

of all, Dr. William Rutgers who faithfully represented TELL to the churches.

Finally, we pray that synod will again be led to endorse the work of TELL for financial support by the churches. We beseech your prayers also for this vital work in bringing the gospel of salvation to thousands.

William C. Schultze,
Synodical Representative

THE EVANGELICAL LITERATURE LEAGUE —
GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN
INCOME AND EXPENDITURES

Year ended August 31, 1976

Total Income	\$95,415.87
Total Expenditures	92,314.39
Income Over Expenses	3,101.48

REPORT 32

TRINITY CHRISTIAN COLLEGE

(Art. 26)

This has been a year of significant progress at Trinity Christian College. Below is a list of some benchmarks of this progress for which we are thankful to God and grateful to the Christian Reformed Church and her members:

1. In July 1976, Trinity Christian College was fully accredited by the North Central Association. In addition to an overall very positive evaluation, the visiting team highlighted these three specific areas of commendation:
 - a. Creative integration of quality Christian liberal arts education and specific career preparation through field work and internships.
 - b. Effective use of the unique education resources of the Chicago Metropolitan area.
 - c. Excellence in economy of operation and financial control.
2. Increase in student enrollment from a broader geographical area for the third consecutive year.
3. Substantial planned repayment of capital debt acquired in buying and building Trinity's fine fifty-acre campus as a part of balanced annual operating budgets.
4. Rapid growth of several career related educational programs, especially Business Administration, Metropolitan Studies, and Medical Technology.
5. Opportunity to share through Trinity's Metropolitan Studies Program the rich Chicagoland educational resources with the other colleges serving our churches. Some sixty students from our sister Reformed Christian colleges spent a full semester in Trinity's Metropolitan Studies Program during the 1976-77 academic year.
6. Operation in the Spring Semester, 1977, of Trinity's third semester-long Foreign Study Program in the Netherlands, in which students from our other church related colleges are also allowed to enroll.
7. Acquiring full use, at very low cost, of a complete on-campus computer facility for instructional and administrative uses.
8. A successful year-end 1976 capital debt reduction mailing to the membership of the Christian Reformed Church.
9. Encouraging feedback from area Christian Reformed Churches on the deepening of Christian commitment of their young people who are students at Trinity.
10. Growth in opportunities to serve our area churches by means of faculty and student involvement, and through offering short non-credit adult education classes both on-campus and in churches in our four classis area.
11. Opportunity to enhance our unity with Christian education at every level throughout North America by hosting the annual National

Union of Christian Schools Convention on Trinity's campus in August 1977.

Recollection of God's many blessings in the past deepens our conviction of increased responsibility for the future. The need has never been greater for biblically based higher education to assist our churches in placing in society a membership fully committed to what our fathers called a "Calvinistic World and Life View." A recent Gallup Opinion Index Report on "Religion in America" (1976) showed clearly that students generally become far less religious during their four years at college. From testimony from pastors of our students' home churches, and from data on Trinity collected for a doctoral dissertation at the University of Chicago, we are thankful that most entering Trinity students score high on Christian value orientation, and that this Christian conviction is deepened and broadened through education at Trinity.

We believe, therefore, that Trinity Christian College and our other Christian colleges have a vital ministry in Christ's church and kingdom, especially in these increasingly secular times. We at Trinity commit ourselves to cooperate in every way with our churches throughout North America in the exciting and formidable task of being the people of God in a society which desperately needs to return to the God of the Scriptures. We ask you to give us your sons and daughters, your prayers, your financial support, and your personal enthusiasm and goodwill as together we seek to be more effective servants of God in the 1980's and beyond.

Abel Hoving,
Synodical Representative

REPORT 33
UNITED CALVINIST YOUTH
 (Art. 26)

Calvinettes

The Calvinette organization is happy to report a year of blessings. Our new director, Jo Ilbrink, and new assistant director, Carol Slager, have given us nearly a year of competent, creative, Christian leadership, seasoned with a caring and compassion that has made their work so effective.

We've grown in our ministry. We now total 608 clubs, 442 in United States churches, 165 in Canada and one foreign club, a growth of more than 4% in the past year. Our 1977-1978 approved budget of \$165,800 is about a \$20,000 increase over last year.

Efforts are made to help the adult leadership in the Calvinette program to realize their full potential through

- 1) an annual convention—last year over 350 counselors met in beautiful Vancouver, British Columbia, and this year will meet in the Rocky Mountains of Colorado;
- 2) Council President seminars conducted by our staff;
- 3) visits made to various councils for the purpose of leading workshops and seminars, helping to organize new clubs or councils, etc.; and
- 4) a monthly publication, *Calvinette Cable*, designed for sharing ideas, helps and enthusiasm among counselors.

In addition to encouraging competent leadership for our clubs we work to provide materials which best meet the needs of our growing young girls. New course material for Advanced Calvinettes (grades 8-9) has just been completed and will be ready for use in September. Future efforts will go toward improving our Busy Bee (grade 3) materials. Our own publication for young girls, *The Touch*, has a subscription increase proportionate to our membership growth.

We thank God for providing the Calvinette organization with excellent staff, a compatible board, self-giving counselors, a generous constituency and the challenge of growing young girls. May his kingdom come through this channel, too!

Joanna Meyer,
Synodical Representative

Young Calvinist Federation

The Young Calvinist Federation is enjoying another year of fruitful ministry and substantial growth. There are now 680 youth groups being served by the federation in Canada and the United States.

God has blessed the federation with dedicated administrators, employees and volunteers. The enthusiasm and competence of the director and staff are best seen in the daily activities of this group. I am happy to report that harmony and joy prevail and we have cause to thank

our Lord for these attitudes as we seek to minister effectively to the needs of young people with a variety of social and cultural differences.

In addition to our director and staff, there is a multitude of volunteer leadership. Between 3,000 and 4,000 volunteers serve as executive board members, young people's leaders, society officers, campaign managers, leadership training coordinators, volunteer service coordinators and special committee groups. We praise God for their partnership in the gospel.

The convention at Princeton University was one of the best we have ever had. We are deeply grateful to the Eastern League for their hospitality and exceptional organization in providing an outstanding spiritual growth experience. Our young people are also to be commended for their beautiful behavior on a most beautiful and historic campus. This was truly a fulfilling and rewarding experience for all of us who attended.

The *Insight* magazine continues an effective ministry of relating faith to setting. The staff has not been reluctant to carry readers into the real world as they seek biblical answers for daily experiences. We praise God for people who have the courage and ability to place contemporary issues within biblical perspective.

The total campaign revenue was \$168,100 this fiscal year. We are grateful to the faithful supporters and workers in the annual campaign. Expenses are expected to exceed receipts this year due to the change of the annual board meeting. Any deficit will be covered by UCY general fund money to which YCF has contributed in past years.

The SWIM program continues to broaden our mission. The emphasis this past year and for the future is on building quality into our existing program. We have an excellent program that we are seeking to polish for a more effective ministry. Our director has made this "polishing" a first priority of his personal goals for this ministry. The SWIM ministry has proved a blessing beyond our expectations as the federation seeks to be a distribution center for serving others.

My general observation is that the federation is doing all and more than the denomination expects of it. There is always room for improvement and there is no prevailing attitude that in practice says, "We have arrived." On the contrary, it seems that faults are recognized and corrected and at the same time the federation as a unit builds on its strong points. I am personally thrilled at the thought of having such a well-organized program within our denomination teaching our young people how to participate in and understand our world.

The director of YCF, the Rev. James Lont, would again appreciate a few moments to address the Synod of 1977. He would like to share some of the highlights of this past year and his enthusiasm for this ministry.

Robert Menkveld,
Synodical Representative

REPORT 34
WORLD HOME BIBLE LEAGUE
(Art. 32)

During the year 1976 the World Home Bible League made available to our churches, pastors, and missionaries thousands of Bibles, New Testaments, Gospel portions, and Bible study courses for use in their programs of evangelism. Scriptures in several different languages were produced in special format for distribution at the Olympic games in Canada. Special Scripture editions and Bible study courses were provided in conjunction with the Bicentennial celebration in the United States. Scripture versions made available were: the New International, the American Standard, the King James, and the paraphrased Living Bible.

Foreign Distribution

The World Home Bible League is presently distributing Scripture in over forty different countries. The largest distribution is in Japan, Taiwan, Africa, and Latin America. A new avenue of reaching thousands of Latin Americans was opened several years ago. By negotiating with high officials in government, the World Home Bible League has been able to place New Testaments in classrooms as a textbook for reading and study. And in every instance the placement is made with the assurance of the officials that it will be read and studied as a textbook in the class. At present this program is operating in Bolivia, Peru, Guatemala, and Brazil. Many young people are reading the Bible for the first time in their lives and are coming to know the Lord. In Guatemala there are over 300,000 young people in such classes under the supervision of missionaries and national Christians. Guatemala is the smallest country in which this program is in operation. Over two million New Testaments will be needed in 1977 for placement in classrooms.

A request for 500,000 Portuguese New Testaments for the schools of Brazil has been received for the 1977 school term. A number of other countries, including two in Africa, have expressed interest in a similar program.

Scriptures have also been made available to our Christian Reformed missionaries in Mexico, Honduras, Puerto Rico, Japan, and Taiwan. Over 1,300,000 Scriptures have been distributed in India alone in 1976.

Project Philip Bible Studies

Project Philip reports significant advances in church growth among churches overseas using the World Home Bible League's Bible Study courses. In Taiwan, three hundred churches report an average monthly church growth rate of about three to five members each for a cumulative total of 1,500. Approximately 2,000 Bible courses are being distributed every working day to churches in India. We are grateful to God for these encouraging reports.

The Project Philip department has recently launched a new Bible study program in the United States and Canada in which laymen are trained to teach the Bible by means of filmstrips in the home. The filmstrips, illustrated by Dr. E. Boeve of Calvin College, are extremely provocative and form an excellent base for discussion. The Home Mission Board of the Christian Reformed Church has agreed to conduct an official field test and pilot project this year in several of its fields.

Project Philip has also launched a new program providing courses for teaching the Bible as literature in the high school. Approximately 1,500 schools have requested sample copies for possible inclusion in their literature programs.

Wycliffe Bible Translators' Publications

The World Home Bible League published Scripture translations of Wycliffe Bible Translators in eighty-five different languages in 1976. One hundred and twenty-four New Testaments, Gospels, and Old Testament sections were printed. The estimated cost of publications requested by Wycliffe in 1977 is in excess of \$500,000. The Bible League is printing translations of Scriptures from Wycliffe branches in Australia, Bolivia, Brazil, the Camerouns, Central America, Ghana, Indonesia, Ivory Coast, Mexico, Nigeria, North America, Paa New Guinea, and Peru.

The World Home Bible League is eager to serve the churches, pastors, and missionaries of our denomination in their programs of evangelism. It is grateful for Christian Reformed personnel on its board of trustees and staff. It celebrated the twenty-fifth anniversary of Mr. Wm. Ackerman's employment as its Director this past summer. Mr. Ackerman is a member of the Christian Reformed Church. The League is grateful especially for the many prayers of Christian Reformed people in its behalf as well as its financial support.

The World Home Bible League requests that synod again recommend it to the churches for both prayer and financial support.

John A. De Kruyter,
Synodical Representative

STUDY COMMITTEE REPORTS

REPORT 35

MARRIAGE GUIDELINES

(Art. 76)

PREFACE

The Synod of 1975 referred Report 38, Marriage Guidelines, to the churches for study as the committee had requested.

We want to take this occasion to thank the consistories and individuals who responded to our report. We were gratified by the many responses that commended the report and expressed agreement with it. We benefited greatly by those responses that pointed out weaknesses in the report. The committee considered seriously every response and every criticism.

In resubmitting the report it will be noted that in addition to minor alterations the most extensive changes are to be found in II. Biblical Teaching Regarding Divorce, C. *The Scope of Porneia as Possible Grounds for Divorce*, and in III. Biblical Teaching Regarding Remarriage, B. *The Remarriage of Persons Divorced on Grounds Not Recognized as Being Legitimate in the Bible*.

The following altered report is, we believe, an improvement over the one submitted in 1975. It is our belief that the report is true to the teachings of Scripture. We have struggled long and hard with difficult passages. We were genuinely concerned to determine what the requirements of Scripture were regarding marriage, divorce, and remarriage. We believe the report and the guidelines will serve our churches well if the recommendations are seriously considered. The problems in marriage and divorce are rapidly increasing; the church must be prepared to deal with them.

Communications received by the study committee since the synod of 1976 will be relayed to the advisory committee of synod which will deal with this report.

THE MANDATE

The Synod of 1973 appointed the undersigned to serve as a committee on Marriage Guidelines. Our mandate reads as follows: “. . . to provide guidelines in the light of: a. previous synodical decisions; b. the study committee report (1973); c. the reactions of the synodical advisory committee (Report 4, B, Art. 62, 1973); d. the original overture (Overture 18, 1971)” (Acts of Synod 1973, p. 59).

HISTORY OF THE MANDATE

This mandate has its source in an overture sent to the Synod of 1971 by Classis Toronto. That classis overtured Synod of 1971 “to appoint a study committee to draw up new 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.” Classis Toronto then adds its study on Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage (Acts of Synod 1971, page 632, Overture 18).

In response to the overture of Classis Toronto, synod appointed a study committee. This committee reported to the Synod of 1973 (Acts of Synod 1973, pp. 595-607), interpreting its mandate as follows:

“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."

The marriage guidelines submitted by the committee reporting to Synod 1973 have considerable merit. In dealing with this report the synodical advisory committee had recommended some extensive and drastic revisions. In considering these revisions synod concluded that it would be more advisable to appoint a new study committee rather than to proceed with the laborious procedures of revising a document. Synod then decided to appoint our committee with the mandate quoted at the beginning of this report.

It is worthy of note that the Synod of 1973 did adopt the following as presented by the synodical advisory committee:

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 (Acts of Synod, Report 40, p. 601).

"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 (Report 40, pp. 597, 598).

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.

The remainder of the report was not acted upon by synod since this was committed into the hands of our committee and became part of our materials as matter to be studied. We quote for the purpose of reflecting the advisory committee's reactions:

"That synod observe the following with respect to the study committee's second recommendation" (Acts of Synod 1973, pp. 606, 607).

a. Though it is true that there is a distinction between "internal marital breakdown" and "legal divorce," the former is not necessarily a biblical ground for the latter" (Acts of Synod 1973, pp. 599, 600).

b. We reject the statement, "Adultery be viewed in its broad meaning as marital infidelity," because this statement leaves open the possibility for a wide variety of grounds for divorce and in this way would be in conflict with 1956 synodical decisions on divorce.

c. Though we recognize that these terms can be misunderstood and misapplied, we reject the committee's recommendation that "talk of 'biblical' and 'unbiblical' divorce be discontinued as at best confusing." While agreeing that any divorce is tragic, we reaffirm that a "biblical divorce" is one which is granted on the basis of the ground which Scripture allows.

d. We reject the recommendation that "the practice of necessarily excluding a person guilty of so-called 'unbiblical divorce' from church membership be dropped" since we judge that what is said here is not in fact the present practice.

This latter quotation from the advisory committee's report as well as the preceding section that was adopted by synod received considerable attention in our studies since we judged these to be substantive in criticism of and objection to the study committee's report.

The remainder of the synodical advisory committee's report contains recommendations regarding Part III and IV of the study committee's report. Our committee has reviewed these recommendations and judges them to be essentially modifications of the study committee's report. Our presentation of guidelines will reflect the material presented by both the study and advisory committees.

PREVIOUS SYNODICAL DECISIONS

To summarize past synodical decisions would unduly lengthen this report. It can be said that prior to 1956 our church's preoccupation was with the problem of church membership for persons remarried following a non-biblical divorce. Divorce and remarriage has been listed on the agenda of synods twenty-eight times between the years of 1900 and 1950. From 1950 to 1971 marital problems appear in twelve Agendas for Synod.

The decision of the Synod of 1956 constitutes the stand of the Christian Reformed Church regarding divorce and remarriage at the present time. These decisions are:

"1. No substantial and conclusive scriptural evidence has been produced to establish the thesis that parties remarried after being divorced on the ground of their own adultery, or divorced on non-biblical grounds, are living in continual adultery.

"2. No substantial and conclusive scriptural evidence has been produced to warrant the demand that a person remarried after being divorced on the ground of his own adultery, or divorced on non-biblical grounds, must, in order to prove the sincerity of his repentance, cease living in the ordinary marriage relationship with his present spouse."

Having taken this position, synod further declared what may properly be called procedure:

"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 and have remarried, and 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. (Note: the Synod of 1968 decided to drop the last sentence of the above, namely, "Such . . . classis." Synod did state that it becomes the responsibility of classis in case of appeal. See Acts 1968, p. 61.)

"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 for forgiveness, and the general provisions of the Church Order," (Acts 1956, Art. 96, p. 59 and Art. 152, p. 118).

MARRIAGE GUIDELINES

I. BIBLICAL TEACHINGS REGARDING MARRIAGE

In attempting to formulate guidelines for pastors and consistories in dealing with marriage and marital problems it is important to understand the nature of marriage itself. The biblical view of marriage, divorce and remarriage can be summarized as follows:

A. *Basic Biblical Teaching*

Marriage may be described as a mutual relationship, a social arrangement, a legal agreement, but it is much more than these terms imply. According to Scripture it is divinely ordained and instituted so that Christian marriage is holy and sacred, a truth that is in need of constant emphasis.

Consider the following facets of biblical teaching:

1. The male and female identity is rooted in God's creative activity. We are told that God "created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female created he them" (Gen. 1:27). From the succeeding context it is clear that this basic similarity (image of God), with the essential difference of sex (male and female), envisions the close and intimate union of man and woman as husband and wife. Jesus emphasized this truth when he said, "Have you not read that he who made them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one'? So they are no longer two but one. What therefore God has joined together, let no man put asunder" (Matt. 19:4-6).

2. There is clear evidence of the divine intent that the woman shall complement the man; she shall be his helper. God himself declared, "It is not good that the man shall be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him" (Gen. 2:18). On man's part there evidently was a deeply felt need as indicated by his exclamation when the woman was brought to him, "This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh" (Gen. 2:23). Marriage as God ordained it and sex as God created it are among the highest, holiest, and happiest gifts God has bestowed.

3. The closeness and intimacy of the marriage bond, as God intended it, is indicated in the manner in which he created the woman. Fashioned from Adam's rib, she is indeed flesh of his flesh (Gen. 2:23) and this is followed by the divine instruction, "Therefore, a man leaves his father

and his mother and cleaves to his wife, *and they become one flesh*" (Gen. 2:24). The marriage relationship is then the most intimate of all human bonds or relationships.

4. The fact that marriage is divinely instituted is also beautifully underscored by the statement, ". . . and the rib which the Lord God had taken from the man he made into woman *and brought her to the man*" (Gen. 2:22).

5. The permanency of the marriage bond is emphasized by the divine injunction that a man shall leave father and mother and cleave unto his wife (Gen. 2:24). This is strengthened by the biblical emphasis on faithfulness, by the constant warning against and condemnation of adultery, and by the instruction of Jesus in Mark 10 (see also Matt. 19) concerning marriage and divorce.

6. The biblical norm for marriage is monogamy—one man and one woman. This fact is substantiated in such references as Genesis 2:18, 24; Matthew 19:4-6; I Corinthians 7:2; Ephesians 5:33.

Conclusion:

The fact that God created man male and female, created the woman of Adam's rib and brought her unto him; and the injunction that a man leave father and mother and cleave to his wife, clearly indicate that marriage is divinely ordained and instituted. This must be emphasized lest any conclude that marriage is simply a man-formed relationship. It is not of human origin.

When God blessed that first union and added, "Be fruitful and multiply . . ." it would indicate that this has much to say as to the purpose of marriage, the maturity of the individuals involved, the permanency of the marriage relationships, and the enrichment and strengthening of the bond of love by the birth, blessing and training of children. (See also Psalm 127 and 128.)

B. *Distinctive Character of Christian Marriage*

Marriage is a unique union between husband and wife, built upon love and characterized by fidelity.

The distinctiveness of the Christian marriage relationship is found in the following:

1. The marriage relationship is rooted in a divinely created sexuality. By means of marriage God intends to enhance the glory of each by causing the man and woman to complement each other. "The Lord God said, 'It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him'" (Gen. 2:18). This declaration by God indicates that the expected state for the majority of mankind is the marriage of one man and one woman. Scripture, however, clearly allows Christian individuals the right to choose the unmarried state. This position is set forth in the study on homosexuality adopted by the Synod of 1973. (See Acts of Synod 1973, pp. 624, 625.) I Corinthians 7 is frequently cited as scriptural evidence favoring the unmarried state. However, the chapter clearly indicates that Paul advocates the unmarried state because of his concern for total commitment to the cause of Christ under certain circumstances.

2. True marriage can come to its own only where there is real love. For the Christian this love is distinctive: It has its source in God. "Love

is of God, and he who loves is born of God and knows God. He who does not love does not know God; for God is love" (I John 4:7, 8). "We love, because he first loved us" (I John 4:19). Love in the human heart is born of the love of God. Only those who are new creatures in Christ can love as God loves (I John 3:10, 4:11f). This love is implanted in the human heart by the Holy Spirit (Rom. 5:5), and is the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22). The law requires that we love others as we love ourselves (Matt. 22:39); however, Christ has set before us a higher standard: "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another" (John 13:34, 35). This love can find one of its richest expressions in the marriage of two Christian individuals. Love is beautifully described in I Corinthians 13. Such love seeks the welfare of the other (Rom. 15:1-3; Gal. 6:20); gladly forgives injury (Eph. 4:31, 32); and gives the place of honor to the other (Rom. 12:10).

Mature marital love is composed of romantic pleasure (*eros*) and companionship of the highest order in sharing life with one another (*philia*). Christian marital love is unique because it can be characterized by what is called *agapic love*—the capacity to forgive, to seek the welfare of the other, to find fulfillment in giving, to love when love is not returned. Christ becomes the pattern and inspiration for mature, Christian love in marriage. "Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her" (Eph. 5:25). Such love rules out and prohibits selfishness and self-centered ambitions in marriage.

3. Marital love is expressed in the sex act. The marriage bond warrants the sexual relationship and is confirmed and consummated by it. Outside this union in marriage all human sex acts become sinful. Agapic love transforms the sex act as in the highest way seeking to satisfy mutual fulfillment and enrichment. It rules out the lust of seeking self-satisfaction or arbitrary withholding without considering the marriage partner.

4. The marriage relationship is exclusive. It tolerates no encroachment upon or violation of this sacred union. Illicit sexual encounter (*porneia*) is so serious a violation of the marriage union that our Lord recognized that it could be considered permissible ground for divorce (Matt. 5:32).

5. In marriage the two parties enter into a contractual, covenantal relationship. Solemn vows are given and received in marriage—vows that are recognized by God and fellowmen. In these vows love is promised and fidelity is pledged. Fidelity involves loyalty, trust, love, devotion, reliability. The breaking of the vow and the betrayal of the trust involves sin against the marriage partner and guilt before God. It is destructive of the basic structure of society and generally involves great suffering for families. The church must recognize the obligation to define clearly the responsibilities of marriage to those contemplating marriage and to remind believers repeatedly of their solemn duty to keep their vows.

6. Marriage vows must be taken without reservation and the covenanted marriage is intended to last until death terminates the relationship. "A woman is bound by law to her husband as long as he lives, but if her husband dies she is discharged from the law concerning the

husband. Accordingly, she will be called an adulteress if she lives with another man while her husband is alive. But if her husband dies, she is free from that law, and if she marries another man she is not an adulteress" (Rom. 7:2, 3). "What therefore God has joined together, let no man put asunder" (Matt. 19:6).

C. *The Husband as Head*

In marriage the husband is the head of the wife. Ephesians 5: 22-31 spells out in a beautiful way the relationship between a husband and wife. This pointed paragraph about marriage is introduced by a leading thought, viz. "Be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ" (vs. 21). The overarching principle is set forth as a relationship of mutual subjection.

The Ephesian passage continues with the much debated words: "Wives be subject to your husbands" (vs. 22). Paul recognizes a divinely ordained hierarchy in the order of creation. When the wife recognizes and accepts her submissiveness to the husband she does so "as unto the Lord," acknowledging his ordinance. It is clear that this concept of submissiveness does not contain an idea of inferiority. 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.

The husband is said to be the head of his wife as Christ is head of his church (vs. 23ff). The husband is head (kephale), not lord. Headship does not suggest the function of giving orders or of final authority over every matter. We are guilty of a serious anachronism if we take head as a directing, controlling organ of the body. In Paul's day, according to popular psychology, both Greek and Hebrew, a man reasoned and purposed not "with his head" but "in his heart." Headship, as Paul makes clear in his analogy of Christ and the church, means to give oneself in love for the body. Headship also involves responsibility. As head of the marriage relationship the husband assumes obligations to his wife. The husband is to take the lead in setting the religious directions of the marriage, its meaning, goals, and purposes. In the exercise of these obligations he should merit the respect of his wife. This headship also has bearing upon the family relationship. The husband and father assumes a representative role and becomes accountable to God in a very special way.

The subjection of a wife to her husband, therefore, is not that of compulsive, slavish fear, but that which comes spontaneously from freedom. Furthermore, such an attitude exists and may be expected to endure, only if and when the husband manifests Christlike devotion and love.

D. *Relationship of Marriage to State and Church*

The institution of marriage is interrelated with both state and church in so intimate a fashion that for Christian marriage the role played by both state and church may not be taken lightly. The biblical command to "be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth" unavoidably places marriage in a foundational position for society in general and the

church in particular. Marriage, and the family which emerges from it, serves as the meeting place for the past and the future so that human society may continue and the heritage of the faith be committed from one generation to the next. The family as the expected result of marriage is both the basic unit of society and the basic covenantal unit of the Christian church. It is, therefore, very important to define the relationship between marriage and both the state and the church.

1. Marriage and its Relationship to the State

The state serves as a jural (legal, judicial) association which integrates its members within a given territory in a public judicial manner. It binds its citizenry together and provides the context of order within the public domain into a jural order. The qualifying aspect of the state, that which serves as the criterion by which its character should be shaped, is justice. Governmental agencies of every type and on every level, therefore, must be characterized as administrative agencies for the realization of justice within a given territory. As the administrator of justice, the government acts as God's agent within the state to provide the just order that God requires for the fulfillment of the lives of the citizenry.

This understanding of the character of the state has significant relevance for marriage.

Marriage is the bi-unity of man and woman for the service of God in this world. It differs from other societal relationships in that it does not emerge (or evolve) in the process of historical differentiation as most other societal relationships do. Rather, marriage was established by God at the very dawn of history. "Societal relationship," therefore, is an inadequate term for marriage, since it is a fundamental anthropological matter. That is, God ordained that in this bi-unity alone human life unfolds itself in fulfillment of the original commandment, the creational mandate to be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth. This implies, among other things, that marriage does not owe its existence to the state and marriages are not established by the state through any of its agencies.

But whatever precisely the nature of marriage is, whether the all-embracing life integration of two sexually different people or an ethically qualified social relationship, the people who unite into this bi-unity are also citizens of a state. This means that in the public, legal aspect of their lives they are members of a jural community, and they ought to submit themselves to the public legal order within the state (cf. Rom. 13). They should desire the recognition and sanction of the state to be assured that their marriage contributes to the order of justice which is necessary for the integration of citizens within the public domain.

To state it somewhat differently, as members of the state, the men and women who marry change their position within the state as of the day of their wedding. From that day on they are no longer merely two individual beings, but a bi-unity, which has implications for the public legal domain such as, the change of names, the ownership of property, and the possibility of having children who will also be members of the state, and the responsibility of the state for integrating these

new members into the public order. With good reason Paul's admonition to submit to every ordinance for the Lord's sake include marriage laws, such as the postponement of the marriage plans of those whose blood test reveals active venereal disease, lest the public order be adversely affected.

The function of the state is both the recognition and the sanctioning of a marriage. The state does not establish a marriage relation since marriage is far more than a legal relationship. But the state legitimizes a marriage and proclaims, as it were, that from now on, all others in the state are under obligation to recognize and respect two particular people as married. Marriage partners, on their part, ought not to consider themselves married until such recognition and sanction is given.

2. Marriage and its Relationship to the Church

The Bible speaks of the church both as the body of Christ and as instituted, local, congregations of believers with their office bearers. As the body of Christ, the church comprises all believers everywhere, a spiritual temple of which Christ is head. As a local worshipping community of believers with its office bearers, the church is a fellowship comprised of Christian families, as the basic covenantal unit, whose head is Christ. The task of the church as institution is to faithfully proclaim the Word of God for all life, which, of course, includes the Word in its relevance for marriage. It is the church in this latter sense upon which we focus our attention in considering the relation of the church to marriage.

The church is the covenant community. That is, it is the believing, worshipping, and serving community of those who acknowledge God's gracious promise to be our God (in the fullest most comprehensive sense), and the God of our children. This covenant, first made explicit with Abraham, is assured to his seed, whose seed we are since we are Christ's (cf. Gal. 3:7-29). Through its faithful proclamation of the gospel, the church presses home the implications of the covenant both to parents and their children. A high priority matter among these implications is the need for prayerful selectivity regarding the Christian commitment of one being considered as a marriage partner. To a large extent the covenant faithfulness of the succeeding generation depends on the Christian character of the marriage relationships of the current generation. To be sure, the church, by God's grace, will always include "many who are far off, as many as the Lord our God shall call unto him." But the membership of the Christian church is comprised predominantly of those who, raised in the bosom of the covenant, accept the obligations and privileges of the covenant upon reaching the age of mature discernment.

Recognizing that the quality and character of marriage carries far reaching consequences for the church and its continuing ministry, Christians should desire to be guided by the church in every stage leading to marriage. Further, the recognition and sanction of the church should be desired at the time of marriage as well as throughout their marriage, and the partners in marriage should be expected to openly accept, in

the midst of the believing community, the responsibilities to which the biblical teaching of covenant calls them. This might well be recognized by some liturgical activity to indicate the blessing of the church upon the marriage. This is not to say that marriage is an ecclesiastical relationship, but the church does acknowledge the Christian legitimacy of the new relationship which two people who marry begin, and proclaims to the believing community that through a particular marriage a new covenant unit has been initiated.

Marriage at its heart is the bond of fidelity to which a man and a woman commit themselves before God. But it is not a purely private matter between two individuals. The order of human society and the organic unity of the body of Christ which is the church, necessarily requires that two people committing themselves to each other do so in recognition of the fact that both church and state are agents of God through which his approbation upon their marriage is assured.

II. BIBLICAL TEACHING REGARDING DIVORCE

Jesus placed strong emphasis upon the permanence of marriage. "And Pharisees came up to him and tested him by asking, 'Is it lawful to divorce one's wife for any cause?' He answered, 'Have you not read that he who made them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one'? So they are no longer two but one. 'What therefore God has joined together, let no man put asunder.' They said to him, 'Why then did Moses command one to give a certificate of divorce, and to put her away'? He said to them, 'For your hardness of heart Moses allowed you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so. And I say to you: whoever divorces his wife, except for unchastity, and marries another, commits adultery'" (Matt. 19:3-9; see also Mark 10:2-9). It is evident that Jesus confirms the creation ordinance that marriage is intended to be binding for life. In this time of easy divorce (in some areas, without cause) it is most important that the permanence of marriage be emphasized.

While Jesus emphasizes the permanence of marriage it would appear that he allows for justifiable cause for breaking the marriage relationship, that is *porneia* in Matthew 5:32 and 19:9. Since there are differences of opinion regarding the specific meaning of *porneia*, the word and its usage in Matthew 5 and 19 deserve careful study.

A. *The Specific Meaning of Porneia in Matthew 5:32 and 19:9*

1. Current Interpretations

a. The study committee in its report to the Synod of 1973 has argued that "adultery" covers "all the ways in which infidelity in marriage can take place" (Acts of Synod 1973, p. 598). Again: "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" (p. 600). Out of this background they approach Matthew 5:32 and 19:9. They distinguish *porneia* (fornication) from *moicheia* (adultery) and assert that in Matthew it is the Greek trans-

lation 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 (p. 601).

A bit later the committee states: "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 given above would be strengthened" (p. 601). Again, in the same paragraph: "In any case, it is not possible to limit fornication to physical infidelity" (p. 601).

We confess that we do not understand everything that is stated and claimed in the last full paragraph on page 601. For example, we do not know what they mean when they say: "He is not referring to such cases of fornication in this instance." And we do not know who the "many exegetes" are who are alleged to be tending to consider *porneia* as referring to infidelity within marriage. But the main drift of their argument is clear.

b. On the other hand, the Synod of 1973 did adopt one part of the report of her advisory committee in which the committee offers the following as one example of the fact that Part II of the study committee's report is not in its entirety in accord with the biblical teaching on marriage (Acts of Synod 1973, p. 59): "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." The advisory committee (and, therefore synod) did not say specifically what they thought *porneia* specifically means in Matthew 5:32 and 19:9, but the implication seems to be that they regard *porneia* to mean "illegitimate sexual intercourse." This is the position of many exegetes, though there is some variety on whether and to what extent *porneia* here should be limited to adultery or also to include pre-marital unchastity.

c. Some exegetes (many recent Roman Catholic exegetes, but not exclusively so) understand *porneia* in these passages to refer to physical sexual intercourse but argue that (pushing hard the distinction between *porneia* and *moicheia*) the word refers exclusively to "premarital sexual intercourse." (One such exegete is E. J. Mally in *Jerome Biblical Commentary*, N.T., p. 44.)

d. Other exegetes (once again mostly Roman Catholic) understand *porneia* in these two passages to refer to "Christians who, prior to their conversion, had married within prohibited degrees of blood relationship as stated in Leviticus 18:6-18," or, in other words, to an "unlawful union of concubinage." (The first quotation above is from *The New American Bible*, N.T., p. 31 and the second from J. L. McKenzie in the *Jerome Biblical Commentary*, N.T., p. 72.) It should be noted that these two positions (items c and d here) now taken by recent Roman Catholic exegetes differ from the older and traditional Roman Catholic position which claimed that adultery was not a permissible ground for complete divorce; rather adultery can be a ground for what they call "separation from bed and board." (For this position, one may consult still *The Jerusalem Bible*, N.T., pp. 45f.)

There may be other interpretations of the word, but as far as we could determine these are the four major interpretations. In our study we must come to some judgment about the correctness of these positions.

2. Deuteronomy 24:1-4

The study committee (1973) may have overstated their case when they said that "in Matthew it (the reference to *porneia*) is the Greek translation for the 'some indecency' of Deuteronomy 24:1" (p. 601). But they were correct, as almost all exegetes allow, that there is a close connection with the problematics of Matthew and Deuteronomy 24:1. This is obvious from especially two things. (1) The reference in Matthew 19:3 to divorce "for any cause" clearly places this question in the context of the rabbinical discussions which centered around the interpretation of the ground for divorce in Deuteronomy 24:1 ("because he found in her some indecency," *'erwah dabar*). And though in Matthew 19:4ff, Jesus shows them that their question is a wrong one, he nonetheless seems to come back to it in Matthew 19:9. (2) The phrase in Matthew 5:32 "except on the ground of unchastity" employs a rather unique Greek construction (*parektos logou porneias*) which, especially because of the similarity between *logos* and *dabar*, seems to be structured according to one of the interpretations of Deuteronomy 24:1 which read it as *dabar 'erwah*. In any event, one can hardly escape looking at Deuteronomy 24:1-4 as background for *porneia* in Matthew.

First of all, it must be noted that Deuteronomy 24:1-4 does not institute divorce, it merely acknowledges the existence of the custom and, to some extent, regulates it. The correct translation of the verses is that found in the RSV in which the first three verses are all part of the introductory section of the conditional sentence and verse 4 gives the conclusion. In this sense, this passage deals only indirectly with divorce, in that its main contention is the prohibition of the reunion of partners after a divorce and remarriage.

Nevertheless, in the process the passage does make reference to a situation in which after a man and woman are married, "if then she finds no favor in his eyes because he has found some indecency in her. . . ." The phrase translated "some indecency" is very difficult to interpret and that phrase (Heb.: *'erwah dabar*) was the center of an exegetical controversy among the great rabbis who lived at the time of the New Testament. Shammai insisted that it would be understood in such a way that divorce be permitted only for adultery (with emphasis upon the *'erwah*) while Hillel taught that for a wide variety of reasons (with emphasis upon the *dabar*) divorce could be granted, including such trivial causes as inferior cooking.

But what did the phrase mean to the author of Deuteronomy? It means literally "nakedness of a thing," and was translated in the Septuagint (LXX) as a "shameful matter" (*aschemon pragma*). The exact meaning of the phrase for the Deuteronomist is difficult to define, since it occurs only one other time in the Old Testament and that in Deuteronomy 23:14(15) where it refers to a kind of ceremonial uncleanness in connection with human excrement. J. Murray (*Divorce*, pp. 9-12) argues that one must locate the meaning somewhat midway between the

interpretations of Shammai and Hillel. It seems to mean something short of adultery since there are other prescriptions and punishments given for adultery and divorce is not one of them (cf. esp. Deut. 22:13-29). On the other hand, it means something more than the trivial interpretation of Hillel since the context demands some sort of shameful conduct (cf. also the LXX translation) and since the other occurrence of the phrase points to ceremonial defilement. Also to be noted is the fact that the word *'erwah* by itself is used frequently in connection with illicit sexual relations (esp. Lev. 18 and 20). Perhaps Murray's statement is the best we can do: "while falling short of illicit sexual intercourse it may well be that the indecency consisted in some kind of shameful conduct connected with sex life" (p. 12).

To the extent that Deuteronomy 24:1 may lie behind the exceptive clauses in Matthew 5:32 and 19:9, it is clear that one cannot simply equate *porneia* with adultery in the strict sense. On the other hand, to the extent that the interpretation of Shammai may lie behind the exceptive clauses, there appears to be support for understanding *porneia* as sexual unchastity.

3. *Porneia* in the Old Testament and elsewhere in the New Testament

It is generally agreed that originally *porneia* meant "fornication," that is, the unfaithfulness of a woman before marriage. Specifically, it often designated prostitution, so that a *porne* was a female and a *pornos* a male prostitute. But it also came to have a broader reference to indicate unchastity or every kind of unlawful sexual intercourse.

In the LXX the word *porneia* translates a number of words that stem from the Hebrew *zanah*. In the Old Testament it refers to harlotry, in connection with Tamar, Genesis 38:24. It can also be used of a married woman, Hosea 2:2; 3:1, and in Hosea 2:2 *porneia* is used interchangeably with adultery. It is used also in a figurative sense to describe "unfaithfulness to Yahweh" (cf. Hos. 1-3; Jer. 3:1-4; Ezek. 16 and 23, etc.).

In the New Testament the word *porneia* is used some twenty-two times. Only in the book of Revelation is the term used in the figurative sense to designate apostasy from God (cf. Rev. 19:4; 14:8; 18:3; perhaps also 2:21). For the rest the word is used to refer to every kind of illicit sexual relationship and thus sexual immorality in general (cf. I Cor. 6:13, 18; II Cor. 12:21; Gal. 5:19; Eph. 5:3; and Col. 3:5). In I Corinthians 5:1 it designates incest (a man married to his father's wife) and some think that the references in Acts 15:20, 29 and 21:25 are to marriage within forbidden degrees of consanguinity (Lev. 18), though this is disputed. Occasionally *porneia*, by being used in a list with *moicheia*, is distinguished from that latter term (cf. Mt. 15:19 and Mk. 7:21). On the other hand, the warning against *porneia* in I Corinthians 7:2 and I Thessalonians 4:3 are structured in such a way so as to include illicit sexual intercourse on the part of married persons. That *porneia* can refer to adultery on the part of married persons (and thus as a synonym for *moicheia*) can best be seen in the quotation from Sirach 23:22, 23: "So it is with a woman who leaves

her husband and provides an heir by a stranger . . . she has committed adultery (*emoicheuthe*) through harlotry (*porneia*) and brought forth children by another man."

4. *Porneia* in Matthew 5:32 and 19:9

We find little real support for the 1973 study committee's interpretation of *porneia* in these passages. It is true, as they point out (pp. 598f), that *moicheia* (adultery) and *porneia* (fornication or harlotry) can be and is used in both the Old Testament and New Testament to refer to a breaking of trust or fidelity over against God. But if they were to draw the logical conclusion from this observation for the meaning of *porneia* in Matthew 5:32 and 19:9, then these passages would teach that the only legitimate ground for divorce is "apostasy from God," a kind of "spiritual adultery." As a matter of fact, this interpretation was advocated by St. Augustine, which had the happy conclusion of bringing Matthew 5:32 and 19:9 into a kind of easy harmony with I Corinthians 7:10-16 (cf. P. E. Harrell, *Divorce and Remarriage in the Early Church*, pp. 122f). The study committee report is correct in saying that it is difficult to interpret these two texts as if *moicheia* were in the text and not *porneia*.

Now even though *porneia* and not *moicheia* appears in the Matthean exceptive clauses, we must take seriously the possibility that *porneia* in a given context may refer primarily to *moicheia*, or "adultery," that is, the sexual infidelity of a marriage partner. The survey given above indicates that this is certainly a possibility. The setting here in Matthew suggests that in the exceptive clause *porneia* does refer primarily to adultery since Jesus is speaking about married persons. This primary reference to adultery in these passages is also supported by the fact that the interpretation of "some indecency" of Deuteronomy 24:1 as referring to "adultery" may lie behind the formulation of the exceptive clause. Thus there is much in favor of, and nothing against, understanding the *primary* reference of *porneia* in Matthew 5:32 and 19:9 to be "adultery," that is, sexual infidelity on the part of one of the marriage partners.

Yet if Jesus wished to limit the meaning to "adultery," it is strange that he did not use the word *moicheia*. And even though the primary reference in the exceptive clauses may be to adultery, this does not preclude the fact that *porneia* was specifically chosen in order to cover more than adultery alone. Here the following additional considerations are in order. (1) One interpretation, particularly from the Roman Catholic side, suggests that *porneia* means here "marriage within prohibited degrees of blood relationship" as stated in Leviticus 18:6-18. *Porneia* certainly has that meaning in I Corinthians 5:1 and may have that meaning in Acts 15:20, 29. Although it appears incorrect to limit the meaning of *porneia* to that in Matthew's exceptive clauses, it is certainly possible that such kinds of "unchastity" could function as one aspect of *porneia* in Matthew 5:32 and 19:9. (2) Since the word *porneia* covers illicit sexual relationships in general, it can be suggested that other forms of sexual vice, such as, e.g., homosexuality, would be included here. (3) Finally, the suggestion has been made that since

the word *porneia* was closely associated with "harlotry" and "prostitution," the word suggests a kind of persistence in sexual vice. Thus it would seem to connote a kind of persistent and unrepentant adultery or unchastity (cf. D. W. Shaner, *A Christian View of Divorce*, p. 50).

Thus, in summary the following points should be made: (1) *porneia* in Matthew 5:32 and 19:9 does not refer to "spiritual adultery" or "infidelity of any kind," but refers to sexual infidelity; (2) although the meaning of *porneia* is broader than *moicheia*, its primary reference in Matthew 5:32 and 19:9 is to adultery; (3) the word *porneia* in Matthew 5:32 and 19:9 should be translated as "unchastity" and be understood to include such sexual infidelity as incest and homosexualism; and (4) because of the association of *porneia* with "harlotry" and "prostitution," the accent appears to fall on persistent and unrepentant unchastity rather than on the single act itself.

B. The import of the Exceptive Clauses in Matthew 5:32 and 19:9 in Relation to the Teaching of the Rest of the New Testament on Marriage and Divorce.

1. The Problem of Interpreting the Exceptive Clauses in Matthew 5:32 and 19:9 as Expressions of a Principle or the Application of a Principle to a Specific Situation.

a. A large number of New Testament scholars argue that the exceptive clauses in Matthew 5:32 and 19:9 do not represent the authentic or original teaching of Jesus but are additions made by Matthew in adapting the message of Jesus to his audience. The argument, all too briefly, runs like this. Mark 10:11, 12 and Luke 16:18 basically represent the original teaching of Jesus. They do not contain the exceptive clause. They clearly assert that God's intention for marriage is that it be permanent, that there is to be no divorce, and that if there is divorce there ought to be no remarriage. It is argued that Mark 10:11, 12 and Luke 16:18 basically represent the original and authentic teaching of Jesus for at least three reasons: (1) such direct and unqualified pronouncements are typical of Jesus' teaching in the gospels; (2) I Corinthians 7:10, 11 does not contain an exceptive clause and Paul expressly appeals here to a teaching of the Lord; and (3) Mark, it is argued, has no significant reason to omit such an exceptive clause, while Matthew had every reason to insert it in order to make the teaching fall in line with Jewish thought.

Although Mark 10:11, 12 and Luke 16:18 are regarded as giving basically the teaching of Jesus, it is usually pointed out that Mark 10:12 does contain a bit of Markan adaptation of the original message. Mark 10:12 recognizes the woman's right in initiating a divorce. This was a possibility under Roman law but not under Jewish law. In this part, Mark is seen to be adapting Jesus' message to Mark's Roman audience, just as Matthew, by adding the exceptive clauses, is adapting Jesus' original teaching to his more Jewish audience. Thus the exceptive clauses are said to be evidence of how the original message of Jesus was adapted by the gospel writer in order to meet the needs of the church served by him.

b. Your committee is convinced that the exceptive clauses in Matthew 5:32 and 19:9 are part of Jesus' original teaching and that, for various reasons, the exceptive clauses are not mentioned in Mark 10:11, 12; Luke 16:18 and I Corinthians 7:10, 11. The following points may be fairly raised in supporting the argument that the exceptive clauses do belong to the original and authentic teaching of Jesus.

(1) Jesus' ministry took place in the context of disputes with the Pharisees and their scribes. In that sense, it may be postulated that the interests of the Matthean community (which was more Jewish in character) were closely allied with the original historical setting in which Jesus' public ministry took place. Thus it would not at all be strange if Jesus himself had addressed himself to the various differences within the rabbinical teaching.

(2) Mark may, after all, have had a very important reason for omitting the exceptive clause. For Mark's purpose it may have been enough simply to remind his audience of the abrogation of the Mosaic provision concerning divorce. This takes on all the more force if the immediate occasion for Mark bringing up the question of divorce was related to John the Baptist's denunciation of the conduct of Herod Antipas and Herodias. Even though that denunciation story is recorded earlier (Mark 6:17ff), it is recorded in Mark 10:2 that the Pharisees came "tempting Jesus" and Mark elsewhere notes that the Pharisees and Herodians cooperated (cf. 3:6 and 12:13; for this argument, see Wm. Lane, *Commentary on the Gospel of Mark*, pp. 354-358). This immediate historical interest may be part of the reason why Mark did not wish to include the exceptive clause, for the exception could be misunderstood as giving validity to Herodias' desertion of her former husband, Philip, for Antipas, since she had sent Philip a letter of separation.

(3) Paul also may have had sufficient reason for not mentioning the exceptive clause in I Corinthians 7:10, 11. In the immediate context Paul has expressly argued that marriage is an important safeguard against fornication (7:2, 5). In this context, it might have been considered to be inappropriate to mention the exceptive clause. Furthermore, there is clear evidence in I Corinthians 6 that Paul regarded *porneia* as being destructive of the marriage relationship. In I Corinthians 6:13-17, Paul asserts that through fornication a man becomes "one flesh" with a prostitute. Here fornication, or adultery, is seen to have profound, even "metaphysical," implications. Although in I Corinthians 6:13-17 Paul does not apply this immediately to the marriage relationship, this pericope does give credence to the argument that the idea of the exceptive clauses may have been an unexpressed assumption underlying I Corinthians 7:10, 11.

(4) Finally, and generally, it should be noted that there may well be unexpressed assumptions behind biblical teaching that are and remain unexpressed because they are regarded as axiomatic or more or less universally accepted. For example, it is taken for granted that Matthew 5:31, 32; Matthew 19:3-9; Mark 10:2-12; Luke 16:18 and I Corinthians 7:10-16 do not exclude the possibility of remarriage after the death of the spouse. Yet they do not mention it, for it appears to

be assumed and comes to more or less incidental expression in I Corinthians 7:39 and Romans 7:3. So too the exceptive clauses may have been almost axiomatic and therefore not always expressed but rather assumed.

2. *Porneia* as a Possible Permissible Ground for Divorce.

The view here defended gives to the exceptive clauses (Matt. 5:32 and Matt. 19:9) a more universal and principial importance than when they are viewed as a Matthean adaptation to meet the needs of a particular community. It is this basic and universal import of the idea of the exceptive clauses that is here maintained for the New Testament view of marriage and divorce. Implicit in this view is the basic importance of the physical act of sex in marriage as the highest symbolic act in regard to the meaning of marriage. Physical union in sexual activity becomes the central symbol of two people becoming one flesh. In that sense, physical fidelity to the marriage partner has a unique status among all of the "faithful acts" in a marriage. Physical union brings all of the rest into focus as the most full and free expression of love and fidelity.

Therefore, infidelity on the physical level becomes a permissible ground for divorce. It may be that precisely because among all other "unfaithful acts" in a marriage, it is unique. Physical infidelity symbolizes the epitome of unfaithfulness and strikes at the very heart and center of the marriage relationship. As the supreme act of infidelity it may be evidence for the fact that the marriage breakdown is so complete that the restoration of that marriage relationship becomes impossible.

It should be noted, however, that *porneia* in marriage does not demand divorce. It is only a *possible* ground for divorce. Especially if both partners in a marriage are Christian and the partner who is guilty of physical infidelity confesses his/her sin in genuine repentance then the other marriage partner should accept that confession and, recognizing his/her own weaknesses, seek restoration and healing in the marriage. Such confession and forgiveness is in harmony with our Lord's teaching on the importance of (confession and) forgiveness (Matt. 6:14, 15; Matt. 18:21-35; cf. also Col. 3:12 and Eph. 4:32). In fact it might be said that only prolonged adultery that is not repented of qualifies as a permissible ground for divorce. This may even be suggested by the use of the word *porneia* instead of *moicheia* in Matthew 5:32 and 19:9, since it may suggest, because of its association with harlotry, "persistent and unrepentant adultery" instead of the single act of marital unfaithfulness in the sex act.

In all of this, care has been taken not to speak of *porneia* as "the biblical ground for divorce." For to speak of the "biblical" ground for divorce not only may suggest that the Bible approves of divorce but may also suggest that the Bible encourages unchastity as the approved means to that end. Although that idea was not intended by such terminology, the terminology is susceptible to that interpretation and may have fostered that kind of mentality. Therefore, it would be better to discourage the use of that terminology. Consequently in this section we have used the phrase "possible permissible ground" for divorce. Of course, behind

that expression is the assumption that the Bible gives the criteria for what is possible and permissible to be regarded as ground for divorce.

3. The Scope of *Porneia* as a Possible Ground for Divorce.

The Christian Reformed Church has been hesitant to accept grounds other than adultery for divorce. Only for two years (1894-1896) did the Christian Reformed Church agree that "wilful desertion as Paul prescribes in I Corinthians 7:15" could be allowed as an accepted ground for divorce. It has been thus the near uniform judgment of the Christian Reformed Church that the Holy Scriptures allow for the dissolution of marriage only for fornication or adultery as taught in Matthew 5:32 and 19:9.

Perhaps part of the reason for rejecting "wilful desertion" as a so-called second ground for divorce was the danger of casuistry in constructing the biblical evidence. For this brought up at least two very distinct problems: is "separation" (Gk. *chorizomai*) the same as or different from "giving a bill of divorce" and is it necessary that the precise conditions of I Corinthians 7:12-15 be met, namely, that the one who separates or departs be an unbeliever and (presumably) the believer one who had become a believer since the time of marriage? Certainly in this way we run the danger of treating the Bible as a casebook of canon law. It is important that we avoid treating the Bible in an unwarranted legalistic way. Yet, the question remains, does not I Corinthians 7:12-15 have something to say about the problem of marriage and divorce?

In this difficult area, the following is suggested. If our interpretation of the sense of the exceptive clauses in Matthew 5:32 and 19:9 is correct, then physical infidelity, precisely because it is unique and symbolizes the epitome of unfaithfulness, may be reckoned as a permissible ground for divorce. We argued that it was so regarded because physical sexual union symbolizes the quintessence of the marriage union. Conversely, therefore, physical infidelity is unique in that it symbolizes the ultimate in marriage breakdown and dissolution. In that sense *porneia* stands as the unique possible ground for divorce.

There may, however, be other kinds of actions, situations, and conditions that in the judgment of a consistory can only be judged to be the *equivalent* of unrepentant unchastity in signalling the complete breakdown of a marriage and the unlikelihood of its restoration. Exactly what actions, circumstances, and situations would qualify for being the equivalent to unrepentant adultery would be difficult to say. But here I Corinthians 7:12-15 may point the way. Wilful desertion, while not in itself a so-called second ground for divorce, may be judged to be tantamount to physical infidelity and therefore also indicate that the marriage relationship cannot function in any meaningful way. Certainly in the case of *wilful* (prolonged and unrepentant) desertion, any kind of meaningful marriage relationship is impossible. It is conceivable that other actions, circumstances, and situations could likewise be judged to be the equivalent of prolonged and unrepentant unchastity. In such cases then, also, divorce might be recognized as the only viable course of action.

But who is to make such a judgment? Certainly in the case of a Christian partner in marriage, the person would not wish to make that judgment alone. He would wish to seek the wisdom of the Christian community by seeking the judgment of the consistory. They represent the Christian community and are obligated to give guidance and to apply the teachings of Scripture to given situations. If the consistory judges that there is prolonged and unrepentant adultery or a situation equivalent to it (such as prolonged and unrepentant wilful desertion), then one may, albeit with mourning and repentance, legitimately seek a divorce. This ought not to be construed as opening the door to all kinds of justifications for divorce. The central teaching of Scripture is still paramount—marriage is intended for the life of the partner.

The committee is well aware that the “equivalent of unrepentant adultery” is a guiding norm that entrusts each consistory with decisive moral responsibility in making judgments concerning divorce. Such responsibility we think is warranted on the basis of Scripture. (See explanation of I Cor. 7:12-15). Scripture does contain regulative specifics that must guide our decision making. Every consistory must begin with the biblical principle that the only possible permissible ground for divorce is unchastity (porneia). But as a statement of moral principle it can only be applied by a morally responsible agent, such as a consistory.

Part of the burden of application is interpretation not just of the principle but also the circumstance in which application takes place. We realize that situations are often extremely complex, especially when it comes to obstinate evil and guilt. The term “equivalent” anticipates this complexity. It places a responsibility on each consistory which at times may be agonizing. Such agonizing is the price that moral integrity often demands of us in a sinful world.

III. BIBLICAL TEACHING REGARDING REMARRIAGE

Remarriage in Scripture is never directly under discussion. It arises as something incidental to other subjects. In Scripture the stress is on the permanence of marriage and the responsibility of marriage partners to foster and support this permanence.

A clear and uncontested situation in which remarriage may take place is when one of the marriage partners dies. (See Romans 7:1-3, I Corinthians 7:39.)

A. *The Remarriage of Persons Divorced on Permissible Grounds*

Matthew 19:9 states: “And I say unto you: whoever divorces his wife, except for unchastity, and marries another, commits adultery.” The exceptive clause (except for unchastity) gives the grounds for divorce. (See II, B, 2 above.) However, the sentence within which this exceptive clause is found discloses more than just what is a permissible ground for divorce. Within this sentence there are two verbs, “divorce” and “marries another,” which are coordinate because they have a common subject, “whoever.” The “whoever” is predicated as engaging in two possible actions, “divorce” and “marrying another.” Without the exceptive clause the verse would read “whoever divorces his wife and marries another, commits adultery.” The exceptive clause excepts other “whomevers,” that is, those who divorce because of the unchastity of their

mate and remarry. The conclusion therefore is that these, because of the exceptive clause, may remarry without committing adultery.

By inference this permissibility of remarriage should be granted to any Christian divorced on grounds of unrepentant adultery and its equivalent. (See II, B, 3, above.)

B. The Remarriage of Persons Divorced on Grounds Not Recognized as Being Legitimate in the Bible

The following material is a presentation of the major interpretations of the biblical material dealing with remarriage as found in Matthew 5:32, Matthew 19:9, Mark 10:11, 12, Luke 16:18 and I Corinthians 7:10, 11:

1. Some interpret biblical data on remarriage to teach that every remarriage after divorce is an act of adultery (Luke 16:18 and Mark 10:11, 12). The consequence of such an interpretation is that the only advice that the church can give to divorced persons is that of I Corinthians 7:10, 11, "Let her remain single or else be reconciled to her husband." This position would not even allow the remarriage of the so-called innocent party in cases where adultery (Matt. 5:32; 19:9) was the cause for divorce. In general this interpretation represents the traditional Roman Catholic position. This position concludes that the prohibition against remarriage in Mark 10: 11, 12 and Luke 16:18 is unconditional and universal.

2. (a) Very few churches, however, maintain this unconditional stand against the remarriage of divorced persons. A more common interpretation of the biblical data is to say that the apparent absolute prohibition of remarriage of divorced persons in Luke 16:18; Mark 10:11, 12 and I Corinthians 7:10, 11 is to be qualified in at least one way. In the light of the exceptive clause present in Matthew 5:32 and 19:9, it is usually inferred (cf. III, A, above) that the so-called innocent party in a marriage broken by unchastity is indeed free to remarry without thereby committing adultery.

(b) A further complexity in this context is how to judge the right of remarriage of the so-called innocent party who is divorced with no adultery involved. In such an instance the question can be raised, is such an innocent party free to remarry? Although the Bible does not speak directly to this question, the biblical principle of permanency requires that an innocent party remain unmarried so long as there is reasonable hope for reconciliation. If in time reconciliation proves to be impossible, remarriage of an innocent party is legitimate.

3. In the interpretation of our Lord's teaching on remarriage in Matthew 5:32, Matthew 19:9, Mark 10:11, 12, Luke 16:18 and I Corinthians 7:10, 11, perhaps a further qualification can be defended. This qualification centers around the intention of the persons involved. The crucial importance of intention comes to the fore when one seeks to do justice to the emphasis that Jesus places on the factor of permanence in marriage. In most instances, e.g., Matthew 19:9, Mark 10:11, 12 and Luke 16:18a, it is clearly stated that a person who divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery. This close conjunction of divorce and remarriage suggests that Jesus is speaking specifically against people dis-

solving their present marriage with a view to remarriage. To dissolve a marriage with such an intention in mind displays a complete disregard for God's will for marriage, namely, its permanency.

In Luke 16:18b (compare Matt. 5:32b) there is not a close conjunction of divorce and remarriage but rather the added statement, "and he who marries a woman divorced from her husband commits adultery." But even this statement should not be taken out of its historical context. R. C. H. Lenski (*Commentary on Luke*, pp. 843f.) points out that Jesus is inveighing against the Jewish practice of putting away a wife for any and every cause. By so doing, the person involved "commits adultery," that is, he contributes to the breakdown of marriage, the very nature of which is permanency. Whatever contributes to such a breakdown is prohibited. Lenski's interpretation here is helpful:

"Fornication on the part of the husband or a wife, of course does that (Matt. 5:32 [that is, contributes to the breakdown of the marriage institution and disregards its permanent character]) but so does every Jewish dismissal of a wife for other reasons or for no special reason at all. And that is why Jesus here includes, as being equally guilty, the Jew who marries a wife who is dismissed by a Jewish husband and says of him as he says of the other: *moicheuei*, he helps to ruin the permanency of marriage. These Jews and Pharisees were all alike; none of them regarded marriage as having been made a permanent relation by God and his Word. All of them regarded marriage as being something that was to be dissolved at pleasure. The man who married a discarded wife married her only in this way, i.e., himself to discard her when he so pleased. In the very act of marrying her . . . he thus violated God's law of marriage."

But what about I Corinthians 7:10, 11? Here Paul says: "To the married I give charge, not I but the Lord, that the wife should not separate from her husband (but if she does, let her remain single or else be reconciled to her husband) —and that the husband should not divorce his wife." Does the parenthetical material here contain an unconditional and universal prohibition of remarriage? If it does then the only advice that the church can give to any and every divorced person (who is not the innocent party) is, be "reconciled" to the one whom you divorced or "remain single." No doubt, the advice, "be reconciled to your husband (or wife)" is advice consistent with the Christian notion of the permanency of marriage and of the propriety of reconciliation. The question can be raised, however, whether the advice to remain unmarried represents a universal principle that must be maintained over against all those who seek remarriage.

There is some evidence in the text that the advice to remain unmarried should not be regarded as a principle of universal application. In the first place, the main statement of the text—and that which Paul then explicitly attributes to the Lord—is that a wife should not separate from her husband and the husband should not divorce his wife. The parenthetical material is an insertion on the part of Paul, not a direct quotation from the Lord's teaching. Therefore, the parenthetical material may well have been occasioned by the special circumstances as described elsewhere in I Corinthians 7. Secondly, Paul's material in I Corinthians 7

contains much advice concerning marriage and celibacy. In general it can be said that although Paul never says that marriage is in any way sinful, he does prefer, if the person has the necessary gift, the unmarried state (cf. I Cor. 7:7, 8, 32-35 and 38). Why Paul prefers the unmarried state is indicated in his references to the "present distress" (vs. 26) the fact that "the time is shortened" (vs. 29), and the possibility of the unmarried person giving "undivided devotion" to the Lord (vss. 32-35). The precise meaning of these phrases is debated. But, whatever their precise meaning may be, they do form the reasons for the widespread conclusion that Paul's preference for the unmarried state does not have universal applicability. These reasons that led to Paul's preference for the unmarried state as reflected in I Corinthians 7, may also have occasioned his advice in verse 11, "let her remain unmarried." At the very least then, it is dubious whether this advice from Paul should be regarded as excluding every remarriage.

4. In the light of the above evidence the committee concludes that each consistory must make an individual judgment with reference to those seeking remarriage after a divorce granted on grounds not considered legitimate in the Bible. In making a judgment the central concern is and remains the attitude toward the permanency of marriage on the part of the person contemplating remarriage. For example, did such a person divorce in order to remarry? If so, the person thereby indicates disregard for the permanency of marriage as taught in Scripture. In this connection a further question may be asked as to a person's attitude toward the contemplated remarriage. Does he or she regard this marriage as a permanent union? If not, the person thereby indicates disregard for the permanency of marriage as taught in Scripture. Such a remarriage is sinful and should not receive the blessing of the church!

5. It is the judgment of the committee that any individual who is sincerely repentant for his or her part in the breakdown of a previous marriage and who demonstrates the biblical attitude toward the permanency of marriage should be forgiven and restored to the full fellowship of the church. Within such forgiveness and restoration of fellowship, remarriage may be legitimately considered.

IV. THE CHURCH'S RESPONSIBILITY REGARDING MARRIAGE, DIVORCE, AND REMARRIAGE

A. The church has its own task, toward 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's ministry also points the way to obedience in marriage and family.

B. Since a healthy, vibrant fellowship of believers cannot be maintained if there is marriage failure and family breakdown, the pastoral ministry of the church has a special concern with life in these central areas. It is highly important that ministers diligently seek to build healthy marital relationships by faithfully preaching what the Bible declares regarding marriage. In applying the clear teaching of God's Word to daily living, ministers must not forget to make clear reference to the marriage relationship. The permanence intended in marriage must

be fully declared as the teaching of the Word is made to apply to the marital state and the gravity of the sin which allows breakdown of this relationship must be stressed.

C. The church in its pastoral care ought not only busy itself with situations which are clearly in need of special help, it must above all be concerned with helping its young members find the right way in their life activities. In this light the committee recommends to synod the following approaches:

1. Education for Living or Family-life Education

The teaching ministry of the church 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, prerequisite 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 ages 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 premarital counseling, more effective and therefore should be given priority.

It is obvious but an 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 a biblical discussion of love and marriage 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 in the developmental stage of the children and young people involved.

2. Pre-Marital Counseling

a. The burdens and responsibilities of marriage and family are such that young couples contemplating marriage should be instructed under

the leadership of a qualified person or team of persons, concerning the nature of marriage and family. This is especially needful in our time because the permanence and nature of marriage are being challenged. 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 initiation of pre-marital programs would be an important positive step. The content of such programs should include a biblical discussion of love and marriage as well as certain other specifics mentioned in above (1.). The church should call upon all possible resources for guidance to the couple such as economists, lawyers, gynecologists, pediatricians, psychiatrists, psychologists, internists, etc. Let the professionals share their gifts in helping to build healthy marriages.

b. In addition, all couples contemplating marriage should be involved in private, pastoral counseling sessions in which there is ample opportunity to discuss more personally and individually the ensuing marriage. The pastor in preparing pre-counseling sessions might well consider several sessions. The following pattern is suggested:

(1) The first session could be used for the purpose of the pastor to become better acquainted with the couple and should include aiding the couple in formulation of wedding plans, ceremony, music, etc.

(2) The second session could deal with the general topic of what is involved in a Christian marriage. Emphasis should be placed on the realization that this type of marriage takes work, concentration and the honest, open interpersonal relationship of the Christian couple as seen in their relationship with Christ.

(3) In the third session, the couple could write out what they consider is involved in ideal marriage. They could discuss what they expect to give to each other in the marriage and what they expect to receive from this marriage. Personalities might well be discussed to be certain that the persons know and understand each other. They might be encouraged to offer what they would like to change about themselves. Their personal strengths and weaknesses should be reviewed. (Prepared forms for inventory and analysis are readily available from such sources as Family Life Publications, Inc., Box 427, Saluda, North Carolina 28773.)

(4) In the fourth and fifth sessions the pastor could discuss with the couple the basic facts of interpersonal communications as they apply to the marriage relationship, how to deal with conflict, how to develop understanding, recognizing traps that can produce anxiety, etc. Special problems that may have surfaced in the consultations should be discussed openly and honestly.

(5) There should be follow-up counseling sessions after the marriage to determine if problems have arisen and if they have been resolved. Each pastor involved in a marriage should have deep personal concern for the success of every marriage solemnized.

3. Marital and Family Counseling

a. Due to the stress on life in marriage and family today, there is

great urgency for 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 periods of crisis. They would learn that ignoring or hiding the problems only further complicates the situation.

A more healthy climate must 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.

b. For couples involved in marital difficulty, counseling should be constructive, and 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.

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.

c. Where divorce has taken place, the church should have special concern for the persons involved in this traumatic experience. Divorce often triggers deep feelings of guilt and failure, even of spiritual distress. The church's ministry can really come to its own among such needy persons and the guidance and counsel offered will be highly important when remarriage is contemplated. Even where there is great guilt in divorce with no apparent repentance, the church has solemn obligations to carry on patient and persistent work.

4. Remarriage Counseling

a. When 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, even in a previous area of failure, in Jesus Christ.

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 involved in divorce and remarriage.

b. In all situations of need there should be concern, compassion and love to help the persons involved reorder their lives so that the *shalom* which comes from obedience to the Word of God may more and more be an experienced reality.

V. GUIDELINES FOR PASTORS AND CONSISTORIES

In view of the preceding, consistories and pastors are urged:

1. to maintain the biblical view of marriage, and to warn unceasingly against every violation of the marriage bond.

2. to promote a forgiving, sympathetic, open fellowship in which concern, compassion and help can be more freely offered and more freely received.

3. to ascertain whether those who seek entrance into the marriage state are sufficiently aware of the nature of marriage and the problems which so often occur before they extend the blessing of the church.

4. to include in the pastoral family visiting 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. with patience and understanding to seek to heal situations of marital breakdown employing all the resources at their disposal.

6. to recognize that marital breakdown and divorce should produce sadness for the breaking of vows and genuine repentance for any guilt in which either party may have been involved, and which contributed to the destruction of the marriage.

7. to 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.

8. to remember that divorced persons require help rather than condemnation and to support divorced persons pastorally in a way similar to the manner they support members involved in other personal difficulties.

9. to withhold the blessing of the church on remarriages that conflict with the biblical teaching concerning the permanency of marriage. When such marriages are, nevertheless, consummated contrary to the advice of the church, the consistory should continue to display pastoral concern for such errant members and work toward their restoration to full fellowship within the church (See III, B, 4).

10. to extend the blessing of the church to a remarriage involving a divorced person if that person contemplating remarriage is:

(a) the so-called innocent party in a divorce granted on the grounds of unchastity (see III, B, 2, a); or

(b) the so-called innocent party in a divorce granted on grounds other than unchastity and who had sincerely sought reconciliation in attempting to preserve the former marriage (see III, B, 2, b); or

(c) the so-called guilty party in a divorce (for example, one guilty of unchastity or one who sued for divorce on grounds not recognized in Scripture) but one who has manifested genuine repentance for that sin, who has been restored to full fellowship in the church, and who demonstrates the biblical attitude toward the permanency of marriage (see III, B, 3, 5).

VI. GUIDELINES FOR THE CHURCH

Because of the great importance of the stable family for the health of society; and because the welfare of the church in no small way is dependent on good family units; and since the covenant is transmitted from parents to children through healthy marital and parental relationships; and in view of the rapid increase of divorces, frequently on the basis of "no fault"; therefore synod urgently directs the following to the churches:

1. Churches be reminded of the need to proclaim the full implications of the gospel for marriage.

2. The church should acknowledge the new relationship established when two people marry and make appropriate announcement of such recognition.

3. The Education Committee, Board of Publications of the Christian Reformed Church, be urged to continue preparing Christian life courses and provide premarital counseling materials, coordinating its efforts with those of other institutions, especially schools.

4. The Board of Trustees of Calvin College and Seminary examine the seminary pastoral training and continuing education programs as to how the programs can be strengthened to increase the pastor's sensitivity in premarital counseling and to marital problems and their solutions.

5. 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.

6. Consistories should develop and implement programs for family life education, premarital education, marriage and family enrichment. Consistories should encourage and finance specialized training for their pastors in the field of marital counseling.

7. 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.

8. Increased attention be given to making it possible for churches to use more readily the various counseling resources, referral and consultant, which are already in existence.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That synod recognize the Revs. George Gritter, Adam Persenaire, William Vander Haak and Dr. Andrew Bandstra as representatives of the committee at synod and that they be given the privilege to speak when this report is under consideration.

2. That synod:

a. accept Part I of the report as being basically in accord with the biblical teaching on marriage;

b. accept Parts II and III of the report as being basically in accord with the biblical teaching on divorce and remarriage, including specifically the following:

1) that *porneia* be understood as being the only permissible ground for divorce that is sanctioned in the Bible (see II, B, 2);

- 2) that *porneia* in Matthew 5:32 and 19:9 refers primarily to adultery, but may also include such things as homosexuality and marriage within prohibited degrees of blood relationship (see II, A, 4);
 - 3) that the scope of *porneia* be understood to include certain other illicit sex related acts, as well as wilful and prolonged desertion which in the judgment of the consistory can only be regarded as the equivalent of unchastity (see II, B, 3);
 - 4) that the right of remarriage with the church's blessing be granted to a divorced person only if the divorced person contemplating remarriage: a) is the so-called innocent party in a divorce granted on the ground of unchastity (see III, A, and B, 2, a); or b) is the so-called innocent party in a divorce granted on grounds other than unchastity and who has sincerely sought, over a reasonable period of time, reconciliation with the former marriage partner (see III, B, 2, b); or c) is the so-called guilty party in a divorce but one who has manifested genuine repentance for that sin, who has been restored to full fellowship in the church, and who demonstrates the biblical attitude toward the permanency of marriage (see III, B, 3, 5);
 - c. endorse Part IV as a helpful description of the church's responsibility toward promoting the biblical view of marriage.
 - d. adopt Parts V and VI as specific guidelines for pastors, consistories, the church as a whole, and specific synodical boards and committees.
3. That synod declare the committee's mandate fulfilled and, therefore, discharge its committee.

Marriage Guidelines Committee
 George Gritter, chairman
 Wm. Vander Haak, secretary
 Andrew J. Bandstra
 Derke Bergsma
 Michael De Vries
 Thomas Duthler
 Theodore Minnema
 Cornelius Van Valkenburg

NOTE: The Rev. Adam Persenaire has served faithfully with the committee during our studies. However, his name does not appear with this report since he is in disagreement with parts of the material presented. He has requested of the committee the privilege of presenting 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. But before I do so, I wish to express my appreciation for the patience with which the other members of the committee listened to my objections, and for the courtesy they now extend to me to add this postscript.

Perhaps the best way to present my objections would be to go through the report, as submitted, step by step, and to show both where I agree and where I disagree.

First of all, I wholly agree with the position which the committee takes in regard to marriage, and is subsumed under:

I. THE BIBLICAL TEACHING REGARDING MARRIAGE

The committee rightly begins by stating that marriage is not a man found relationship, but is divinely ordained and instituted. Furthermore, it stresses the contractual, covenantal character of the marriage relationship, placing as secondary its social and legal aspects. And finally, it lays the emphasis on the exclusiveness and permanency of the marriage relationship. Also the role that the state and the church play in regard to marriage is clearly set forth in the report. With all this I am in hearty agreement.

II. BIBLICAL TEACHING REGARDING DIVORCE

Again, I am able to agree with what is offered under "A" of this section. The committee has shown clearly what is meant by "porneia" in Matthew 5:32 and 19:9. And, in general, I can also subscribe to what is found under "B." For example, the committee is correct, when it maintains that only "porneia" is "a possible permissible ground" for divorce. The only objection I might have is found in the wording of II, B, 1, namely: "The Problem of Interpreting the Exceptive Clauses in Matthew 5:32 and 19:9 as Expression of a Principle or the Application of a Principle to a Specific Situation." I will refer to this later.

However, my real disagreement with the report begins with what is offered under section II, B, 3. In last year's report this was II, C, and had as its heading: Other Possible Permissible Grounds for Divorce in the Bible. Now this section reads: The Scope of Porneia as a Possible Ground for Divorce.

The committee made this change because it realized that, after it had argued that porneia offered the only exception to the principle, enunciated by Christ ("Whoever divorces his wife, except for unchastity, and marries another, commits adultery"), it was then quite inconsistent to ask the question: are there, indeed, other possible permissible grounds for divorce?

But, although this section has a different heading now, its contents are essentially the same. The committee still refers to "other kinds of actions, situations, and conditions, which in the judgment of a consistory can only be judged to be *equivalent* to unrepentant unchastity. In other words, at this point the committee seeks to deal with *applications* of a principle to certain situations or conditions which are not directly covered by the principle itself. The principle, as enunciated by Jesus in Matthew 5:32 and 19:9, states that porneia is the only possible permissible ground for divorce. But the committee states that in applying that principle consistories may judge *other* actions, situations, and conditions to be *equivalent* to unrepentant unchastity. True, the committee admits that it is difficult to say "what actions, circumstances, and situations would qualify for being the equivalent of unrepentant adultery." But then it suggests that I Corinthians 7:12-15 may point the way. Wilful desertion might be called one such an equivalent situation.

In fact, the committee goes even further, and states: "It is conceivable that other actions, circumstances, and situations could likewise be judged to be the equivalent of prolonged and unrepentant adultery. In such cases then, also, divorce might be recognized as the only viable course of action." But again, the committee does not state what those *other* actions, circumstances, and situations might be, which would make a divorce viable. It only avers that the judgment concerning these should not be made by the persons involved, but rather by the Christian community, as it is represented by the consistory. "If the consistory judges that there is prolonged and unrepentant adultery or a situation equivalent to it (such as prolonged and unrepentant wilful desertion), then one may, albeit with mourning and repentance, legitimately seek a divorce."

The committee states further that the "equivalent of unrepentant adultery" is a *guiding* norm that entrusts each consistory with decisive moral responsibility in making judgments concerning divorce." And in this connection again it refers to I Corinthians 7:12-15, as giving consistories such a guiding norm. In other words, in all these cases of equivalency consistories are not to be guided by the *principle*, clearly enunciated by Christ himself, but rather by their own interpretation which they may have about the *application* of this principle. Does it apply, for example, to the case of wilful desertion? May it apply also to a number of other situations which consistories might judge to be equivalent to porneia?

The committee states that wilful desertion may be a ground for divorce because it would make "any kind of meaningful marriage relationship impossible." But would not this also be true in the case of a wife whose husband is in a mental institution; or of a husband whose wife has had a severe stroke? And so one can go on mentioning other possibilities which make a meaningful marriage relationship impossible. It all comes down to this—that each consistory can make its own interpretation of what constitutes the equivalency of porneia. The committee which reported on this matter to the Synod of 1973 stated that porneia might be construed as any kind of infidelity, and a so-called "dead marriage" might make divorce a viable option. It is my conviction that this vague and indefinite reference to equivalency would open the door wide for the danger of casuistry, and would certainly water down the only exceptive clause mentioned in Matthew 5:32 and 19:9. Nor do I believe that the committee's rather casual reference to I Corinthians 7:12-15 adequately supports its position. On the contrary, I am convinced that its failure to give any exegesis of this passage does not give it the right to draw the conclusions from it which it does.

Yet, since the passage in I Corinthians 7 seems to be so crucial in the committee's argumentation for "equivalency," allow me to give a short resume of the thorough exegesis of I Corinthians 7:10-15 which was given by the committee on *Marital Problems* to the Synod of 1957 (Acts of Synod 1957, pp. 335-347). This was the same committee that reported to the Synod of 1956, and persuaded that body to radically change the church's position on divorce and remarriage, making it possible for "a person remarried after being divorced on the ground of his own adul-

tery, or divorced on non-Biblical grounds," to be admitted or re-admitted to church membership, provided he or she truly repented of these sins, and otherwise lived a godly life. The following is my resume of this committee's exegesis of I Corinthians 7:10-15:

"G. *The teaching of Paul in I Corinthians 7:10, 11.*

"But unto the married I give charge, yea not I, but the Lord, That the wife depart not from her husband (but should she depart, let her remain unmarried, or else be reconciled to her husband): and that the husband leave not his wife.

". . . In these verses, in contrast to those that follow (12-15), Paul is addressing himself to believers who have believing mates. What Paul tells these people who are married in the Lord is that they may under no circumstances separate. Reiterating Christ's teaching in Mark 10:11 and Luke 16:18, he unqualifiedly forbids divorce on any ground whatever . . . But should one of them depart from the others, in violation of Christ's command, then he or she is nevertheless still bound — bound either to effect a reconciliation or to remain unmarried.

"H. *The teaching of Paul in I Corinthians 7:12-14*

"But to the rest say I, not the Lord: If any brother have an unbelieving wife, and she is content to dwell with him, let him not leave her. And the woman that hath an unbelieving husband, and he is content to dwell with her, let her not leave her husband. For the unbelieving husband is sanctified in the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified in the brother: else were your children unclean; but now are they holy.

"The marriages in view in these verses are, unlike those in the preceding, 'mixed' marriages. Paul speaks here to Christians who are married to pagans, to Christians who in all probability became followers of the Lord only after they had taken a (pagan) husband or wife. These Christians were in trouble . . . They wondered whether they had the *right* to live any longer with their pagan mates, . . . Was it not a sin to be thus unequally yoked with unbelievers? . . . Was it not the duty of a pious wife to go out from the pagan husband's house, and be separate? To this Paul replies in clear and unmistakable language: The Christian is not to depart. He must do *nothing* to break the marriage. . . . In the sacred bond of marriage the believer is not polluted by his unbelieving spouse, and the unbeliever is sanctified by his believing spouse. Let the believer, therefore, not depart.

"But what if the unbeliever departs? . . . Well then, says Paul, just let him leave. Don't hinder or restrain him. 'The brother or sister is not under bondage in such cases.' What is the import of these words? Is there here a second ground of divorce . . .? This can be determined only by a sustained look at verse 15.

"I. *The teaching of Paul in I Corinthians 7:15*

"Yet if the unbelieving departeth, let him depart: the brother or the sister is not under bondage in such cases: but God hath called us in peace.

"1. *The Unbelieving One.* — The action contemplated in verse 15 is taken by the unbelieving one, and is taken against the brother or the sister who believes. It should be evident, therefore, that there is no warrant in this text for extending its teaching to parties both of whom are Christians. If such an extension is made, if the text is generalized to apply to 'homogenous' as well as 'mixed' marriages, the extension and generalization must be recognized for what it is, an *inference* resting upon the logical principle of *analogy*, a notoriously weak foundation. Most careful exegetes accordingly understand Paul here as granting a certain liberty not to every Christian whose spouse 'departs,' but only to that much smaller group of Christians whose departing spouse is an 'unbelieving one.' On no account does Paul permit divorce in all cases of 'desertion.' . . .

" . . . Paul's teaching . . . has relevance to every situation in which an 'unbeliever' is involved, regardless of whether he is a 'heathen' or a 'neo-pagan' standing within historic Christendom.

"But he must be really 'unbelieving.' He cannot . . . be one whose 'unbelief' is *defined* by his 'desertion' as A. A. Hodge supposed. To declare, as Hodge does, . . . that 'one who is guilty of such wilful, causeless, and incurable desertion is exposed thereby as an unbeliever' is to be guilty of circular definition and to introduce under the cover of this fallacy the very generalization that the text excludes. The man of whom Paul speaks is not an unbeliever by virtue of his deserting: he is one who prior to his deserting is, and is known as, an unbeliever. . . . this Scripture is applicable only to marriages . . . in which one of the parties denies the Christ whom the other affirms.

"It must be said, therefore, the separation in view flows from a basic religious disagreement . . .

"2. *The Departure.* — The unbelieving one is contemplated as in process of departing (choozetai). What is to be understood by this departing? What is the unbeliever doing? Is he abandoning his wife? Is he thrusting her out of his house? Is he filing suit for divorce?

"These questions are not easy to answer, and for a number of reasons. For one thing divorce in Paul's day was not nearly as formal a thing as it is in our own, and its difference from what we call desertion was consequently not so obvious. In the second place, in the pericope constituted by verses 10-15 Paul uses two different words (aphieemi and choorizoo) to express the action contemplated, and thus leaves the interpreter wondering whether the change from one word to another is meant to point up a significant difference, or whether it is merely a rhetorical device to introduce variety. . . ."

The committee (of 1957) believed that "Paul is speaking here of divorce, and that then there is no need to raise the question whether the believing spouse may or may not file suit for divorce. Divorce, in the situation contemplated, is an accomplished fact, or is in the process of becoming so, and it is the unbeliever who seeks to get it. Divorce *action* on the part of the believer is not so much as hinted at; and since divorce cannot be a ground for divorce, no *ground* for such an action is here provided.

"3. The *Acquiescence*. — Marriage is holy. A Christian may not break it, and he must do everything to preserve it. This is what Jesus taught. 'What . . . God hath joined together,' he said, 'let not man put asunder.' Jesus condemned divorce, and by implication at least, condemned acquiescence in it. But he made one exception. In the case of adultery the innocent party was permitted to sue for divorce. In no other case might he do so, and in no other case might he leave uncontested his spouse's suit for divorce.

"But in I Corinthians 7:15 Paul says to the Christian: If the unbelieving divorce you (not on the ground of adultery, but on religious grounds), let him divorce you. He obviously means: Acquiesce in your unbelieving spouse's action. . . . Don't feel obliged to preserve the marriage he is about to break, and don't feel obliged to restore it once he has broken it. Let separation take its course.

"That is Paul's counsel, and he introduces it by declaring (in verse 12): . . . 'I say, not the Lord . . .' This declaration does not mean, of course, that Paul is hazarding a private opinion. He is speaking with the authority of an Apostle, and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The declaration simply means that he can quote no word of Jesus that will apply to the case under consideration. Jesus did not contemplate mixed marriages . . . In the course of the history of revelation it was left to Paul to give the directions and to provide the counsel. And this is his counsel: Acquiesce in the divorce.

"Now, what have we here? . . . If adultery is the only legitimate ground for divorce, as Jesus teaches, then this was an illegitimate, a sinful, an unbiblical divorce. How then can Paul advise the Christian spouse to acquiesce in it? Should he or she not rather bend every effort to prevent the divorce and preserve the marriage . . .? Is not this what Jesus would have counseled. . . .

"The answer is that there exists no explicit Word of Jesus about acquiescence or non-acquiescence in this kind of divorce. What Jesus explicitly teaches is that no one (. . .) may get a divorce, saving for the cause of adultery. And he adds that whosoever shall marry a wife put away for a cause other than adultery himself commits adultery. Paul does not change this teaching of Jesus in the least. He simply comments on the *attitude* a believing wife may take toward a sinful divorce initiated and effected by her unbelieving husband. If we did not have this word of Paul we might suppose, indeed, that Jesus' teaching about the high sacredness of marriage necessitated non-acquiescence in any divorce not based on adultery. But now we learn from Paul what before we did not know, that acquiescence is appropriate to a Christian in the case of a divorce effected by an unbelieving spouse and grounded in a basic religious disagreement. This does not contradict Jesus' teaching: it merely elaborates and extends it.

"4. The *Freedom*. — It is apparent, therefore, that Paul gives the Christian a certain freedom in the case cited. ' . . . The brother or the sister,' he says, 'is not under bondage in such cases.' His words are plain: The Christian is not obliged to contest the divorce; he is not obliged to prevent the departure.

“But is this all that his words mean? Many exegetes do not think so. They believe that the words ‘not under bondage’ (ou dedoulootai) mean that the Christian is free of the marriage, that the marriage bond is broken by the departure (divorce) of the unbelieving spouse, and that the Christian is therefore free to enter into a new marriage . . .”

Some members of that committee (of 1957) had this opinion: “Marriage, they declared, may be dissolved in three ways: by death; by divorce action on the ground of adultery; and by being (passively) divorced by an unbeliever for a religious cause.”

Other members, however, regarded the arguments adduced for this position inconclusive. “For them the biggest obstacle to the view that Paul is here freeing the Christian wife from the marriage bond and thus giving her permission to marry is the word of Jesus in Matthew 5:32: ‘Every one that putteth away his wife—saving for the cause of fornication, maketh her an adulteress: and whosoever shall marry her when she is put away committeth adultery.’ Unless we adopt the untenable position that Jesus in Matthew 5 and 19 is merely citing adultery as an example of several unnamed grounds for divorce rather than as the only ground, one brings Paul into conflict with Jesus by interpreting him as allowing remarriage after divorce on grounds of religious hatred.

“What then is the freedom that is here accorded the believer? The answer is: The freedom, in good conscience, to let the husband go! This is no small freedom. It is freedom from absolute enslavement. When Paul tells the believer that he or she is not under bondage, he does not mean that they are not bound *in* the marriage tie. What he means is that they are not bound in the (continuing) marriage tie. That is, they are not so enslaved by the marriage institution that they are compelled to preserve the ‘living together’ at all costs. The demand to live together is central in marriage, to be sure, but it is not an absolute demand. The demand need not be met if it causes continuous unrest at the deepest (i.e. the religious) level of one’s existence, and if by it one is under constant temptation to surrender the faith. It is significant that the word used here is not *dedetai* as in verse 39, which is properly translated ‘bound’; but the word *dedoulootai*, which is properly translated ‘enslaved.’ The usage indicates that the marriage is *binding* indeed, but not *enslaving*. The marriage *holds*, thus preventing the believer from remarrying, but it does not *enslave* by compelling the believer to pursue her unbelieving husband.

“J. *The Summary*” (Adopted by the Synod of 1957).

“1. The teaching in I Corinthians 7:15 pertains only to Christians whose *unbelieving* marriage partners ‘depart’ for deeply-seated *religious* reasons.

“2. The teaching in I Corinthians 7:15 does not provide the Christian with a (second) ground for divorce.

“3. The teaching in I Corinthians 7:15 absolves the Christian from the obligation to preserve a marriage broken or about to be broken

by the divorce-proceedings of an unbelieving spouse acting from religious motives.”

III. BIBLICAL TEACHING REGARDING REMARRIAGE

It is especially this section that I cannot endorse. I do agree with what is said under “A,” namely, that only the so-called “innocent party” who has obtained a divorce on the one possible permissible ground (Matthew 5:32; 19:9) has the right to remarry. But I cannot agree with section III, B. True, the material under this section in the present report is a substitution for what was found in last year’s report. Yet in essence the committee still comes to the same conclusions as it did then.

For example, this time the committee introduces a qualification in the interpretation that should be given to our Lord’s teaching on remarriage in Matthew 5:32; 19:9; Mark 10:11, 12; Luke 16:18; and I Corinthians 7:10, 11. This qualification centers around the *intention* of the persons involved. If such people dissolved their present marriage with the intention of marrying another, then they disregard God’s will regarding the permanency of marriage, and thus commit adultery, when they remarry. But, if at the time they obtained their divorce such intention was not present, then, by implication, they may remarry, and would not be guilty of adultery. It is this implication that I deny, and that for the following reasons: First of all, there is no indication apparent within these passages that Jesus was addressing himself *only* to those who divorced *in order to marry* someone else. The question the Pharisees asked him had to do with the legality of divorce itself, and upon what grounds. Contemplation or intention is an unwarranted importation into the text, and certainly cannot be used to weaken its abiding requirements. Secondly, there is proof that Jesus was not thinking about intentions here. For he includes in his warning against remarriage even the woman who is put away (passive!) on grounds other than unchastity. Surely she could hardly be accused of trying to get a divorce in order to remarry. And then Jesus goes on to warn even a person *twice removed* from the original divorcing party and warns him that it would make him an adulterer, if he marry the one wrongfully put away.

When there is a total absence of any mention of intention, and warnings against becoming guilty of adultery by marrying someone who has been the *victim* of a divorce action, it seems very strange that the committee can introduce *intention* into these passages and by it reduce their relevance to our present problem of dealing with those divorced for reasons not recognized in the Bible. In fact, later on the committee recommends that the church can even bless that which Jesus calls adultery.

The committee’s appeal to R. C. H. Lenski’s commentary is not very convincing either. One could quote many other commentators who disagree with Lenski. For example, Dr. F. H. Grosheide in his commentary on Matthew 19:9 writes: “Fornication is the factual breaking of the marriage. . . . But Jesus adds explicitly ‘and marries another,’ for then only we are able to say that the putting away of the first wife has become an accomplished fact, that the first marriage is now irrevocably broken.”

Charles R. Erdman has the following on this same passage: "Among the Jews the granting of a divorce carried with it the right of remarriage. It is well for us in the present day to distinguish between these two ideas. There seems to be a common belief that even the guilty party in a suit of divorce has a right to remarry. This case Jesus does not discuss. It may indeed be advisable for parties who are guilty of immorality to secure legal separations to bear the name of divorce. It is surely allowable for a divorce to be granted in case the marriage tie has actually been broken by unfaithfulness; but it is quite another matter to teach that one who has been at fault is justified, when a divorce has been granted, in marrying when and whom he will. There is something peculiarly searching in the words of the Lord, 'Whoever shall put away his wife, except for fornication, and shall marry another, commits adultery: and he that marries her when she is put away, commits adultery.'"

But what about the committee's argument that I Corinthians 7:10, 11 also does not apply to our present day, because what Paul says there is not to be regarded as a principle or universal application? In this passage Paul states: "But unto the married I give charge, yea not I, but the Lord, That the wife depart not from her husband (but should she depart, let her remain unmarried, or else be reconciled to her husband): and that the husband leave not his wife."

According to the committee this statement of Paul may well have been occasioned by the special circumstances described elsewhere in I Corinthians 7. For various reasons, it says, Paul preferred the unmarried state, and it was this preference that occasioned his advice in verse 11: "Let her remain unmarried." Therefore, so the committee reasons, "It is dubious whether this advice from Paul should be regarded as excluding every remarriage."

Now, of course, we must agree with the committee that what Paul says here does not exclude every remarriage. For example, in verse 39 Paul says that a widow has the right to remarry. So has the so-called innocent party in a divorce based on the one exceptive clause in Matthew 5:32. But what has this to do with the wife whom Paul is talking about in I Corinthians 7:11? What Paul stresses there is that the wife should realize the permanency of the marriage bond by remaining single, or else by seeking reconciliation with her husband. For again, if she remarries, how can Paul say, "let her be reconciled to her husband"? Would not remarriage make this other option impossible?

But let us ask this question: Does the committee *really* mean to say that Paul advises the wife who departs from her husband, contrary to the command of the Lord, to remain unmarried because in the "present distress" the single state is preferable, and because it would give her the opportunity to devote herself more fully to the Lord? In other words, should she disobey Christ's command in order to serve the Lord better? But then how could Paul leave her the other option of being "reconciled to her husband," if this would bring her back in the less preferable state of marriage? Is not this whole line of reasoning illogical?

Yet the report states that "in the light of the above 'evidence' the committee concludes that each consistory must make an individual judg-

ment with reference to those seeking remarriage after a divorce granted on grounds not considered legitimate in the Bible? And once more the committee appeals to the same argument which it presented previously, namely, What is this person's *attitude* toward the permanency of marriage? Is it scriptural, or not? To this I would reply: Surely, the person who divorces his spouse on a ground not recognized as legitimate in the Bible does not have the right view of the permanency of marriage. So, too, when he marries again, while he did not seek to be reconciled with his former spouse, he can hardly be said to believe in the permanency of marriage. For when he marries some one else, he no longer keeps the door open for the grace of God to work reconciliation.

IV. THE CHURCH'S RESPONSIBILITY REGARDING MARRIAGE, DIVORCE, AND REMARRIAGE

There is much in this section which is excellent material and to which I can heartily subscribe. But again, I have very serious objections to what is said in the last part thereof in regard to situations where divorce has taken place and remarriage is contemplated.

V. GUIDELINES FOR PASTORS AND CONSISTORIES

On the whole, I can accept all that is found under points 1 to 8, even though I wish that the committee had said some of these things differently. But I cannot agree with what is stated under 9 and 10.

Although it is stated in point 9: Consistories are "to withhold the blessing of the church on remarriages that conflict with the biblical teaching concerning the permanency of marriage," it does not say directly that the church should discipline those who consummate such marriages nevertheless. It only states that "the consistory should continue to display pastoral concern for such erring members and work toward their restoration to full fellowship with the church." And, in another place, the committee urges consistories to deal with "marital breakdown and divorce . . . in the same way as any other serious shortcoming."

But is an unscriptural divorce merely "a serious shortcoming" among many others? Should we not rather say that such a divorce is a gross, public sin, giving great offence to both God and his church? Does not such a divorce often break up two families, and cause terrible anguish to the deserted spouses, as well as have traumatic consequences for the children involved?

It seems to me that the advice, found in a Report on *Marital Problems*, presented to the Reformed Ecumenical Synod of 1953, is more to the point. It reads as follows:

"He who divorces his marriage partner and marries another party, wilfully transgresses the holy commandment: thou shalt not commit adultery.

"It is a combined *deed* of complete breach of marriage or adultery. It is a very serious sin, the height of transgression.

"If this sin is committed by a communicant member of the church, then there is no doubt that, for the benefit of the sinner and for the appeasement of the offence given in the congregation, church discipline

must be charitably enforced and this member be excluded from the fellowship of the holy sacrament.”

My main objection, however, is to what is found in “b” and “c” under point 10 of this section. I believe the church may never extend its blessing to those who contemplate remarriage after being guilty of a sinful divorce. For it is exactly the remarriage that is the sin of adultery. For Jesus said: “Whoever shall put away his wife . . . and shall marry another, commits adultery” (Matthew 19:9a). Moreover, he added, “And he that marries her when she is put away commits adultery” (Matthew 19:9b; Luke 16:18). This is the direct opposite of what the committee suggests in point 10.

VI. GUIDELINES FOR THE CHURCH

I can accept this section.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

In the light of what I have written in the foregoing, I need not reiterate that I cannot endorse these recommendations in toto. I only wish to point up that what is said in 2, b, 3) is not exactly the same as what the committee has stated in the report itself (see II, B, 3). Here the scope of porneia is defined as including “certain other illicit sex related acts, as well as wilful and prolonged desertion which in the judgment of the consistory can only be regarded as equivalent of unchastity.” But in II, B, 3 the committee stated that besides “wilful (prolonged and unrepentant) desertion” being equivalent to porneia, “it is conceivable that other actions, circumstances, and situations could likewise be judged to be the equivalent of prolonged and unrepentant unchastity.”

In conclusion, I wish to call synod’s attention to the fact that, if these recommendations of the committee are adopted, then our Christian Reformed Church would, definitely, be changing its position on marriage and divorce, and that in the following directions:

1. it would sanction a divorce not only on the one ground of fornication or adultery; but also on a second ground of wilful desertion (Cf. Acts of Synod 1906, pp. 21ff., Acts of Synod 1957, p. 106).

2. it would sanction, under certain circumstances, the remarriage of the guilty party in a divorce. This would be contrary to the position taken by the Synod of 1956, which stated clearly that, after a sinful divorce, the *remarriage itself* was an adulterous act. That synod only stated that this second marriage was not “a living in continual adultery.” Thus, according to the mind of that synod, “Jesus condemns as adultery in Matthew 19:9 not a *state* (of marriage) but an *Act* (of marrying).” (See Acts of Synod 1956, p. 321.)

3. it would sanction the remarriage of a person who was divorced by his spouse on a ground not recognized in the Bible. The church has never taken this position previously, except that it did, perhaps, leave open that possibility for those who were deserted by their spouses for “deeply-seated religious motives.” (See Acts of Synod 1957, p. 106.)

Adam Persenaire

REPORT 36
HERMENEUTICAL PRINCIPLES ON WOMEN IN
ECCLESIASTICAL OFFICE

(Art. 17)

Synod of 1975 appointed a committee of Old and New Testament scholars to study the hermeneutical principles involved in a proper understanding of relevant Scripture passages and apply these principles in an exegetical study of such passages.

We the undersigned have studied relevant passages from the Old and New Testaments, have met regularly, and have made substantial progress in our work. Nevertheless, because of the scope of the material, we have not been able to cover certain areas. Also, because at least two members had to be absent from one or more meetings, our committee has been unable to complete the work within the prescribed two-year period. We humbly request permission to present a completed report to synod in 1978. We ask for your continued interest and prayers as we seek to conclude our study and write our report.

Committee re Hermeneutical Principles on
Women in Ecclesiastical Office,

A. Bandstra, chairman
P. Bremer
D. Engelhard
S. Greidanus
S. Kistemaker, acting reporter
G. VanGroningen
M. Woudstra

REPORT 37

ETHICAL DECISIONS ABOUT WAR

(Amended in accord with Article 41)

(Art. 41)

HISTORY AND MANDATE

The Synod of 1973 appointed the undersigned committee to provide the church's membership with guidelines for making ethical decisions about war. This appointment was made in response to a 1973 overture from Classis Lake Erie requesting that synod provide a Declaration on War. The overture specifically requested 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."

The synod decided to "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" (Acts of Synod 1973, p. 170).

The following grounds were appended to the above decision: "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" (Acts of Synod 1973, p. 70).

The committee presented a report to the Synod of 1975 (cf. Acts of Synod 1975, pp. 518-533). After due consideration the synod referred "the study report and its guidelines to the churches for study and response to the committee for report to synod in two years" (Article 62, p. 57). Twenty-four churches and three individuals responded. The committee is genuinely appreciative of this interest and effort, and believes that this revised report reflects a goodly number of the criticisms and suggestions offered.

The responses varied widely. Some churches simply expressed general agreement or flat disagreement. Others, while expressing sensitivity to the problem of war and appreciation of the committee's effort, felt that agreement on and implementation of guidelines for war-related conduct of Christians are so impracticable as to not warrant further effort. Several replies showed a failure to recognize the important distinction between fixed *ethical regulations* and *guidelines* offered to assist Christians in making conscientious decisions. A number of churches and individuals, however, evaluated our report in depth, dealing mainly with the following areas:

1. Biblical data, notably the Old Testament wars, Romans 13, and New Testament Ethics;
2. The ethical philosophy underlying the report;
3. Civil religion and the authority of the state;
4. The conscience;
5. Pacifism.

Several responses faulted the report for not dealing adequately with certain biblical data. In its deliberations and conclusions the committee sought to do full justice to the Scriptures, but in the interest of brevity limited the inclusion of exegetical details. Questions and criticisms received have now prompted us to treat with greater fullness a number of biblical data. Nevertheless, the committee is constrained to point out that the subject of war may not be dealt with by selectively marshalling proof-texts favoring one view or another. If the teachings of the Word of God on the Christian's involvement in war were as clear as some responses alleged, the subject would not have torn and troubled the church down through the centuries, and the synod would not have appointed a committee to make this study.

The underlying premise of the committee's study is that the special revelation of God preserved in the Bible unfolds more fully as time moves along. Each new divine disclosure is richer and clearer than those made earlier, reaching a climax in the full and perfect revelation when God speaks in his Son. The unchangeable truth of God is the substance of all revelation, but the form of revelation changes with each passing stage. Furthermore, the manner of God's dealing with a sinful world changes, and with these changes come changes in the manner in which his people conduct themselves. The progressive character of divine revelation and the changes made in the administration of his rule among men must be understood adequately in order for Christians to perceive what God is saying about war and about responsible Christian attitudes and conduct with respect to war. Without this perspective the Scriptures will appear to present conflicting and contradictory standards.

Commentary on the Mandate

The task assigned to the committee is not a new task. In one form or another, previous synods have had the matter of guidance in relation to war on their agendas in 1916, 1936 through 1939, 1959 through 1964, 1969, and 1972. These dates obviously correspond to periods in our his-

tory when decisions relating to war had to be made by members of the church.

Our own mandate has arisen unmistakably out of the war in Indochina and the decision-making difficulties experienced by our people in relation to it: These have been principally, although not exclusively, the problems of young men who were eligible for the draft and had to face the question of how they should respond if they were drafted to fight in Indochina.

It might be thought with the ending of the draft and the conclusion of the war in Indochina our mandate has become irrelevant. However, this is not the case. While some of the urgency of concern may have dissipated, the substance of the mandate has not. The mandate of the committee was not tied to the war in Indochina, but asked for guidelines applicable to war in general. Moreover, the grounds of our mandate contain the judgment that our previous synodical decisions on war have not provided sufficient guidance for those who might be required to make decisions relating to possible future wars. So, our mandate remains.

The Difficulty of the Task

While resolved to give this assignment our best effort, our committee has been impressed with the difficulty of the task. We are aware, and our readers should be aware, that there is a long history of controversy and debate on how Christians should relate to war. There has been a whole spectrum of positions on the subject. At one end of the spectrum there is the Anabaptist position challenging not only the right of the state to wage war, but in its extreme form, even the legitimacy of the state itself. At the other end of the spectrum there have been the Crusades and other supposedly holy wars in which men have presumed to wage war in the name of God himself. Between these extremes there have been many intermediate positions which have attempted to distinguish the conditions under which war is permissible from those conditions under which it is morally impermissible, and to distinguish those conditions under which a Christian should fight from those under which he should refuse to fight in an already existing war.

If the issues in this area could be clearly defined and if Christians could agree on what the Bible teaches with respect to these issues, this could bring great strength to the witness of the church and of Christians in time of war. However, it is regrettably true that in every American war from the Revolutionary War through the Indochina War the witness of Christians has been dissipated by the adoption of a great variety of positions, each making fervent appeal to the Scriptures or to Christian moral concerns, but in conflict with one another. The church itself has frequently been at war over the peace question.

The difficulty of our task may be highlighted by reviewing what happened at our own synods in the period of 1959-1964. At that time the focus of concern was on guidelines in relation to atomic warfare. In 1959 synod appointed one committee, then discharged it when it reported in 1960, and appointed another committee. The recommendations of the second committee were presented to the Synod of 1963, but received

considerable opposition and were referred to the churches for study for one year. At the Synod of 1964 consensus could not be reached on what our attitude should be toward atomic weapons, and synod simply referred the 1964 report to the churches for study, without taking any position on the report.

The experience of our people in relation to the Indochina War provides a more recent example of the same difficulty. Among the membership of the denomination there were strong differences of opinion on whether the American action in Indochina should be defended. Seemingly well-informed people within the denomination, drawing on the same tradition with the same creedal and theological resources, arrived at positions that differed sharply from one another. The responses by the churches to this committee's 1975 report provide evidence that marked differences continue to exist.

The Need for Examining Basic Concepts

We believe there are some understandable reasons why Christians have so much difficulty arriving at a common mind in decisions relating to war. One reason is the fact that the Scriptures do not give direct answers to many of the questions we ask. The Scriptures do not give simple yes or no answers to the question of whether a Christian should participate in a given war. The Scriptures are clear enough in affirming that all war stems from human sin, that without sin there would be no war, and that basically war is not the solution to the problem of conflict (cf. James 4:1-10). But the Scriptures do not clearly answer the question of whether or not, in some circumstances in a fallen world, going to war may yet be a given nation's only moral resort.

In the absence of direct, biblical answers to these questions, Christians must work with the basic concepts and concerns of the Scriptures, and through them find answers to these questions.

However, one of the reasons why Christians have so much difficulty arriving at a common mind in this area is that they frequently operate with underlying assumptions or concepts which differ from each other. For example, when one makes ethical decisions relating to war one invariably draws on some view of the state, its calling and its authority. Two persons with different views of the state will likely soon find that they come up with different answers in a decision-making situation relating to war. Similarly, in decisions about war, one operates with a view of what love for neighbor means, a view of the nature and authority of conscience, and a view of the church in relation to both the individual and society.

It is necessary to explore concepts such as these in some detail because so much hinges on whether or not we are scriptural in our grasp of them. For that reason the next section of our report will deal with such key concepts. Subsequently we will go on to list some practical guidelines which flow from these concepts and which must be understood in the light of them.

The task of this committee, as we see it, is not to give people ready-made answers to all their questions about war. This would be impossible

and presumptuous. Instead, we see our task as one of setting forth principles and guidelines which can be applied by those making decisions. If we succeed in identifying and clarifying the concepts with which one must work in this decision-making activity, both individuals and the assemblies of the church will be assisted in working out their responsibilities and making their decisions.

BASIC PRINCIPLES AND CONCEPTS

The Law of Love and the Sixth Commandment

The supreme moral principle which bears on the knotty questions surrounding the Christian and war is that we must love our neighbor as ourselves. This principle, derived explicitly from our Lord's command, (Matthew 22:39), summarizes the Christian's obligation to his neighbor—an obligation elaborated in the second table of the Ten Commandments (cf. Romans 13:9).

The single commandment from that second table most obviously relevant to the questions at hand is, of course, the sixth: "You shall not kill." But what, exactly, does the sixth commandment prohibit? Does it prohibit all taking of human life? Does its stark and simple form imply that taking another human's life is always and everywhere immoral? Or, rather, does it prohibit only the *wrongful* taking of human life? Does it starkly and simply imply that all *murder* is wrong?

An examination of the Hebrew verb in Exodus 20:13 is not immediately conclusive. Though a few translators, and many interpreters, have rendered it "murder," suggesting that the commandment is directed not against all killing, but only against all wrongly motivated killing, the verb itself (*rāsah*) is elsewhere used in the Old Testament for even unintentional, apparently accidental and unmotivated, killing (Deut. 4:41-3; 19:1-13; Josh. 20:3, etc.). This might lead one to think that if, in the eyes of God, not only murder, but also "involuntary manslaughter" is always wrong, then surely no war stands much of a chance of being pleasing in God's sight.

What is quickly apparent, however, is that the committing of an act normally wrong, even an act simply and explicitly forbidden in one of the Ten Commandments, is *not* always and under every circumstance wrong. After all, one often noted and vexing fact about the Old Testament is that the same God who commands the Israelites not to kill (in the sixth commandment) elsewhere commands them in detail to kill the enemy (I Sam. 15:3, etc.). Indeed, the very verb under consideration (*rāsah*) used in the sixth commandment against killing is used in a commandment *to* kill in the infliction of capital punishment in Numbers 35:30.

A final note on *rāsah*. In some of the prophetic and wisdom writings, *rāsah* *does* seem to refer (disapprovingly) to that complex of wrong motive, act, and primary intention we call murder (e.g., in Hosea 6:9, Job 24:14, and Ps. 94:6).

Thus, our conclusion is that a mere reading of the Hebrew text in Exodus 20:13 is only a beginning. Even a comparative word study or *rāsah* is insufficiently illuminating. For, in the first place, the referent

of this verb is clearly not *confined* to what we could call murder—though it does sometimes refer to murder. In the second place, though the verb is generally used in the sixth commandment to prohibit “killing,” it is also specifically used (in Numbers 35:30) to command (a special sort of) killing. Since God never commands the performance of an action which is, in that case, wrong, we may conclude that the doing of what *rāsah* refers to (let alone what the two other Hebrew verbs we translate “to kill” refer to) is not always wrong. At the very least, it has not always been wrong. Still, this does not tell us nearly as much as we want to know with respect to our present questions about the Christian and war. The only thing we are so far safe in assuming is something we already knew before studying Exodus 20:13, viz., that *murder*, no matter what Hebrew verb we may be translating, is nowhere countenanced in the Old Testament. To take another human life for the wrong reason is, clearly, always wrong. Both the sixth commandment and the Lord’s summary command which includes it (“Love your neighbor as yourself”) plainly proscribe at least murder.

The question at the heart of the Christian-and-war issue is, however, whether every killing, including every killing in wartime, is an instance of murder. Does the Old Testament, particularly, regard every killing as *wrong* killing? As we have already seen above with respect to Numbers 35:30, (many additional passages could be adduced) it does not. Does the Old Testament, then, regard every killing in *war* as wrong killing? Again, clearly not. The Old Testament documents report that the Israelites were sometimes commanded by God to destroy God’s enemies by the sword. The books of Joshua, Judges, and particularly I Samuel abound with examples of such commands. These incidents have troubled the church for centuries. Some early and enduring heresies have sprung from what their founders took to be intolerable implications about the nature of the Old Testament God found in these incidents. Surely, we who confess a Reformed doctrine of biblical inspiration are not ready to scrap or to explain away these troublesome passages about the warlike God of the Old Testament. Still this does not tell just what relevance they have, in the new age of Christ, for a statement on the Christian’s proper attitude toward war. For one thing, we have no modern nation, no sovereign states which are also identical with the people of God. We have no theocracies. In fact, we regard all tendencies to claim a special national alliance with God as idolatrous and wicked. The particular relationship which obtained, then, between God and Israel now obtains between God and no modern nation. It obtains, in fact, only between God’s Christ and his church. But the church does not engage in earthly, physical warfare.

For another consideration, we must reflect on the fact that even if we *had* some modern nation privileged as Israel was to be true church and state at once, we still would not necessarily know how to identify it or what to do with the celebrated Old Testament war passages. Does it follow from the fact that God once commanded war with the Israelites as his army that he now favors (say) the Germans? Again should we not be at once suspicious if a modern Chinese prophet, singularly godly

in an atheist country, reported that God had commanded the Red Chinese to attack the United States as a judgment on our apostasy? The truth is that we are *rightly* wary of any modern reports of God's command to some one nation to attack and destroy some other nation or nations.

In the third place, consider again the difficulty of *applying* the Old Testament war passages to our modern situation. Suppose God once told the Israelites to slay not only men and warrior-men, but also "women, infant and suckling . . ." (I Samuel 15:3). Does it follow that we may do things like that today? Nowadays, soldiers who kill unarmed women and children are often tried and punished by courts of their *own* country.

This leads to a fourth, and perhaps the most important, consideration. What God wills for our moral lives shows *progression*. The history of God's deeds and of God's words is a history which always moves toward a better match between God's perfect will and his commands to stubborn, sinful, and blind human beings. It was one of the great insights and one of the persistent themes of such Reformed thinkers as John Calvin that God continually *accommodates* himself to us in the history of his dealings with us. He leads us along. What he may allow early because of certain desperate historical circumstances or because of our "hardness of heart" (cf. Mark 10:2-9) may not *always* be allowed—let alone commanded.

In fact, so far as the present question is concerned, it does seem that by the time Jesus Christ, our Lord, preaches his Sermon on the Mount, we are in a new moral atmosphere from that of the bloody war and total destruction we find, for example, in some passages of Samuel. Adding the views of certain of his contemporaries to the context of his sermon, Jesus says again and again, almost as if by way of refrain, "You have heard that it was said . . . but I say to you . . ." Several particular instances of his teaching in this form seem directly relevant.

"You have heard that it was said to the men of old, 'You shall not kill; and whoever kills shall be liable to judgment.' But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be liable to judgment . . ." (Matthew 5:21f.).

"You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.' But I say to you, Do not resist one who is evil. But if anyone strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also" (Matthew 5:38f.).

"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you" (Matthew 5:43f.).

It seems clear that any truly biblical position on the ethics of war for Christians must come to terms with passages like these. Moreover, it seems clear, even without a full exegesis of these famous passages, that these passages indicate a progression of God's will from the old era to the new, and a new way for Christians typically to deal with neighbor and enemy alike. If, as we have seen above, the Old Testament reports of God's commandment to kill entitle us to conclude that not every

instance of killing is an instance of murder, that, under some (as yet unspecified) condition it may be right to kill, these New Testament sayings of our Lord show us that the controlling attitude of the members of the Kingdom is *love*. Such love specifically includes enemies.

But if it may sometimes be right to kill *and* if we are to love even our enemies, the obvious question is whether these things are consistent with each other. Now, to love neighbors and enemies means to seek their good. This we may infer from the explicit parallelism of the Lukan version of Jesus' counsel to enemy love;

"But I say to you that hear, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you . . ." (Luke 6:27).

The question is whether it is ever possible to do good to an enemy at the same time that one kills the enemy. Can killing an enemy ever be an instance of showing love to him? Again, we may put our question a final way. Suppose it be said that the sixth commandment, when posited for the life of gratitude after the habit of John Calvin and the Heidelberg Catechism, generally tells us that we must preserve and enhance life. Then our question becomes whether it is ever possible to preserve and enhance life by killing an enemy. This question will be taken up specifically in the section below on the Christian's dilemma.

The final issue which confronts us before we go on to consider War and the Christian's Dilemma is what, exactly, we mean by the *good* of others which love of neighbors and enemies alike seeks to promote. This is the sort of formal ethical question which, of course, the Scriptures do not neatly and specifically address. This is rather the sort of issue which Christian scholars discuss after steeping themselves in the Scriptures.

Perhaps it would be fair to say at the outset that by the *good* of others, which love seeks to promote, Christians do not mean the same thing as secularists mean by it. By the good which we seek for others we do not mean merely their greatest pleasure, or their best physical and emotional well-being, or their happiness conceived in purely material terms. What Christians mean by the *good* of others is their being rightly related to the God and Father of us all, their realizing the coming of the Kingdom of God in their own lives by reconciliation with him through Christ, and their living a life of conscious obedience. The primacy of this *first-order* or *ultimate* good may be deduced from the centrality of it in Jesus' early preaching and from his explicit command to "seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these [other] things shall be yours as well" (Matthew 6:33). After considering these "other things" in the immediate context, after reviewing as well such passages as Matthew 25:31-46, Romans 12:9-21, and throughout the epistle of James, we may propose that the "other things" which love seeks for neighbor and enemy are, roughly in descending order of importance, justice, i.e., a fair distribution of all secondary goods and a proper redress of social grievances and retribution for wrongdoing; freedom from murderous and destructive assaults on lives and habitats; emotional, intellectual, economic, and physical prosperity.

War

Because we live in a fallen world, these several goods are regularly threatened by human readiness to hate instead of to love, to dominate others instead of to serve them, and to secure one's own freedom and prosperity by violently removing that of others. When large numbers of people, especially nations, exercise such dominance and express such hatred by the use of military arms, the universally feared and sometimes hideously devastating spectacle of war occurs. War is a great and impressive example of human fallenness. Wars commonly arise from a sinful and aggressive tendency to dominate others, to exploit others financially (cf. James 4:1, 2), to hinder the freedom of other peoples of the world, and to regard their various claims to human good as somehow less valid than those of one's own nation.

Though courage and heroism are sometimes evidenced and just protection of the innocent sometimes achieved in war, still, the fallenness which makes warring such a regular—some would say, necessary—feature of our existence is a matter for the profoundest regret. In their instigation, wars usually manifest a massive failure to love. Once begun, by their diminishing the value of life; by their robbery of happiness by their massive cost in human life, time, and energy; by their notorious tendency to spread their menace, and by their fertile spawning of vice, stealing, and lying, wars commonly produce a morally nauseating atmosphere which Christians detest.

God's response to this massive evil—as well as to all other evils—was to send, at last, his own Son as a personal Word of reconciliation and peace. In the new age of peace, God's plan for reconciling human beings to him and to each other has been ushered in by Christ and is now entrusted to those who bear his name and act as his body. Following both the teaching (“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God”) and the example of our Lord, we who claim his name must live peaceably ourselves, furnishing to the world conspicuous examples of peace-loving, harmonious living, and must also privately and publicly denounce war and strive to prevent it by prayer, by redressing the grievances of oppressed people, by prophetic calls to peace, by urging the faithful exercise of diplomacy, by entering the political arena ourselves, and by strong appeals to all in high places to resolve tensions by peaceful means. Christians must be *reconcilers*.

The Christian's Dilemma

Because of war's notorious evils, then, and because of the unique mission of peace-making entrusted to God's people in the new age, war waging and war participation raise grave moral questions for every serious Christian. It would seem, on the face of it, that since war in its several forms inevitably involves the killing of other human beings—including, nearly always, vast numbers of non-combatants—Christians should simply refuse to participate at all. Christ says, “Love your neighbor as yourself,” and, as we have already seen, it is remarkably hard to see, again, on the face of it, how one could love his neighbor as himself at the same time as one was intending to kill his neighbor.

Thus, from near the beginning of the Christian church, some Christians have chosen to be *pacifists*. Pacifists, employing, among others, the sort of argument just given, typically refuse participation in any directly war-related activity.

Yet pacifism, it may be said, falls into a sin of omission. For, while it is true that under ordinary circumstances and all other things being equal, the killing of human beings is forbidden by God and is morally wrong, it is also true that the abandoning of relatively innocent people to the murderous assaults of armed and lawless invaders is immoral and a breach of responsibility to love one's neighbor. While rightly abhorring war, then, and even abhorring the evil visited upon defenseless people, pacifism fails to prevent or minimize such evil even when it is possible to do so. Sometimes pacifists suppose that "You shall not kill" is an exceptionless command. Sometimes pacifists suppose that the use of force and, particularly, of killing force is always inconsistent with the preservation and enhancement of human life. Pacifism shows real and courageous love for those who attack. It takes with utter seriousness Christ's admonition to love one's enemies and to do good to them. There is enough biblical weight in the formulation of the pacifist position and enough moral sensitivity and ethical rigor in its elaboration and defense that certain Christians, including some particularly courageous and exemplary Christians, have always been attracted by it.

Still, it must finally be said that pacifism is mistaken. However deeply pacifism sees into human fallenness and into the Christian's dilemma, it does not see far enough. What it fails to see is that (as we shall argue below) loving one's neighbor as oneself, loving one's enemy, and preserving and enhancing life are not necessarily inconsistent with the taking of life. That is, though the supremely relevant command for our inquiry, viz., "You shall love your neighbor as yourself" seems *prima facie* inconsistent with the sometimes taking of human life, is not *actually* inconsistent with it. This command may be—indeed, must be—obeyed even if the actual physical lives of some (say, relatively guilty) neighbors cannot thereby be preserved.

On the other side from pacifism, and scarcely of the same moral quality, is *militarism*. Where militarists are not, in Hitler's fashion, plainly murderous and imperialistic, they are at least obsessively interested in and delighted with their own nation's striking capability and hair-trigger readiness for retaliation. Where militarists do not urge blatant aggression, they often urge, at least, not a measured defense, but merciless annihilation of the enemy and the enemy's children. Where militarists do not seek imperialistic invasion of the enemy's land, they may still seek, on defense, not justice but revenge. Though, to the great shame of the name of our Lord, the Lord's cross has sometimes appeared in the front rank of militarists, it should hardly need saying that the truculence and glorying in might of militarism is distinctly foreign to the followers of the Prince of Peace.

At once dismissing militarism, and reluctantly parting ways with the often tempting position of pacifist brothers and sisters, the best Christian answer to the question of war-making still appears to be what has

traditionally been called the "just war" theory. The various just war theories, like all other Christian responses to the problem of war, seek to answer the question we have been posing all along—and here pose again: killing human beings is forbidden by God in the sixth commandment. If the commandment is stated positively, in solidly Reformed fashion, so that it commands us to preserve and enhance life, our problem remains. It is hard to see how one can obey the sixth commandment in either of its forms in case one kills. That is, how can one preserve life by taking it? On the other hand, given the murderous attacks on the innocent peculiar to a fallen world, how can one preserve their lives, the lives of the innocent, *without* the use of force, including, inevitably, killing force? If actively killing some (attacking) neighbors seems wrong, so does passively allowing some other (attacked) neighbors to be killed when we are able to prevent it. According to the Heidelberg Catechism's exposition of the sixth commandment, loving the neighbor includes our attempt "to protect him from harm as much as we can" (A. 107). One of the ways we do this is by the election and support of the divinely mandated institution of government. Governments are equipped with the power of the sword (Romans 13) to protect those who are threatened and attacked by marauders. Of course, the "prevention of murder" for which "government is armed with the sword," according to the Catechism, may sometimes occasion the *use* of that sword.

Now the Christian just war theory says that though murder is always wrong, killing for the purpose of preserving and enhancing life may *not* always be wrong. Obviously, "killing for the purpose of preserving and enhancing life" sounds paradoxical, or worse. It is paradoxical. Yet, because we live in a fallen world, because the Kingdom has not yet fully come, it may sometimes be necessary, for the greatest preserving and enhancing of life, to kill those who threaten it.

An example may be helpful. Suppose a man with a machine gun opens fire on a crowd at a sports event. Suppose, moreover, that a policeman (for instance, a Christian Reformed policeman), himself wounded in the spray of bullets, squeezes off a dying shot at the assailant and kills him. Has the policeman done wrong? Surely, he has taken another human life. But, no doubt, overall he has preserved many lives in that arena by taking one. Overall, he has been obedient to the command to do good to one's neighbor(s).

Thus it may be within the positive intent of the sixth commandment sometimes to preserve and enhance life by taking life. The largest scale instances of this will occur in time of war when a nation defends itself or another relatively innocent nation against the murderous attacks of the enemy. In such a case, the preservation of life (even, if necessary, by killing) is not a violation of, but an instance of obedience to, the sixth commandment. If the protection of the innocent cannot be secured without resort to the armed restraint of lawless nations, then a Christian may have to bear arms and a Christian may have to kill. The presence of sin occasions the Christian's dilemma—whether by action to sacrifice the lives of the assailants or by inaction to sacrifice those

of the innocent—and because the good which the Christian seeks to promote includes justice, the Christian may have to decide in favor of protecting the innocent. If the grievance is particularly clear and particularly acute, the justice factor may, on occasion, even justify the sacrificing of a larger number of aggressors' lives for the sake of protecting a smaller number of innocent lives.

Another example may be useful. Suppose five strong young men attack one fragile old man. They demand his money and begin to kick him when he will not, or cannot, produce it. If he is not rescued from this merciless beating, he may die. Any rescuer, however, must contend with the fact that the five are armed and will not be distracted from their prey without force, or threat of force. We may want to say that even if defense of the old man cannot be achieved without the *use* of force, including killing force, against the young men who, let us say, have now begun to fire their weapons, still, the rescuer may not have done wrong. The rescuer may, in fact, have done right in taking, as necessary, three, four, or five lives to protect one or two. He may be obliged, in other words, to do good by upholding justice even on those occasions when, by doing so, more lives are lost than would have been lost in case innocent victims had simply been sacrificed to the whims of their murderers. Justice is a weighty factor in the calculation of what the *good* is which love seeks to promote.

Now there are in the eyes of God, of course, no completely or purely just wars at all. That is, in a perfect world there would be no wars—"just" or not. The fact is that every war is carried out in the wreckage of human life and the frustration of human hope, and is ended with suffering still to be visited upon children's children for years to come. "Just war" is therefore an easily misunderstood expression. Yet, as argued above, some nations' *participation* in war may, on occasion, be justified and promote justice. The difficulty lies in determining, by intelligence, sensitivity, and prayer, just which instances of participation in war are justified and which are not.

Obviously, most of the reasons for waging war are Christianly impermissible and considerably outside the kingdom of God. Christians readily recognize that most reasons for going to war are wrong. Christians know, for instance, that the call to bear arms in a war of sheer aggression is morally wrong and may not be heeded. Christians know that merely economic war-making is immoral. Christians know that all land-hungry, imperialistic war-making is wrong. Christians also know (on the basis of Romans 12:17, for instance) that vindictive, hateful, striking back in rage is unchristian behavior. And they know that, in the moral arena, means are as morally significant as ends, that therefore, no war activity which by its aiding the obliteration of human society would destroy—or have a serious chance of destroying—more good than it preserves can be Christianly supported. Christians know, in other words, that all disproportionate defensive war-waging is wrong, and that all-out nuclear war, disproportionate war-waging's clearest example, is *ipso facto* immoral and unsupportable by any Christian. (See report of the Committee on the Problem of War, Acts of Synod 1964, pp. 314-316.) Finally

because of the uniquely Christian love of peace and mission of reconciliation, Christians know that all national truculence, all inclination—surely all eagerness—to fight, all crusading spirit, every proud display of weaponry and glorying in military might, is thoroughly immoral and contrary both to the letter and spirit of everything our Lord teaches.

Christians ought to go to war reluctantly and only when the alternative is clearly worse. Christians may participate in limited, defensive war only when the alternative consists in allowing lawless men to kill, ravage, decimate and turn to ashes the lives and habitats of innocent people. When every responsible attempt to solve differences has failed, when the good of the attackers has been consciously balanced against the good of those attacked, when there is a massive and unprovoked threat to life and peace, when, finally, the decision to engage in war has been legally taken, then a Christian may take up arms in defense of the innocent and rest in the conviction that in a dark and brutal world he is obeying Jesus' command to love neighbors as well as he can.

The State

The questions surrounding a Christian's participation in war inevitably raise, as well, the question of the view one holds of the state and its authority. There have been Christians who have questioned the legitimacy of the state itself, as well as its right to use military power. Such a view of the state would have a great deal of bearing on how one would respond to a call to military service. With such a view one could even feel virtuous in rejecting the government's call to military service regardless of the circumstances under which the call came.

Other Christians have taken the position that the government has a God-given authority such that when the government orders a Christian citizen to take up arms and fight in a war his duty is not to question what his government is doing, but simply to obey. On this view those in government are answerable to God for the moral choices of the nation but the citizens are not. On this basis it is neither the task nor the right of the Christian citizen to evaluate his government's decision to go to war. Such a view of the state will also have a great bearing on how one would respond to a call to military service.

Neither of the above views will square with what the Scriptures teach about the Christian's relation to the state. The first of these does not give due recognition to the God-given authority of the state. The second position above fails to recognize that the God-given authority of the state is not ultimate.

The first part of Romans 13 is often the focus of discussions of the Christian and his relation to the state. It is important that we understand both what Romans 13 affirms and what it does not affirm. In Romans 13 we are called upon to recognize and submit to the God-given authority of the civil government. "Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God" (13:1). So, Christian citizens owe the state obedience in all matters that are within that God-given authority.

However, Paul's recognition of the God-given authority of the state may not be used to justify the conclusion that God wants us to obey every directive of every authority figure regardless of how that figure exercises his power. Only God has a sovereignty that is unlimited. Every human sovereignty is restricted by the higher claims of God's commandment and limited to the sphere for which the authority was given.

While Romans 13 does not specifically lay down the limits of human authority, it has much to say about those limits indirectly, by setting forth the nature of human authority. Paul declares that all authority flows from God (13:1), and that human authority is only the means of carrying out a God-given assignment. As Paul puts it, the ruler "does not bear the sword in vain; he is the servant of God to execute his wrath on the wrongdoer" (13:4). Since the wrath of God, which the ruler is to execute, relates to man's sin, the ruler's task bears a clear relationship to God's commandments, and to the righteousness and justice required by those commandments.

The God-given authority of the government cannot be detached from that purpose and still claim the unconditional obedience of the person whose loyalty is to God and whose obedience to the state should flow from that loyalty. If the ruler uses his authority to satisfy his own power urges, advance the fortunes of himself and his friends, or reshape the world to his own private wishes, in these actions he has no right to the support of the Christian citizen. And if the ruler orders a citizen to participate in some action that is in violation of one of God's commandments, or to refrain from participation in some action which God requires, the Christian citizen's higher loyalty to God and his commandment must then show itself.

It is important to reflect not only on what Romans 13 says but also on what other biblical materials have to say on the relation between the believer and the state. While biblical history illustrates over and over again that God in his sovereign purposes is able to use sinful kings and even heathen powers to achieve his redemptive goals, the biblical picture of civil authorities is not a very lofty one. In the biblical materials the state does not finally come through as an institution to which believers owe unquestioning allegiance. The Bible is full of warnings that sin may express itself in the demonic abuse of power. Daniel and his friends submit the orders of the king to the test of whether those orders conform to God's commandments. When Daniel and his friends conclude that those orders do not conform, they refuse to submit to them and are sustained by God both in their judgments and their actions. The Old Testament prophets regularly expose and oppose not only the sins of pagan kings but also those of the kings of Israel and Judah. In the New Testament Jesus tells us to "render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's" but carefully sets that in the context of "render unto God the things that are God's." The book of Revelation warns of what the state may become, using language such as "beast," "dragon" and "great whore."

Thus, in the biblical materials on the Christian and the state there is a kind of tension. There is need to recognize the God-given authority of the state and to discern where that authority requires loyal obedience. But there is also the need to recognize where the use of authority becomes sinful and where our deeper loyalty and obedience to God must prevail. While the state is called to serve as a minister of God and must be obeyed when it serves as such, Christians cannot uncritically obey the state on the assumption that it is always fulfilling that calling.

In view of the above, in times of war the duty to obey the God-given authority of the state in no way cancels a Christian's duty to act in conformity with God's law. If the state commands a Christian to kill his fellow man, he cannot escape moral accountability for his act by saying that God commands us to obey the government and the government ordered him to do it. God commands both the citizen and the government to obey his commandments; when the state violates God's commandments, God calls upon the Christian to obey God rather than men.

If the state engages in a war in a clearly immoral way, the moral problem of a Christian is also not limited to military service. It is the duty of a Christian citizen to oppose such an immoral action not only by refusing to bear arms but also by a forthright prophetic witness, and by refusal to support the war through war-related industry or war-related taxes as well.

While the duty to obey the higher authority of God and to oppose and resist immoral actions by the state applies under any form of government, there is a special application of this duty in a democracy. In a democracy, in which citizens have some voice in government, the citizen has a greater opportunity to influence the actions of government and an accompanying greater responsibility for the actions of his government than the citizens in a monarchy or a dictatorship.

Not only national actions but national attitudes as well are a concern for the Christian in relation to the state. The Christian should bring prophetic witness to bear on any attitude that treats the God-given authority of the state with disrespect or that gives a false ultimacy to the state. The Christian should especially be on guard against the attitudes of anarchism, militarism, and (national) chauvinism, and should recognize the sinfulness of all three. The Christian must reject and bear witness against the stance of anarchism, with its view that all government is evil and unnecessary, and with its refusal to honor the God-given authority of the state. The Christian must also reject and bear witness against militarism, with its glorying in might, its love of weaponry, its spoiling for a fight, and its sometimes reckless race to produce more devastating armaments than the other members of the family of nations. Similarly, the Christian must oppose the attitudes of chauvinism, with its overweening love for one's own country, which exalts that nation and its people above the claims for recognition and just treatment of the other nations of the world. The Christian should recognize the sinfulness and worldliness in each of these attitudes and respond accordingly.

There is, assuredly, a kind of patriotic love for one's country which is altogether wholesome. That patriotic love flows from a love for one's neighbor as commanded by God, and is only a broader expression of that love. To love one's country in this sense means to respect the God-given calling of one's nation and the worth which accompanies that calling. It means to seek and defend the true well-being of that nation within the framework of that calling, willingly making personal sacrifices in order to do so.

However, it is important to recognize the difference between such a wholesome Christian patriotism and a chauvinism that calls for unconditional loyalty to one's country, exalts one's own country above all others, and is willing to deny justice to other peoples if that denial advances the power of one's own nation. It is important that a Christian recognize the difference between Christian patriotism and that idolatry which loyally supports the action of one's own country regardless of whether it is right or wrong.

To be sure, a Christian ought to love his *country* whether it is right or wrong, but he ought to express that love differently when the *action* of his country comes in conflict with God's commandments. On the individual level love for one's neighbor may sometimes require calling one's neighbor to repentance and changed behavior. So also, love for one's country may sometimes require the Christian patriot to raise a prophetic voice against the actions of his country. When patriotism is placed in this context, it is altogether fitting that the Christian exercise a patriotic love for his country.

The Conscience

One of the key concepts in a discussion of ethical decisions relating to war is the conscience. There have been various views of the conscience, and one's view of the conscience is important, because that view has much to do with both the role one assigns to conscience and the way one deals with conscientious objections, either in oneself or in another. Conflicting views of how a Christian should relate to war have often involved conflicting views of what the conscience is and how it is to be treated.

Common to the various views is the recognition that the conscience is an inner voice addressing the individual concerning the rightness or wrongness of his conduct. In Romans 2:15 the Apostle Paul recognizes that even the "Gentiles" have consciences that accuse or excuse them. But various views differ on the question of whose voice it is that speaks within, with what authority it speaks and how seriously it is to be taken.

One set of views tends to see the conscience as the voice of God himself. If one so defines the conscience, this has implications. If conscience is simply the voice of God, then the conscience has absolute authority and may not be questioned. On this basis the validity of the testimony of conscience can never be challenged, either by a fellow human being or by a government that wants to send one to war. In war the individual conscience must be the sole judge of whether the individual will partici-

pate in a war. So, too, one's duty to one's own conscience is simple obedience and one's duty to the conscience of others is simply to urge them to follow their consciences.

Another set of views sees the conscience as merely an element in the human make-up, a human faculty that makes judgments concerning right and wrong. Like depth perception, which judges distances, the conscience is seen as a human faculty that judges morality. If one so defines the conscience, this also has implications. On this basis the testimony of conscience is nothing but a subjective human judgment. Like all subjective human judgments, it can be freely challenged, impatiently rebuked, or lightly dismissed. It speaks with no authority, for it has no objective reference. On this view the nation can freely send the individual to war regardless of whether the individual's conscience objects.

Neither of the above views of conscience fits the biblical data on conscience. The Apostle Paul makes clear that the conscience is not to be treated simply as the voice of God, for the conscience can be weak, or mistaken, and does involve subjective judgment (I Corinthians 8). However, the conscience is also not to be lightly dismissed or treated with disrespect, for it is something important in one's relation to one's Lord. To "defile" or "wound" the conscience is a matter of serious spiritual consequences, as Paul sees it (I Corinthians 8:7-13).

While the voice of conscience is not simply the voice of God, it is also not simply a subjective judgment without objective reference. The voice of conscience is perhaps best described as the inner voice that testifies for the moral authorities we recognize. Some voice of conscience speaks to everyone (Romans 2:15), but the content of that voice varies according to the authorities and standards which we consciously or unconsciously recognize. For some, the voice of conscience may merely reflect the values of family, friends, and society. But a sensitive Christian conscience is responsive to the values of the Christian fellowship, and, beyond these, to God as he reveals himself in the Scriptures, in his law, and in the person of Christ. The sanctified Christian conscience is one in which God's law is "written in the heart" (Psalm 119:10,11; II Corinthians 3:1-6, Hebrews 8:10,11).

Thus the conscience of a Christian is very much involved in his commitment to his Lord. One cannot trample upon his conscience, or permit another to do so, without serious spiritual damage to his commitment (I Corinthians 8:7-13). To act in flagrant conflict with one's conscience is moral suicide. This means that the genuine conscientious objection of the Christian should be dealt with very carefully not only by the individual himself, but also by the fellowship of believers and the nation.

However, while the Christian's conscience includes what he hears as his Lord's call to obedience, it is important to recognize that the conscience may hear imperfectly and may be mistaken. It is also important to understand that the conscience is not a static thing, but is capable of growth and is shaped by social influences. The Christian conscience is in a lifelong process of being shaped by the Word of God in the fellowship of believers. This social influence is not only taking place con-

stantly, but it is proper that it should. One of the purposes of the communion of saints and the admonition of the church is the shaping of the moral discernment of the individual in order that he grow up into mature judgment (cf. Ephesians 4:13).

This means that a Christian who is struggling with a moral decision about war ought never to isolate himself from the counsel of fellow-believers as he seeks the light of the Word. The Christian who is faced with the decision of whether or not to participate in an act of war should not presume to decide that question without thoroughly examining the moral issues while receiving the fullest counsel of the Christian fellowship in understanding those issues. Similarly, the Christian fellowship ought to recognize its responsibility to the conscience of the individual and should enter in the fullest possible way into that counsel.

Nevertheless, when the time for decision arrives, the church may not presume to dictate to the conscience of the individual. During the process of counsel, the believing fellowship may work hard in an effort to reshape the conscience of the individual so that he comes to a conclusion in harmony with the conscientious convictions of the larger fellowship. However, when the outcome of the process is clear, the church must urge the individual not to violate his own conscience but to act in integrity with his own conscientious conviction. In the final decision, the church may not appoint itself the ultimate judge over the individual, because not the church but Christ is the Lord of the conscience.

The Church

One's view of the church and its role in moral decisions can also have much to do with how one handles a decision-making situation relating to war.

Some see the task and concern of the church as a purely spiritual role, and then define the spiritual as dealing only with man's relationship with God. This view tends to see the church as concerned with personal salvation, with sound doctrine, with private and public worship, but not with deciding when the government ought to wage war, or whether the individual ought to participate and how. Those who so view the spiritual role of the church usually also affirm that the church should not "meddle" in politics and in social problems in general.

If some one takes this view of the church's role, he will likely be annoyed by requests that the church take a position on war, or race relations, or any social problem. Moreover, when faced by a question of his own involvement in war, whether by duty in the armed forces, by work or investment in industry producing war materials, or by paying taxes which support a war effort, he will tend to make his decisions in isolation, without consulting the body of the church.

But the above view does not square with the biblical picture of the church in relation to its members. The role of the church is, indeed, spiritual. But the moral questions of whether and how we participate in the waging of war that kills our fellow human beings are spiritual questions. God's commandments apply to all of life, especially to our

treatment of our fellow human beings, and social questions inevitably involve us in the matter of our obedience to our Lord. So the church that is concerned about our spiritual life must be concerned about how we relate to a war that kills our fellow human beings, and the church should rightly become involved in the decision-making process.

However, there is the further question of how the church ought to become involved. Here, again, one's view of the church makes a great deal of difference. Different views of the role and authority of the church in relation to the moral life of its members can result in quite different approaches.

One danger to be avoided is the tendency to see the institutional church as a legislator for moral decisions. If one sees the church this way, he tends to look to the church for a code of moral behavior and to reduce his own moral question to one of whether he is obeying the authority of the church. Whether that moral authority is seen as flowing from a pope through a hierarchy of priests, or flowing from a synod through the assemblies of the church, the impact may be about the same. Such an individual may find a sense of security in doing what the church has said is right, or he may live with a sense of guilt because he knows the position of the church and does not follow it. Either way, he sees the church as the legislator for moral decisions and the authority for his conscience, and tends to feel he is in a moral vacuum in areas where the church has not spoken.

While the church should become involved in moral decision-making, it should not be involved in that fashion. The church is not a legislator for moral decisions and should avoid even the appearance of taking over that role. Christ alone is Lord of the conscience (cf. I Corinthians 4:3-5; Matthew 15:8,9). The task of the church is not to subjugate the conscience of the individual, but to enlighten it, and to seek its mature responsiveness to Christ the Lord. As observed earlier in this report, the conscience of the Christian needs the fellowship and witness of the church in reaching mature moral decisions. But that assistance must be given in a way that respects the nature of the church's moral authority, as well as its role in relation to the conscience.

With respect to such difficult questions as war, this means that the church should witness freely to what the Scriptures teach, and urge the individual to expose his conscience fully to all the relevant issues, and this within the context of the fellowship of the church. However, when that process has been followed, the church must urge the individual to act in integrity with his own conscientious convictions as to the will of his Lord, and must accept and support him in the exercise of them, even if those convictions should disagree with those of a majority of the church.

Simply stated, the true task of the church in relation to war is the proclamation of the Word. The church should bear witness forthrightly to what the Scriptures teach and to what the church sees as the clear implications of those teachings. The pulpit of the church should stimulate the consciences of the members by speaking to the moral issues of the day, including wars when they occur. When clarity and consensus

can be reached, the assemblies of the church should also address the membership, the government, and society at large with its testimony to the standards of Christ and what they mean in the current situation.

In time of war a painful price in conflict may be paid by the church that forthrightly bears witness concerning the rightness or wrongness of its nation's behavior. Nevertheless, when clarity and consensus can be reached on that question there is no good reason why the assemblies of the church should not openly declare what they see as the moral duty of the nation and its Christian citizens.

This task is rendered especially difficult by the fact that not all instances of war-making are clearly moral or immoral. In some of them information is so limited and the moral issues sufficiently complex so that the church may simply be unable to reach clarity and consensus. In such cases the church can nevertheless explore the relevant moral issues not only through sermons and Bible study, but also through debates, colloquia, study committees, and the advice of those with special qualifications to address these issues.

However difficult the task, the church cannot escape the responsibility to address moral questions. The church must speak in order to stimulate and enlighten the consciences of its own members and also in order to arouse in government and society an awareness of the claims of God's law and the meaning of God's call to reconciliation.

INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDELINES

In setting forth the foregoing teachings of the Word of God concerning the responsibilities of Christians relative to war, the committee believes it has presented the foundation for providing guidelines to the members of the church who must make the difficult decisions concerning involvement in war and to the assemblies and officers of the church as they seek to fulfill their respective prophetic and pastoral callings. However, before listing the guidelines it is necessary to make some important observations which are fundamental to their proper utilization.

A. We believe that the following statements express biblical principles and should underlie all decisions about war:

(1) All wars are the result of sin, and though God may use wars in his judgment on nations, it is his purpose to make all wars to cease.

(2) The supreme standard for all moral decisions is the will of God. When Jesus said, "Love your enemies," he taught that there are no exceptions to God's command to "love your neighbor as yourself." In all circumstances the Christian believer must live by the law of love enunciated by the sovereign Lawgiver and Judge and exemplified in his Son.

(3) The Christian should obey the state when it orders him to act within the framework of righteousness. Conversely, he should disobey every order of the state to perform acts contrary to the will of God, and he may not obey such demands of government as require him to sin. The Christian must obey God rather than men.

B. Careful distinction must be made between *basic biblical principles* and the *guidelines* set forth to assist Christians in living by those principles. All Christians must surely agree that the root cause of all war is sin; that God "makes wars cease to the end of the earth"; that Christians are called to be peacemakers. But there have been and probably will continue to be significant differences among Christians on how to implement these principles in the real world of hate and violence. There are several factors that stand in the way of unanimity among Christians when they are required to make decisions about war.

(1) The complexity of international politics and economics and the secrecy and deception ordinarily employed in international relations make it extremely difficult, if not impossible, to ascertain the pertinent facts that must be known in order to judge the morality of participation in any given war.

(2) The difficulties inherent in cross-cultural communication often make it hard to understand other nations, their problems and objectives.

(3) Sin affects the capacity of Christians to evaluate accurately and honestly the grave and complex moral issues in a world in tension between sin and righteousness. National and personal interests and prejudices tend to overcome concern for the righteousness of God and the welfare of society on a world-wide scale.

(4) Inability to look into the future prevents Christians from perceiving the full effect decisions about war will have on the future of society.

In the face of these difficulties it is not possible for the church to arrive at a neat set of morally binding rules for her members relative to war. At best she can offer *guidelines* that mark out boundaries, point out directions and dangers, and stimulate the mind to thoughtful, honest evaluation of the issues at hand. Such guidelines can do no more than assist the church and her members in translating into practicality and in implementing the principles of Holy Scripture. Moreover, the church cannot expect that any set of guidelines, however carefully drawn and conscientiously employed, will necessarily result in a unanimous evaluation of any given war. Conscientious members of the Christian community sometimes interpret differently the various authorities which form and nurture the individual conscience. However, the church can hope and pray that they will provide help for the development and proper functioning of the Christian conscience as the proper means for Christian decision-making in a sinful world.

C. In his unrelenting opposition to all war, the committed pacifist may not despise and reject a fellow-Christian whose conscience persuades him of the legitimacy of his nation's armed response to aggression. Nor should the Christian, whose conscientious patriotism readies him to take up arms against aggression, scorn and condemn the Christian pacifist whose conscience forbids him to engage in or encourage any act of violence. The Bible in a number of places approves passive resistance, and, although this report concludes that war is sometimes

necessary, and participation therein justified, we do not hesitate to point out that Christian pacifism has a long and respected history. The difficulties inherent in the problem of war and Christian participation therein, together with the imperfect moral state and limited wisdom of every Christian, summon all members of the church to mutual understanding and tolerance of the conscientious convictions of one another.

* * * *

In fulfillment of our mandate and in the name of the Prince of Peace the committee submits to synod the following guidelines for making ethical decisions about war in the hope that, with the indispensable guidance of the Holy Spirit, they will be useful to all who seek to do the will of God in matters involving war.

1. Christians faced with problems concerning war should respect their need of the communion of saints, remembering the affirmation of Scripture: "You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, that you may declare the wonderful deeds of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light" (I Peter 2:9). By divine grace Christians are bound to God in holy covenant, and by faith are united to Christ in one body. Therefore they should realize that weighty moral decisions are made responsibly before the face of God only if the prayers and counsel of the covenant fellowship are sincerely sought and lovingly offered.

2. If the nation has or is about to become involved in a war or in any military action against another nation, Christians, as morally responsible citizens of the nation and of God's kingdom, should evaluate their nation's involvement by diligently seeking the answers to questions like the following, drawing on the counsel of fellow-members with special qualifications as well as pastors and the assemblies of the church:

- a. Is our nation the unjust aggressor?
- b. Is our nation intentionally involved for economic advantage?
- c. Is our nation intentionally involved for imperialistic ends, such as the acquisition of land, natural resources, or political power in international relations?
- d. Has our nation in good faith observed all relevant treaties and other international agreements?
- e. Has our nation exhausted all peaceful means to resolve the matters in dispute?
- f. Is the evil or aggression represented by the opposing force of such overwhelming magnitude and gravity as to warrant the horrors and brutality of military opposition to it?
- g. Has the decision to engage in war been taken legally by a legitimate government?
- h. Are the means of warfare employed or likely to be employed by our nation in fair proportion to the evil or aggression of the opposing forces? Is our nation resolved to employ minimum necessary force?
- i. In the course of the war has our nation been proposing and en-

couraging negotiations for peace or has it spurned such moves by the opposing forces or by neutral nations or international organizations?

3. If a Christian cannot conscientiously engage in a given war or in alternate service, his refusal must be within the framework of law. He must expose himself to the due process and even the penalty of the state whose laws he has knowingly, publicly, and conscientiously broken. He should not "go underground" or flee the country except under conditions of extraordinary oppression or intolerably brutal tyranny.

4. If an individual must make a personal decision about involvement in war, he should seek the prayers and guidance of his parents and other members of his family group. The family, in turn, should provide such guidance and prayer support. If there are continuing disagreements within the family, the various members should exercise mutual respect, forbearance and charity.

5. A Christian who believes it is sinful for him to serve in a given war, or who conscientiously objects to serving in any war, should notify his church and be open to its counsel.

6. When the nation faces international crisis or war itself, those who preach the Word must seek the direction and support of the Holy Spirit so they will be able to declare prophetically from the Scriptures what Christ is saying concerning the issues at stake. Furthermore, the love of Christ must be forcefully and compassionately proclaimed in order, in the face of differing opinions in the church, to preserve the unity and fellowship of the body of Christ and to guard against sinful nationalism and hatred of people of other nations.

7. Pastors should recognize their special responsibility to counsel all members and families of the church who are required to make decisions relating to war. They must take particular care with those families where differences are so sharp as to threaten that loving Christian communion which is expressive of the covenant of grace.

8. Remembering that the moral decisions respecting participation in war are among the most agonizing faced by any Christian, the members and assemblies of the church should not reject fellow-Christians whose conclusions and decisions differ from the majority, but in the name of our longsuffering Savior exercise understanding and forbearance. They should also provide counseling and other necessary support to those whose conscientious stand brings them any sort of hardship.

9. The members of the church, out of reverence for the righteousness and justice of God, should be willing always to test the policies and practices of all governments by the teachings of Holy Scripture, and never assume a blind and proud nationalistic spirit that regards one's own nation as always above criticism. Moreover, they should consider it their duty under God to give discreet expression to their conscientious views in whatever manner is open to them.

10. Whether to prevent the outbreak of war, to hasten the cessation of hostilities, or to encourage support of or resistance to a given war, the assemblies of the church, by means of public testimony or petitions

addressed to the governments concerned, must give clear and courageous witness to the teachings of the Scriptures.

11. In order to give informed witness in times of war and international crisis, the assemblies of the church should use the best available resources in areas such as ethics, law, history, international relations, political science, economics, and psychology. The assemblies should also urge knowledgeable Christians to offer freely their services to all in the Christian community to whom war or the threat of war present pressing problems—both conscientious participants and conscientious objectors and their families.

12. Christians should use their rights and privileges of citizenship to secure such legislation as is calculated to prevent unjust war, correct moral wrong, and establish just policies.

13. Christians who hold public office must give total allegiance to Christ the King and firmly resist every compromise of righteousness and justice in the conduct of government. Specifically, they should do all in their power to prevent the nation from becoming immorally involved in war, and should clearly disassociate themselves from policies and actions that bring about such involvement. Further, they should encourage in government a climate for open communication so that citizens can receive accurate information sufficient to make responsible decisions regarding a given war.

14. Christians who have a financial interest in or are employees of companies that provide war materiel or in any way stand to profit from war must face the questions suggested in Guideline 2 and be willing, if conscience demands, to alter their relationship with such companies.

15. Christians who serve in the military should be sensitive to the countless evils that are inevitably present. They ought prayerfully to use all means available to strengthen their spiritual life and to guard against being engulfed by the tides of hate and violence that destroy the soul, or fleeing to such desperate and self-indulging escapes as gambling, prostitution, and the abuse of alcohol and drugs. They should constantly bear in mind the limited objectives of the war they have reluctantly accepted, and remember that God's command to love our neighbor applies even to the enemy.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That during the discussion of this report the Rev. Raymond Opperwall, chairman, and the Rev. Eugene Bradford, reporter, be given the privilege of the floor.
2. That this report be referred to the churches for guidance.
3. That the Guidelines be adopted.

Grounds:

- a. They are consistent with the Scriptures and the confessions of the church.

- b. They will give direction to members who are required to make decisions concerning involvement in wars.
- c. They will assist the assemblies and officers of the church in their prophetic and pastoral callings.

**Committee on Guidelines for
Ethical Decisions on War**

R. Opperwall, chairman

E. Bradford, reporter

J. J. Hoogland

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REPORT 38
THE LODGE OATH AND CHURCH MEMBERSHIP
(Art. 68)

MANDATE

Your committee was appointed pursuant to the adoption by Synod of 1975 of the following recommendations of the advisory committee regarding the lodge and church membership:

1. That synod accede to the request of Classis Lake Erie and appoint a new study committee to research the content, confessional character, and function of the oath in the relationship of lodge members to their oath bound societies.

Grounds:

- a. Reports 37 (1974) and 45 (1975) do not address themselves sufficiently to this question.
 - b. The answer to this question is crucial in the evaluation of the expressed desire of lodge members to become members in our churches.
 - c. Reports 37 (1974) and 45 (1975) argue from the religious pretentiousness of some lodge literature and practice to the religious character of the member's commitment. This is contestable reasoning that needs demonstration.
 - d. The church must guard the integrity of its God-given gospel of reconciliation, and witness to it by speaking truth about the inquirer.
2. That synod withhold action on Report 45, refer it to the new study committee above referred to for inclusion in its findings, and for reporting in 1977.

Grounds:

- a. Report 45 assumes what needs demonstration "concerning the content, confessional character, and function of the oath in the relationship of lodge members to their oath bound societies" referred to in recommendation 1 above.
 - b. Conclusions of Report 45 almost exclusively draw on the *teachings of one lodge* but claim to speak also to the *practices of many lodges*.
3. That synod refer Overture 29 re cartoon illustrations to the study committee.
 4. That synod ask Classis Columbia and Tri-Cities (Kennewick) CRC to stay their respective actions pending action of synod on report of study committee above.

Report 37 (1974), alluded to in the recommendation, is the very comprehensive statement drawn up in response to the request of the Synod of 1972 that there be formulated a current statement of the position of the Christian Reformed Church. Synod accepted Report 37 as a resource document for the guidance of the churches but felt the need of a more concise summary pamphlet containing the stand of the church in the light of the study committee's report, with a view to its adoption as the official witness of the Christian Reformed Church's position regarding the lodge and church membership. This summary

pamphlet is what is alluded to as Report 45 (1975). As to Overture 29, it was a request from Classis Grandville that cartoons be omitted from the summary pamphlet, the claim being that they do not contribute to the value of the proposed pamphlet.

BACKGROUND

The present stand of the church is the same as it has been from the beginning of our denominational existence. The church has always excluded members of secret societies. Already in 1867 position was taken against membership in secret, oath-bound societies when it was declared that Free Masons had to quit the lodge or be excommunicated (Minutes, Feb. 20, 1867). Soon thereafter the same position was taken with respect to secret societies in general. (See Minutes, June 10, 1868, Art. 17; Acts 1873, Art. 24; General Rules of 1881, Art. 55.)

In the report on secret societies (Acts of Synod 1900, pp. 96-101) and reprinted in Acts of Synod 1958 (pp. 416-422), which synod adopted, a secret society was defined as follows: "A secret society is such an organization which requires of every one who becomes a member unconditional concealment of all that pertains to the lodge, without officially informing the candidate of the contents of what must remain a secret; and which at the same time obligates its members to unrestricted, or at least insufficiently restricted, assistance and obedience."

A consensus has been developing through recent years that it is not the secrecy that is our main objection to the lodges but rather the pseudo-religious character of the lodges. The debate that has been disturbing the church in recent years has had to do primarily with the question of lodge religion. The position that the lodges' teaching and scriptural teaching are incompatible and that this incompatibility is the main reason for the continued exclusion of lodge members are what lie behind a basic paragraph in synod's reaffirmation of the traditional stand (Acts of Synod 1974, Art. 65, B,3,f):

"The lodge member who desires to become a member of the church must be kindly but firmly shown that membership in the lodge and in the church of Jesus Christ involves a double commitment which our Lord himself does not tolerate. Those in the church who affiliate with the lodge must be shown the error of their way, and if they refuse to repent must be placed under the censure of the church."

We need not develop this point at length, since it has been fully set forth in Report 37 (1974). But we do well at least to list the religious positions which appear to be held either explicitly or implicitly by most lodges:

1. The denial of the trinity and of the deity of Christ and the holding of a universalist-unitarian position on the doctrine of God and salvation.
2. The denial of the vicarious atonement by Christ and a positing of good works as a sufficient ground for salvation, and
3. The promises of spiritual enlightenment from many sources, of

which the Bible is only one, and the holding of all the historic religions as equally acceptable in the sight of God.

Your committee is persuaded that the adhering to all or some of these religious positions and practices is more determinative of contraband character of the lodge for the Christian than the secrecy which has heretofore been the main defining factor of all prohibited memberships. We believe that the church should define a particular prohibitive involvement in these terms rather than in relation to mere secrecy.

The focusing upon the oath in our mandate was occasioned by the argument of Classis Lake Erie that many lodge members have *not*, by virtue of their oath at their initiation into a lodge, committed themselves to the false religion of the lodge. Classis argues that whatever of false religion there is in the literature and ceremonies of the lodge, mere membership as such does not necessarily involve a commitment to the religious position of the lodge. Though the classis accepts the position of the church regarding the false religious character of the lodge, it is persuaded that all the declarations adopted so far by our synods have failed to come to grips with the possibility that membership does not necessarily imply religious commitment. Classis believes that all that the member commits himself to in his oath are such things as secrecy, fraternal loyalty, and benevolence. "While there are highly offensive aspects to these commitments as they are spelled out in the Masonic oath, they do not appear to add up to any doctrinal or confessional commitment" (Acts of Synod 1975, p. 635).

Your committee sought to fulfill its mandate by giving attention to the following:

1. The content, confessional character, and function of the lodge oaths, with a view to discovering whether or not the lodge member has by means of the oath committed himself to the religious teachings of the lodge,
2. The reformulation of the summary, conformably to our findings, including the determination of the advisability of using cartoons.

I. THE CONTENT, CONFESSIONAL CHARACTER, AND FUNCTION OF THE LODGE OATH

Note: Your committee sought to fulfill this part of our mandate by (1) the use of questionnaires addressed to lodge leaders, lodge members who have sought entrance into our churches, and consistories; (2) a limited number of interviews with lodge members and leaders and an interview with a pastor deeply involved with the issue (other concerned pastors addressed letters to us); and (3) the exploration of lodge literature and literature evaluating various lodges. (Much help was gained by the correspondence with the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod Commission on Organizations.)

A. *The Content of the Lodge Oaths*

We present the following quotations from the lodges' own literature giving the content of their oaths:

MASONIC LODGE

"I,, of my own free will and accord, in the presence of Almighty God and this Worshipful Lodge, erected to him and dedicated to the holy Saint John, do hereby and hereon most solemnly and sincerely promise and swear:

1. That I will always hail, ever conceal and never reveal any of the secret arts, part or points of the hidden mysteries of ancient Freemasonry, which have been heretofore, may at this time or shall at any future period be communicated to me as such, to any person or persons whatsoever, except it be to a true and lawful brother Mason, or within a regularly constituted lodge of Masons; and neither unto him nor them until by strict trial, due examination or legal information, I shall have found him or them as lawfully entitled to the same as I am myself.

2. I further solemnly promise and swear that I will not write, print, paint, stamp, stain, carve, mark or engrave them, or cause the same to be done, upon anything movable or immovable capable of receiving the least impression of a word, syllable, letter or character, whereby the same may become legible or intelligible to myself or to any person under the whole canopy of heaven, and the secrets of Freemasonry be thereby unlawfully obtained through my unworthiness.

3. To all of this I most solemnly and sincerely promise and swear, with a firm and steadfast resolution to keep and perform the same, without any equivocation, mental reservation, or secret evasion of mind whatever.

Binding myself under no less a penalty than that of having my throat cut across, my tongue torn out by its roots, and buried in the rough sands of the sea at low water mark, where the tide ebbs and flows twice in twenty-four hours, should I ever knowingly or willingly violate this my solemn oath and obligation as an Entered Apprentice Mason. So help me God, and keep me steadfast in the due performance of the same."

ORDER OF THE EASTERN STAR (Men)

"Brother it is with pleasure that I welcome you into the Order, and especially as a member of this Chapter. The grand purposes of the Order are beneficent and social; its lessons are scriptural, its teachings are moral; its obligations are mutual to all its members, and are based upon the universal principle that, whatever benefits are due by the Masonic Fraternity to the wives, mothers, widows, daughters and sisters of Masons, corresponding benefits are due from them to the Brotherhood. To enable us to properly apply these purposes to the best advantage, we make use of certain signs and ceremonies, by means of which we recognize those who belong to and have a just claim upon us, and mutually bind ourselves by an obligation, not only to secrecy, but to the faithful performance of the duties that devolve upon us as members of this Order.

With this knowledge of its aims and purposes, are you willing to assume the obligations and responsibilities appertaining to this Order? (Candidate assents)"

ORDER OF THE EASTERN STAR (Women)

"You will carefully preserve in sacred and inviolable secrecy, and under no circumstances improperly divulge any of the ceremonies, signs or passes belonging to the Order of the Eastern Star.

You will cheerfully obey the constitution and all the rules and regulations of the Supreme Grand Chapter and the by-laws of the Chapter of which you may be a member.

You will, so far as in your power, liberally dispense to your Sisters advice in their troubles, sympathy in their sorrows, and aid in their misfortunes.

You will cautiously avoid speaking evil of your sisters, or performing any acts of injustice or unkindness to them.

Do you to all these pledges covenant your honor as a woman?

Candidate: I do."

KNIGHTS OF PYTHIAS

Rank of Page: "I solemnly promise that I will never reveal the password, grip, signs or any other secret or mystery of this rank, except in a lodge of this order,

recognized by, and under the control of the Supreme Lodge Knights of Pythias of the World, or when being examined by the proper officers of a lodge, or by one whom I know to be a member of this rank.

I further promise that I will not become a member of, recognize or countenance any organization using the name of this order or any derivative thereof, which is not recognized by, and under the control of the Supreme Lodge Knights of Pythias of the World.

I further promise that I will obey the laws and, so far as possible, comply with the requirements of that order.

I further promise that I will heed the teachings of this rank, and seek to profit thereby, and, as I meet the members of this order, I will endeavor to exemplify, in my conduct and my demeanor toward them, the principles of friendship embodied in the lesson of tonight.

To the faithful observance of this obligation I pledge my sacred word of honor. So help me God—and may he keep me steadfast."

(There are similar pledges required to attain the rank of Esquire and Knight.)

INDEPENDENT ORDER OF ODD FELLOWS

"I, _____, in the presence of the members of the Order here assembled, do solemnly promise that I will never communicate to any one, unless directed to do so by a legal lodge, the signs, tokens, or grips, the term, traveling, or other passwords belonging to the Independent Order of Odd Fellows. Nor will I expose or lend any of the books or papers, relating to the records or secret work of the Order to any person or persons, except to one specially authorized to receive them. That I will never reveal any private business which may be transacted in my presence in this or any other lodge. I also promise, that I will abide by the laws, rules, and regulations of this lodge, of the Grand Lodge of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows of _____, or any other Grand or working lodge to which I may be attached.

I further promise, that I will never wrong a subordinate or Grand Lodge to the value of anything. Nor will I take part or share, directly or indirectly, in any illegal distribution of the funds or other property of the lodge; but will, to the best of my ability, endeavor to prevent the same; and I hereby pledge myself to help and support my afflicted and persecuted brother, and warn him of approaching danger, whether it be from his own imprudence, or from the evil designs of others, or from some accidental cause. I will point out his advantage and interest, where they do not conflict with the rights of others, if it should be in my power so to do. Should I be expelled or voluntarily leave the Order, I will consider this promise as binding out of it as in it. To the faithful performance of all which, I pledge my sacred honor."

THE REBEKAH LODGE (Women)

"I, _____, in the presence of the members of the Rebekah Degree of the Independent Order of Odd-Fellows here assembled do solemnly promise that I will never reveal to any one the Mysteries of this Degree, or the Passwords and Signs belonging to it, and now about to be entrusted to me, except to a member of this Degree, whom I may find, on due trial, to be in possession of them, or when in the discharge of official duties within the Lodge. I furthermore promise to abide by the Laws, Rules, and regulations of the Sovereign Grand Lodge and of the Grand Lodge to which my Lodge may be subordinate, and of this Lodge or any Rebekah Lodge of which I may become a member. To all secrecy and obedience in this respect, I hereby pledge my sacred word of honor, without any mental reservation, and with a full determination to preserve my plighted faith inviolate until the end of life."

ORDER OF PATRONS OF HUSBANDRY (National Grange)

"In the presence of our Heavenly Father and these witnesses, I do hereby pledge my sacred honor that, whether in or out of the Order, I will never reveal any of the secrets of this Order, nor communicate them, not any part of them, to any person in the world, unless I am satisfied by strict test, or in some legal manner that they are lawfully entitled to receive them; that I will conform

to and abide by the laws of my state and nation, the constitution, rules and regulations of the National Grange, and of the State Grange under whose jurisdiction I may be, and of the Subordinate Grange to which I may be attached; that I will never propose for membership in the Order, nor sanction the admission of anyone I have reason to believe an improper person; nor will I oppose the admission of anyone solely on the grounds of a personal prejudice or difficulty. I will recognize and answer all lawful signs given me by a brother or sister of the Order, and will render them such assistance as may be needed, so far as I may be able and the interests of my family will permit. I will not knowingly wrong or defraud a brother or sister of the Order in word or deed; nor will I permit it to be done by another if in my power to prevent it. Should I knowingly or willingly violate this pledge, I invoke upon myself suspension or expulsion from the Order, and thus be disgraced among those who were my brothers and sisters."

BENEVOLENT AND PROTECTIVE ORDER OF ELKS

"I,, in the presence of God and this lodge of Elks, do solemnly promise and swear that I will never reveal any of the confidential matters of this Order which have been, or may hereafter be, committed to my charge and keeping.

I will support the Constitution, and obey the statutes, rules and regulations of the Grand Lodge of this Order, and the by-laws of Lodge, No., and those of any other lodge of which I may hereafter become a member.

I will uphold the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America.

I will propose no one for membership in this Order whom I do not sincerely believe to be worthy thereof.

I will ballot for a worthy candidate and against an unworthy candidate when proposed by another.

I will not permit any political, sectarian or personal prejudice to influence me in the slightest degree in the exercise of my right of franchise in the Order.

I will obey any lawful summons sent me by any competent authority of the Order.

I will never apply to the courts for redress in any matter concerning the Order, without first appealing to the councils of the Order.

I will never reveal to anyone not an Elk, the name of a brother asking or receiving aid or relief from the Order.

I will not, directly or indirectly, use my membership in this Order, nor any emblem, insignia or sign thereof, for business or commercial purposes.

I will never introduce into the Order anything of a political or sectarian character, nor in any way by my conduct bring reproach upon it.

I will always protect a brother, his good name and his family; and I will always respect and defend the purity and sanctity of his home and fireside.

If I break this obligation, may I wander through the world forsaken; may I be pointed out as a being bereft of decency and manhood, unfit to hold communion with true and upright men. And may God help me, and keep me steadfast in this my solemn and binding obligation in the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks of the United States of America. Amen."

LOYAL ORDER OF MOOSE

"In the presence of Almighty God and those here assembled, I do most solemnly promise that I will obey the Laws of the Supreme Lodge of the World, Loyal Order of Moose and the By-Laws of the lodge of which I am to become a member.

I will not become a member of any organization using the word "Moose" as part of its name, unless such organization is under the jurisdiction of the Supreme Lodge of the World, Loyal Order of Moose.

I will not appeal to any civic authority in matters pertaining to this Order, until I have exhausted all means of redress provided by this Order.

I will extend the hand of fellowship and brotherhood to any loyal Moose with whom my relationship may become estranged.

I will never propose an unqualified person for membership in this Order, nor will I oppose the admission of any eligible applicant without cause.

I will endeavor to aid and assist any loyal Moose and warn him of any danger which threatens him and his family.

I will cherish and support our beloved Mooseheart and Moosehaven to the extent of my ability, and give of my substance for the help of children and aged there.

I of my own free will and without reservation accept this obligation binding me to the Loyal Order of Moose. And may God keep me steadfast, in this my solemn pledge. Amen.

FRATERNAL ORDER OF EAGLES

"Before God, and on my honor, I promise that I will never make known to anyone the Rituals of this Order, except to Eagles in good standing, and then only if I am authorized to do so.

I promise never to aid or join an Aerie, or any organization of alleged Eagles, that is not approved by the Grand Aerie.

I will abide by and obey the laws, rules and regulations of the Grand Aerie.

I promise never to propose for admission into the Order a man whom I know to be unworthy; never to use the blackball unless I have conscientious reason for doing so; and never to permit the religious opinions of an applicant, his nationality, or his membership in any other organization to influence my ballot.

I promise never to take unfair advantage of an Eagle in business matters, and never to let him suffer loss of any kind if I can prevent.

I promise to further, at all times, the patriotic, the humanitarian, and the fraternal teachings of this Order.

I promise to try, steadfastly, to make my home the abiding place of thoughts and acts that are wholesome and righteous.

I promise to give our Country the devoted loyalty of a patriot.

Before this Altar my attention is particularly directed to the following vows, and I give my pledge to observe them:

If I cannot speak well of an Eagle, I will not speak ill of him.

I promise at all times to respect the sanctity of his home and family.

I understand the meaning of these pledges and I ask God and my Brothers to help me keep them.

I acknowledge that the wilful violation of any of them is just cause for expulsion from the Order.

(The Worthy President has read these words while the candidates have their right hand raised, and now says 'My friends, if you accept these vows and are willing to give your solemn pledge to observe them, you will now repeat after me.')

I do accept them and I will observe them, so help me God."

Classis Lake Erie has summarized the content of the oaths under the trio "secrecy, fraternal loyalty, and benevolence." We add as applicable to several lodges: obedience, exclusion of political or sectarian considerations, receiving and promoting the teachings, invoking of harsh sanctions, and the invoking of the presence and help of the Deity. These additions to the list, except at a couple of points, do not do much to undercut the statement by Classis Lake Erie that the contents of the oath do not add up to a doctrinal or confessional commitment. Granted the right of a group of generally law abiding people to form a close and exclusive association with one another, the requirements for the most part are such as would be drawn up to reinforce that kind of association.

But other matters enter the picture:

1. The binding of a Christian into a close social and mutually supportive organization with non-Christians, in which fidelity to one

another is of such a type as would violate the scriptural injunction "Be not mismatched with unbelievers. . . ."

2. The use of God's name to bind Christian and non-Christian into this close union.

3. The use of the name of God in a setting in which only an unscriptural concept of God can be testified to.

4. In the case of certain lodges, the use of an oath which involves a calling upon God to witness to the extreme seriousness of one's promise and a calling down upon the person extreme punishment for any infraction of a promise that can hardly be said to require so heavy a sanction.

B. The confessional character of the lodge oath

Having surveyed the contents of the lodge oaths, we come now to the question whether the lodge members are necessarily committed to the religious teachings of the lodge by the mere fact of membership, that is, by their having taken the oath which admitted them to membership. This is what Classis Lake Erie feels we must establish if the present prohibition of lodge membership by the church is to continue to be defensible. Classis admits the pseudo-religious character of the lodge but questions whether mere entrance into membership by means of the oath commits a person to this false religion.

If the oath content be taken by itself, separated from the obvious religious aspects of the lodge (to which the oath contents possibly may not explicitly commit the candidate) even then the concepts in the oath are not without religious implications which are contradictory to our Christian faith. Taking only those concepts secrecy, fraternal loyalty, and benevolence, we maintain that these bear something of a confessional character. They may seem to the casual observer merely ethical concepts. But ethics have a doctrinal foundation. And there is no doctrinal position unless these doctrines are confessed.

Let us concentrate for a moment on the commitment to *fraternal loyalty*. It implies the assumption that all members of the lodge are my brothers. By requiring that this be stated and confirmed in an oath or pledge this assumption is elevated to a doctrinal statement. And taking this oath or making this pledge can, for one who does so, only be defined in terms of a personal confessional commitment to this doctrine. As such this pledge stands in one line with the confessional statement of the Christian believer, "I believe in the communion of the saints." That *fraternal loyalty* is required proves that this profession is supposed to be more than a word of the mouth and that it should be practiced as well. The fact that this pledge is made in some lodges with the hand on the Bible or with an invoking of the name of God emphasizes the more the doctrinal and confessional nature of this pledge.

As to *secrecy*, this aspect of the oath is not in itself wrong. But when a person commits himself to secrecy regarding matters not yet revealed to him, he may be compromising the priority of God's claim over his conscience regarding matters that must *not* be kept secret. In Leviticus 5:4-5 we read: "Or if anyone utters with his lips a rash oath to

do evil or to do good, any sort of rash oath that men swear, and it is hidden from him, when he comes to know it he shall in any of these be guilty. When a man is guilty in any of these, he shall confess the sin he has committed." Some of the secrets may be harmless enough, as those pertaining to secret signs, handshakes, and passwords. But the compromise of conscience that there may be in keeping secret what one knows of the records and secret work of an order, "mysteries," and even in certain orders the prosecutable crimes of a fellow member should be subject to a more critical evaluation.

As to *benevolence*, the chief criticism must be that the benevolence promoted by the lodge is seen as gaining heavenly rewards which are based on merit. Salvation itself is linked to deeds without saving faith entering the picture. The Christian should also be concerned about the true nature of good works—that they are rooted in true faith and are done according to *God's* commands and for his glory. It is true that all of us perform good works in company with the non-Christian population in community programs. But we are not subjected in our well-doing to being docile learners of a particular theory of the good. The lodge member is prevented by the policies of most lodges from intruding what would be interpreted as a sectarian consideration.

Whether, in every instance, the actual content of the oath or pledge reveals a clear case of confessional commitment to the lodge's pseudo-religious positions may be reasonably disputed. The several lodges differ from one another in a number of respects, even as to what such things as secrecy, fraternal loyalty, and benevolence entail. The very reprehensible sanctions in one group may be completely absent from another. Some oaths commit the initiate to be the willing learner of all the lodge's teachings, while others do not.

To judge from the content alone of the oath or pledge as to whether a personal commitment of the initiate at the time of his initiation has been made is beyond man, who cannot search the human heart. We readily have to accept the assertion of a lodge member that he did not commit himself confessionally at the time of his entrance into the lodge. However, we are dealing now with someone who is ready to confess that his only comfort is that he belongs to Jesus Christ. It is at this juncture that the important question arise: How does he, or should he, *now* see his oath or pledge made in the past?

Although we realize that comparisons are never perfect, the following may serve to make our point clear. When David ordered to have the people of Israel counted there was no evidence that he explicitly denied that his trust was in God alone (II Samuel 24). A different evaluation of this act, however, follows when the Lord gave his view of the matter, and when David had to confess, "I have sinned greatly in what I have done." It was very likely without any scruples that Saul took care of the clothes of those who stoned Stephen. But this act was certainly included when after his conversion he confessed that he persecuted the church of God (I Corinthians 15:9).

If it is true that there are confessional elements in the oath or pledge as stated above, then anyone who wants to become a member of the

unique community, the body of Christ, has to come to the conclusion that by the act of initiation into a lodge he has identified himself with teachings which cannot stand in the light of Scripture.

C. *The Function of the Lodge Oath*

There is another aspect of our mandate, namely the function of the oath. In studying this aspect of the oath we again are pressed to a conclusion which is not favorable to the admission into the church of members of oath-bound societies.

The Christian surely should know how any oath, quite apart from anything that may appertain thereto, must function. Even if a lodge seldom would remind a member of his oath, seldom constrain him to conform his behavior to his oath, never discipline him for breaking his oath—if, in other words, the oath functions rather weakly and minimally in the member's ongoing connection with the lodge, should we say then that we need not draw very much attention to the oath in our evaluation of lodge membership and its relationship to church membership? No! The oath remains a very serious thing. It has to function in a large way in the life of the oath taker. Under no circumstances can an oath be taken lightly, for it is a calling upon God to witness our words and to punish us if we fail to keep our pledge.

But now, getting more directly to the matter of function, we are convinced that whether with full awareness of what he is doing or with a minimum of awareness, the candidate by his oath has *identified* himself with the teachings, including the religious teachings, of the lodge. We recognize that there are many who did not make a heart commitment in joining the lodge, did not then or have not since been subscribers to the religion of the lodge. *But we are convinced that in no way can the oath be separated from implicit involvement in the life and teaching of the lodge.* Considering the full picture of the language and actions associated with the initiation ritual, it appears incredible that the lodge itself would ever admit that a person can justifiably take the oath but deny part of the lodge teaching. Certainly in no case we have heard of has a part of the lodge involvement been allowed to be waived for conscience's sake. We believe that the oath fully identifies the candidates with the whole life and teaching of the lodge. What can more fully establish a man's unqualified and unreserved identification with a group and its life and teaching than an oath? Any procedure less than an oath may allow for a limited involvement. But if an oath means anything, it means a full identification of a person with that group to which his oath has bound him.

In this connection, the matter of social memberships should be mentioned. There exists in various local lodges (not including the Masonic orders) the practice of granting memberships that allow a person to use the lodge's social and recreational advantages without involving them in the ritual of initiation and the obligation to attend meetings. Sometimes this is done by circumvention of the lodge's official and traditional rules, as by allowing one member to present a list of people who are admitted without being present. However, the higher judicatories

of the lodges have renounced the whole concept of social memberships and the outlawing of such memberships has been upheld in civil courts. There is an obvious kind of deception in this practice that is certainly not worthy of the Christian. Policies that violate an organization's own constitution can hardly be taken advantage of in good conscience by the Christian.

We have inserted this statement about social memberships to support our conclusion that there is no proper way by which a person can be a member of the lodge and not be identified with it and with what it stands for.

We believe that this identification with all that the lodge is in its formal statements about itself and its beliefs is a fact, whether one has subjectively made a commitment to the whole thing or not. Suppose a person is seeking admission to the Christian Reformed Church while on the rolls of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. And suppose he says: "I did not accept all of Mormonism's teachings, but it was necessary for me to involve myself at least partially with that group in order to fit into the business and social structure of the community where I lived." Do we then say: "We see that you only identified with some harmless elements of Mormonism and so we will not ask you to renounce and resign from the Mormon church"? No! This person would be asked to renounce the whole affiliation because by virtue of his entering officially the Mormon Church he *identified* with the totality of Mormonism's official teachings and practices, with what he did not know much about as well as with what he knew well. A person in taking the lodge oath does not identify with only as much of it as he cares to receive or as much as he might be fully informed about. Everything about the initiation implies a full commitment to all that the lodge officially is. Nothing we have read allows for the possibility that the lodge itself permits any reservations on the part of the candidate—any more than the Mormon church would honor less than a full commitment to Mormonism on the part of the candidate for membership.

One may try to argue that there are other organizations and occasions in which religion plays a part and yet do not involve the members or participants in an identification with that religious expression. One can think of a Rotary Club, a patriotic mass meeting, an inter-scholastic contest, in all of which some regard for religion may be expressed, as by an opening prayer. However, these are a far cry from the lodge, with its officially adopted statements and rituals, with which an oath of necessity identifies one as he, by his oath, enters upon a willing submission to the lodge's instruction in matters of religion along with the rest of the package. One does not, by belonging to a service club, for instance, have to accept the prayer of a visiting religious figure. The man's prayer is his own. No non-church organization we know of makes binding religious statements and rituals in the way a lodge does. And no non-church organization we know of requires the members to identify with its religious statements and rituals as a lodge does. It is one thing for an organization to recognize the existence of God. It is quite another thing for an organization to set up a prescribed worship

of God with exact wording and prescribed rituals. These things represent the "establishment of religion" for all who are within the membership.

If identification with all that the lodge officially is and teaches is established by oath, as we maintain, then a person has become by his membership a confessor of the lodge's religion. His very membership is a witness to those around him to the "truth" of lodgism. He cannot nullify that witness unless he renounces it. If without renouncing it he wants at the same time to be a witness to Christ by public profession of faith and a life of Christian witness, that Christian witness becomes a divided witness. Suppose a lodge member—church member goes out to visit people to win them to Christ and the church, telling people that Christ provides the only way of salvation. What answer must he give to the man who asks him, "How can you tell me *that* when you belong to a lodge which doesn't allow a reference to Christ as Savior and says that all religions are acceptable to God?" Whether he is openly espousing the lodge stand or not, his confessional commitment by virtue of his oath has constituted him a witness to a religion that is diametrically opposed to his Christian witness. He needs to hear Elijah's words: "How long do you go limping between two sides?"

When a Christian is persuaded of this unavoidable identification, let him be willing to avoid or forsake such an organization, even though thereby he forfeits some business, social, or recreational advantage. Our faith must govern all of life. "Whether therefore you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God." We may not keep our religion out of some areas of our life or keep it from judging certain areas. The prospect of affiliating with an organization that denies basic Bible teaching must be met head on with the question: Lord, what will *you* have me do? Scripture warns us against becoming identified with anything that compromises Christian truth and our commitment to it. Any movement which claims to lead men to God but excludes Jesus Christ must be avoided. "He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him" (John 5:23).

II. THE REFORMULATION OF THE SUMMARY

The following summary is presented as a fulfillment of part two of our mandate. It is designed to present the stand of the church on lodge membership in the light of Report 37 (1974) and to serve as the official witness of the Christian Reformed Church's position on this matter.

CHURCH MEMBER—LODGE MEMBER CAN A CHRISTIAN BE BOTH?

Can a person be a member of the church of Christ and at the same time be a member of a lodge?

Does this question surprise you? Perhaps you know several people whom you regard as good Christians who are Masons, or Elks, or Odd Fellows. Or possibly you are a Christian yourself and belong to a lodge. Many people maintain that as long as a Christian is a faithful member

of the church to which he belongs, it is a matter of his own personal concern if he also wishes to join other organizations such as a lodge.

There are Christian churches which do not agree with this position. Among these is the Christian Reformed Church, which declared in 1974 that

“there is an irreconcilable conflict between the teachings and practices of the lodge and biblical Christianity, and that therefore simultaneous membership in the lodge and in the church of Jesus Christ is incompatible and contrary to Scripture.”

Since its founding in 1857, the Christian Reformed Church has maintained this position. Is this just a matter of tradition? Not at all! The matter has been reviewed in recent years, and this church is convinced that this position is biblical.

THE CHURCH

The Christian church is made up of the redeemed people of God. It includes those people of all races throughout the world who sincerely believe and confess that they are sinners before God and cannot save themselves, that Jesus Christ in his sacrificial death on the cross is their only salvation, and that they give themselves to Christ in wholehearted gratitude to serve him with their whole lives.

Christians receive salvation through no merit of their own. Paul writes in Ephesians 2:8-10, “For by grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God—not because of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.”

All believers in Christ form the body of Christ, the church, and they must live their lives under the terms of this divine arrangement, namely, of grace and faith and obedience. At every point the Christian's life must be one of covenant fellowship with God in Christ, under the direction of his Word and Spirit.

The Christian is told in I Corinthians 6:19, 20 “You are not your own; you were bought with a price.” He confesses this when he echoes Paul's words of Philippians 1:21 “For me to live is Christ.” The Christian's allegiance is to Christ, and ultimately only to Christ. Therefore any allegiance under which the Christian cannot honor Christ as the Savior and Lord of his life is unbearable to him!

The Church as Institution

The Apostles' Creed speaks of believing “a holy, catholic church.” This church is universal, transcending nation, ethnic and denominational boundaries. When we speak of the church in this sense, we refer to the invisible aspect of the church. This description implies that in the final analysis only God knows who are true members of this body.

There is another side to the church. It is also a visible church. The Christian is not only a member of this body in its spiritual and hidden character, but he is also a member of a particular church located at some specific time and place in history. The New Testament speaks not

only of the mystical body of Christ; it also speaks of local churches where there are responsible officers and where certain activities take place. When we speak of the Christian being a "church member," we are referring to the church as an institution. The visible church, the church as institution, has been given a task that involves mainly a threefold responsibility—to preach and teach the Word faithfully, to administer the holy sacraments properly, and to exercise spiritual care over the members of this flock. This responsibility rests primarily on the officers of the church. It is their solemn task to remind the members of Christ's body that they are "a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, that you may declare the wonderful deeds of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light" (I Peter 2:9). And in the fulfillment of that unique place in this world, God's people must be told, "Do not be mismatched with unbelievers. For what partnership have righteousness and iniquity? Or what fellowship has light with darkness?" (II Corinthians 6:14).

The Bible is very clear in warning against associations with persons, and involvement in movements which are—because of their fundamental religious direction and purpose—opposed to the will of God and the coming of Christ's kingdom.

THE LODGE

It is not easy to define the "lodge." There are many different organizations which fall under that general category, and each differs in certain respects from others. The largest and best known lodge is the Masonic order. Many others are patterned after this order, such as the Elks, Moose, Eagles, Odd Fellows, Knights of Pythias, Red Men, National Grange and the like.

Historically, these organizations have been described as "oath bound societies" or "secret organizations." They use more or less elaborate rituals, and have a very definite religious character. Most lodges encourage moral living and patriotism, and promote benevolent projects. All demand the acknowledgment of the existence of God, without which the oath of loyalty would be meaningless.

Why would any church take exception to such organizations? Is the taking of an oath wrong, when Scripture even speaks of God taking an oath? Is an organization not permitted to have secrets, matters which ought to be kept in confidence by its membership? Ritual too is not evil, for almost every organization has some order which it follows in the conduct of its business. And surely the church takes no exception in the fact that lodges demand recognition of the existence of God.

Can there then be any objection to a Christian belonging to such organizations?

Three matters will be considered which lodges have in common: the oath or solemn promise, secrecy, and the religious character of these organizations.

The Oath

The oath or pledge which is taken upon entry into lodge membership is generally concerned with maintaining secrecy and securing fra-

ternal loyalty to the organization and its membership. The following excerpts indicate something of the nature of oaths which are taken: "I will always hail, ever conceal and never reveal any of the secret arts, parts or points of the hidden mysteries of ancient Freemasonry . . . except it be to a true and lawful brother Mason. . ." (Masons); "I further promise that I will obey the laws, and so far as possible, comply with the requirements of the order. . ." (Knights of Pythias); "I also promise that I will abide by the laws, rules, and regulations of this lodge. . ." (Odd Fellows); "To all secrecy and obedience in this respect, I hereby pledge my sacred word of honor without any mental reservation, and with a full determination to preserve my plighted faith inviolate until the end of life" (Rebekah); "In the presence of our Heavenly Father and these witnesses, I do hereby pledge my sacred honor that, whether in or out of this Order, I will never reveal any of the secrets of the Order, . . . that I will conform to and abide by the laws of my state and nation; the constitution, rules and regulations of the National Grange. . ." (National Grange); "I will not permit any political, sectarian, or personal prejudice to influence me in the slightest degree in the exercise of my right of franchise in the Order. . . I will never introduce into the Order anything of a political or sectarian character. . . If I break this obligation, may I wander through the world forsaken; may I be pointed out as being bereft of decency and manhood, unfit to hold communion with true and upright men. . ." (Elks); "I, of my own free will and without reservation, accept this obligation binding me to the Loyal Order of Moose. . ." (Moose); "I will abide by and obey the laws, rules and regulations of the Grand Aerie. . ." (Eagles).

Notice that by a solemn oath promises have been made to obey rules and regulations which have not as yet been made known to the applicant. But that which is far more serious is the fact that by this oath the new lodge member has *identified* himself with the organization. He has become part of the body, a participant in its activities. Note the commitment of the Moose: "I . . . accept this obligation binding me to the Loyal Order of Moose."

It is often said by a member of a lodge: "The oath is only a form which you have to go through"; "I didn't really take the oath seriously"; "I wasn't aware at the time of what was involved in the teachings of the lodge, and I do not subscribe to many of the things which the lodge stands for"; I took the oath and joined the lodge because there were certain social advantages that I desired. That's all it means to me."

There can be no doubt that many who have become lodge members and took the required oath did so without giving serious thought to the significance of that act. But may anyone, and especially a Christian, ever use an oath in that fashion? May we call upon God to witness to the sincerity of our promise, a pledge to loyalty, commitment and secrecy, when we are not serious about the oath which we are taking? And may we bind ourselves in this solemn fashion to a system which is unknown to us prior to the taking of the oath? Are we being true

to God, who is the source of truth and utterly dependable in His declarations and promises, when we use the oath in that fashion? For that matter, is a man even being fair to the lodge which he joins when he takes an oath with tongue in cheek?

Moreover, if someone has taken the oath or solemn promise before he was a Christian, does not his conversion by the Spirit of Jesus Christ imply that he is now ashamed of what he has done in ignorance? And does not the renewal by the same Spirit require a radical disassociation from any affiliation that is in conflict with his profession of Jesus Christ as his only Master?

Secrecy

There may have been a day when the rituals and "mysteries" of various lodges were really secrets. This is hardly true today. Copies of rituals, signs and passwords of almost every lodge are available today to the person seeking such information. *The Commission on Organizations, Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod*, has a library of over four hundred rituals, as well as fifteen thousand other reports relating to these organizations.

We do not take exception to an organization keeping certain matters confidential. In that sense secrecy need not be condemned. There is another aspect to the secrecy of the lodge which is objectionable, however. The "mysteries" which are revealed only to the initiates suggest that light is given to those who have joined the lodge, and that before this time they were walking in darkness. For example, in the Masonic ritual, the candidate is required to wear a blindfold, called a Hoodwink. He is introduced as "Mr. _____, who has long lived in darkness, and now seeks to be brought to light, and to receive a part in the rights and benefits of this worshipful lodge, erected to God and dedicated to the holy Saint John, as all brothers and fellows have done before." Similarly, the ritual of the Odd Fellows Lodge requires a candidate to enter blindfolded and in chains, so that he may be led to "primary truth."

A Christian cannot agree that he has been living in darkness, and now that he has become a member of the lodge he will see the light and be led into the truth. For Christ insists "I am the light of the world; he who follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life" (John 8:12), and "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but by me" (John 14:6).

Religion

Lodges are religious. This is not to say that the lodge is a religion in the sense that it has a formal creed, or that it requires a formal confession of faith of its membership. Lodges do not claim to be churches, but it is very apparent that all lodges have certain religious elements. Ritual prayers are prescribed, in which God is acknowledged as the "Great Architect of the Universe" (Masons), the "Father of us all" (Eagles), the "Supreme Governor of the Universe" (Moose), "Omnipotence" (Odd Fellows), "Great Ruler of the Universe" (Elks), "In-

finite Father of us all" (Royal Neighbors of America), and the "Supreme Being" (Grange). Note that there is no reference to God as being triune, and references to Jesus Christ are carefully avoided in all lodge ritual prayers.

That this avoidance is intentional can be seen in the way in which familiar hymns and Scripture references are changed so that Christ is never mentioned. The Moose sing "Blest be the tie that binds, our hearts in brother's love." In the fourth degree ritual, Masons are told, "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God." This text from I Peter 2:5 actually concludes with the words "through Jesus Christ," but they have been eliminated. The words "a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens" (II Corinthians 5:1) are often used in Masonic ritual to refer to the perfect character that the Mason builds for himself as he earns entrance into the Celestial Lodge, but in Scripture these words clearly speak of the house as a "building from God," and therefore not something built by human effort.

Many lodges meet in "temples" and most contain altars on which lie a Bible, a Koran or other religious book. The leaders are given names with religious connotations such as Worshipful Master. The Elks call the one who is in charge of their meeting the "Exalted Ruler," and in their prayers refer to God as the "Grand Exalted Ruler."

Funeral services are provided by Masons, Elks, Odd Fellows, Moose, Eagles, Royal Neighbors of America, and others. It is especially in these funeral services that the religious character of the lodge becomes evident. The Masons pray that "after our departure hence in peace and in thy favor, we may be received into thine everlasting kingdom, to enjoy, in union with the souls of our departed friends, the just reward of a pious and virtuous life." The Eagles pray, "Help us to realize that the parting is only for a short season, and that we shall meet again in the Grand Aerie beyond, where the faults and frailties of this earthly life are forgotten, and all become perfect in the love of an infinite God." At the Moose memorial service the Governor asks "and we can but pray that he who watcheth over us will forgive our mistakes and transgressions, and that he will, because of the love that builded it, find our circle worthy." The Eagles declare "Hope dries our tears, and with the eyes of faith we may see those whom we loved and lost awhile, faring on through a better land, awaiting the day when the chain of fraternal love shall be reunited forevermore."

Fundamental to the assurance given in these phrases is the view that man is able through right living to attain to eternal life. Salvation through the blood of Christ is never mentioned. Attainment to a "great lodge above" is possible through human effort. This good works ethic is stressed particularly in Masonry, but is present in almost every lodge. This is the reason why such great emphasis is placed on fraternity, charitable work and morality.

No one would fault the cultivation of virtues such as brotherly love, truth, fortitude, prudence, justice, fidelity, industry, learning, wisdom, and the like, as these are promoted by the rituals of the lodge.

But is this the way by which a man attains eternal life in fellowship with God? The Bible is diametrically opposed to this position!

AN IRRECONCILABLE CONFLICT!

Many lodges assure those who seek admission that nothing in the lodge will conflict with the applicant's religious position. For example, the Moose require a candidate to "take an obligation which will not conflict with any religious, political, or social obligation which you now have, and will not conflict with your duty to your family, your country, or your God."

With such assurance, how can there be any "irreconcilable conflict" between church membership and lodge membership? Need anyone hesitate joining a lodge which makes such a promise?

Simply declaring that there is no conflict does not mean that a conflict doesn't exist! A test must be applied to any organization before a Christian in good conscience can become a member, or remain a part of the organization if he is already a member.

- The Christian cannot identify himself with an organization which
- denies the God of the Scriptures, and fails to recognize the deity of Jesus Christ, or which
 - rejects the gospel of salvation by Christ alone, and offers eternal rewards for human efforts and deeds, or which
 - considers the Bible as one among many sacred writings, and offers spiritual enlightenment to its members while ignoring the express teachings of God's Word.

Note how lodges compare to these standards.

The God of the Scriptures

Lodges recognize a supreme being. But so do Unitarians, Mohammedans, Buddhists, and other religious groups in the world. However, recognition of a supreme being is not the same as the acknowledgment of the only true God, the God of the Scriptures. In the Bible, God is revealed as triune, and the only way in which a man may know and enter into fellowship with this God is through Jesus Christ. Jesus said "No one comes to the Father, but by me" (John 14:6).

The Bible demands that we recognize this God as the one who calls all men to account for their lives, and who through Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit reclaims his fallen creation and redeems his people. The Bible further reveals him as the one who through Christ will return to judge all men and establish the new heaven and earth.

Over against this position, the lodge is founded on the idea that there is a common religion or religious foundation upon which all religions, Hinduism, Mohammedanism, Buddhism, Christianity, and all others, can stand. It is for that reason that a lodge can assert that "nothing will conflict with your religious opinions," since the "god" of the lodge is so abstract that he is being confessed in the religions of all men. It is also for that reason that any references to Jesus Christ as the Son of God are forbidden in the lodge ritual, since that would be "sectarian."

Who is the god of the lodge? He is whoever each member desires

to worship. But it is to that god that prayers are offered. It is before that god that oaths are taken. He is not the God of the Scriptures!

The Gospel of Salvation

Can a man earn a place in heaven by virtuous living? At this point the conflict between the position of the lodge and the position of the Bible is clearly seen. Lodges promise their members "the just reward of a pious and virtuous life." Their members possess the ability to attain to a place in heaven by living in such a fashion that they will be acceptable to God, and after death will enter into eternal fellowship with God.

This is in direct contradiction to the Bible, which declares, "For no human being will be justified in his sight by the works of the law, since through the law comes the knowledge of sin" (Romans 3:20). It declares man's inability to merit heaven, but also shows the God-ordained way of salvation: "since all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, they are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as an expiation by his blood, to be received by faith" (Romans 3:23-25).

Is it possible for the Christian, as a member of Christ's church, to confess on Sunday that he is saved by grace alone, and on Monday to agree by his silence at the meeting of the lodge that salvation by Christ isn't really necessary because a man can attain to fellowship with God by being a good lodge member and living a virtuous life? He can choose one way or the other, but not both. By his tacit agreement, as a member of an organization which acknowledges the merit of good works, he is denying the plain teaching of the Bible: "And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).

The Authority of the Bible

Implicit in this contradiction about the way of salvation is a rejection by the lodge of the authority of God's Word. Masons acknowledge this when they place the Bible as one of the three great lights on the altar. The Bible shares this position with the Square and the Compasses. But even this shared position is the case only in "Christian lands." In countries where religions other than Christianity dominate, the Bible is removed, and another "Holy Book", such as the Koran, is put in its place. When the Bible is used, it is grossly misused and misquoted. In the process it is often used to support unbiblical concepts. This is equally true in other lodges which use the Bible as a source of light, and then offer light through their ritual which contradicts the teachings of God's Word.

The Christian cannot tolerate such a view of the Scriptures. The Bible teaches and the Christian believes that the Scriptures are the one and only reliable revelation of God's plan of redemption and his will for man (II Timothy 3:16, 17). Nor can the Christian tolerate the Bible being used to support unbiblical concepts. To use God's Word to sup-

port what is contrary to that Word is to use God's name and Word to verify falsehood. This is obvious and utter blasphemy.

* * * * *

It is specifically the religious aspect of the lodge which makes it incompatible with Christianity. There are many other organizations which have worthy benevolent purposes. They are to be commended, and a Christian would have no problem in becoming a part of these organizations.

But what then about the person who specifically rejects the religious positions of the lodge while remaining a member? Many Christians have joined lodges simply for the social and recreational advantages which a lodge provides. As long as he does not subscribe to the wrong concept of God, the way of salvation by good works, and the other things which are contrary to Scripture, can he not simply make use of those things related to the lodge which are desirable? Surely many Christians who belong to lodges are doing that.

But what does this involve?

The lodge member has taken an oath in order to become part of an organization which dishonors God and holds positions clearly contrary to the Word of God. And if he has done this for certain material benefits, what value is he placing on these advantages? Will he compromise his position and witness as one who belongs to Christ for material gain?

The lodge member has identified himself as part of an organization which is correctly described in II Timothy 3:5 as "holding the form of religion, but denying the power of it." The Bible says "Avoid such people." Even though he may not personally believe what his lodge teaches, he expresses tacit agreement by continuing to belong to it. Within the lodge he may not assert his own position, because that would be "sectarian." Can he continue to make this compromise?

What should the Christian do who is a lodge member? He should renounce his relationship to the lodge. He need not break that aspect of the oath in which he promised to keep the secrets of the lodge, but he must confess that it was wrong to be bound to an organization which is anti-Christian.

Can a Christian be both a church member and a lodge member? It is the judgment of the Christian Reformed Church that he can not, for there is an irreconcilable conflict between the two!

The Scripture says in II Corinthians 6:14-18:

"Do not be miseducated with unbelievers. For what partnership have righteousness and iniquity? Or what fellowship has light with darkness? What accord has Christ with Belial? Or what has a believer in common with an unbeliever? What agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; as God said,

'I will live in them and move among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

Therefore come out from them, says the Lord, and touch nothing unclean; then I will welcome you, and I will be a father to you, and you shall be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty."

RECOMMENDATIONS:

A. That our reporter, the Rev. John Petersen, be given the privilege of the floor when synod deals with this report.

B. That synod recognize the fact that many who took an oath or pledge in order to become members of a lodge did so without any conscious commitment to the religious positions which are basic to the lodge system.

Grounds:

1. Many present and former lodge members declare that this is the case with respect to their own position.
2. The church must accept this declaration and may not impugn the statement of lodge members unless there is clear evidence that their assertion is false.

C. That synod, in maintaining its position that "there is an irreconcilable conflict between the teachings and practices of the lodge and biblical Christianity, and that therefore simultaneous membership in the lodge and in the church of Jesus Christ is incompatible and contrary to Scripture" (Acts of Synod 1974, Art. 65), define such organizations as objectionable which hold the unitarian-universalist concept of God, the meritorious character of good works, and the denial of Scripture and of Jesus Christ as the ultimate source of light and truth.

Grounds:

1. An organization or brotherhood may not call itself a lodge and yet because of its religious position should be considered to belong to the same category.
 2. The possibility exists that an organization which calls itself a lodge may simply offer insurance benefits or social benefits without adhering to these religious positions and without in any other way being objectionable to a Christian.
- D. That synod declare that any member of a lodge, by means of the oath or pledge, has made an implicit confessional commitment to the false religion of the lodge, and that therefore even formal membership is incompatible with membership in a Christian Reformed Church.

Grounds:

1. Whenever in the context of the lodge rituals the name of God and/or the Bible is used with the oath or pledge, it should be considered a violation of the third commandment and as such requires repentance.
2. The contents of the oath or pledge to which the candidate must give his assent involves him in at least a tacit identification with the religious position of the lodge. It involves him more explicitly in those oath or pledges which
 - a. call for recognition and practice of a brotherly relationship that

contradicts the unique relationship established by becoming a member of the body of Christ,

b. enforce a commitment to secrecy regarding matters undisclosed to the candidate and therefore hold the possibility of forbidding a Christian to reveal matters the Word of God may require him to reveal,

c. call the member to practice a benevolence based upon a concept of good works that is in conflict with the scriptural teaching.

3. Though the oath or pledge may have been made without a conscious confessional commitment, the instruction in the Scriptures at the time of seeking membership in the church should lead him to realize that this oath or pledge did in fact involve him in an implicit commitment to the religious position of the lodge.

4 It is the function of the oath or pledge to enforce an identification of the candidate with the official teaching and testimony of the organization. That the candidate at the time of making the oath or pledge was ignorant of its sinful implications does not exclude him from the call to repentance after having been enlightened by the Word and Spirit (cf. Acts 3:17-19, 17:29, 30, Eph. 4:17, 18, I Peter 1:14, 15).

E. That synod approve for publication the summary statement submitted in this report as the witness of the Christian Reformed Church's position on the lodge and church membership.

Grounds:

1. The basic thrust of the report submitted to the Synod of 1975 has been retained.

2. Emphasis has been placed upon the content, confessional character, and function of the oath as requested by the Synod of 1975.

3. The statement has been revised so that it speaks to the teachings and practices of many lodges.

F. That synod approve the deletion of the cartoons from the summary statement.

Ground: Cartoons are not appropriate when addressing the inquirer on this serious matter.

G. That synod discharge the committee since its mandate has been fulfilled.

Committee on the Lodge Oath
and Church Membership

P. M. Jonker, chairman

J. Petersen, reporter

L. Dykstra

H. De Jong

C. Zeilstra

REPORT 39
TASK FORCE ON WORLD HUNGER
(Art. 43)

The Synod of 1976 requested the Executive Secretary of the Board of World Missions, Eugene Rubingh, and the Executive Director of the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee, Louis Van Ess, to convene a seven-member task force on world hunger. Messrs. Rubingh and Van Ess, in appointing the committee, drew on the resources of a large number of agencies in the Christian Reformed community and consulted experts in various congregations. They also conferred with a number of Christian associations in the political/economic area and in that of civil rights. On the basis of the responses they received, the following Task Force on World Hunger was formed:

Paul G. Schrotenboer, chairman; Eugene Rubingh, recording secretary; Calvin De Witt, Vernon Ehlers, Joel Huyser, Louis Van Ess, Jacob Vos.

The Task Force understands its task to be to articulate biblical answers to the many issues involved in world hunger, to emphasize the Reformed perspective of man as total being, to pay special attention to such special factors as life style in the face of increasing disparities between rich and poor nations. We should also bear in mind the need for prophetic preaching for a fresh understanding of stewardship, and should make clear the distinction between humanitarian and soundly Christian endeavors.

The Task Force was organized in the fall of 1976, and was not able in the brief span of time since then to prepare a report that would embody the objectives of the 1976 Synod. We would therefore ask that this preliminary report be noted by the synod and that the Task Force be allowed to submit its completed report in 1978.

We would at this time, however, alert the synod to a number of developments in regard to world hunger in the Christian Reformed Church community. We would also explain some of our present thinking as to how the Task Force should pursue its work.

Related Endeavors

Classis Lake Erie is planning to sponsor a conference at Calvin College on June 3-4, 1977 on "Equitable Distribution of Wealth and Power." At this conference papers will be presented, i.e., on wealth and power and on alternative economic systems and injustice. The Task Force has set the time of one of its meetings to coincide with that of the Lake Erie Conference so that we may attend the conference.

The recently established Calvin Center for Christian Scholarship will provide studies during the program of the first year (1977/78) on "The Christian Stewardship of Natural Resources." The study, which will run for eleven months, will involve up to six people who are expected to

devote two-thirds of their time for this period. The Task Force hopes to remain in close touch also with this new Calvin study.

Our Present Thinking

Conscious of the mandate of the synod, the Task Force in our first meetings asked questions such as the following:

1. How can we make the Christian Reformed Church aware of the present world situation in which, it is estimated, one in eight persons is malnourished?
2. How can we make ourselves aware of the extent of our own involvement in world hunger and our responsibility to alleviate it?
3. Should we motivate the Christian Reformed Church to encourage change in national policies and in the international world order, especially in those policies and practices that have contributed to the world hunger needs?
4. How can we motivate the Christian Reformed Church to identify and reject the principle of the dominance of self-interest as this is reflected in our own life style and economic practices?
5. What part should Christian institutions, besides the church, have in the study of and action to combat world hunger and to give guidance to the Christian Reformed Church through appropriate resources and channels for action in combating world hunger?

The Task Force sees as an important part of its mandate the formulation of biblical guidelines for policies and programs to meet both immediate and long-term world food needs.

We have at this point tentatively adopted the following outline:

- A. A description of the world food and hunger situation.
- B. An elucidation of the biblical data pertinent to the matter.
- C. A statement of *de facto* involvement in the current world food problem.
- D. A prescriptive delineation of efforts toward a new style of Christian living.
- E. Recommendation for action such as preaching, change of life-style, practice of more responsible stewardship and other appropriate responses.

It is already apparent to the Task Force that the presentation of a report is in itself wholly inadequate to achieve the objectives of synod's mandate. Implementation of the recommendations will be the major challenge. The Task Force would welcome suggestions from the synod and from members of the churches to assist us in the execution of our mandate.

Task Force on World Hunger
Eugene Rubingh,
recording secretary

REPORT 40
USE OF WOMEN'S GIFTS IN THE CHURCH
(Art. 38)

I. MANDATE AND HISTORY

The Synod of 1975 appointed a committee with the mandate "to help the churches implement" the recommendation "that synod urge the churches to make all possible use, within biblical guidelines and the restrictions of the Church Order, of the talents and abilities of women in the work of the church." That committee met monthly from August 1975, through May 1976.

The Synod of 1976 extended "the mandate of this committee for one year in order that they may:

- a) finish their work of preparing and making available the material they have previously compiled (possibly in consultation with the Board of Publications) in such a form that it will serve as educational material that will provide for study and discussion on the proper use of women's gifts in the church, and
- b) devise a plan for maintaining and updating the "data bank" initiated by this committee as a tool for finding women interested in, and capable of, serving the church on its many committees, subcommittees and boards, and make this available to the churches and church agencies."

II. ACCOMPLISHMENTS

In cooperation with the Education Department of the Board of Publications, we have arranged for the publication of a study guide on the issue of women's role, such study guide to be part of the adult education curriculum of the Education Department.

We have arranged for distribution to interested churches and church groups a selected list of reading materials to encourage discussion and study of the issue of women's role in the church.

We have turned over to the libraries of Calvin College, Dordt College and Trinity College, as a resource, copies of the collection of articles from Christian Reformed and other evangelical publications on the issue of women's role.

We have arranged and held a conference in the Chicago area in March 1977 on how the church can make fuller use of the gifts of all its members.

We have developed a packet of materials describing projects carried on by women in local congregations, for the use of women interested in expanding their service in their local congregations or communities.

We have enlarged the data bank and maintained contact with the women whose names appear in it. We have continued to encourage classes and boards to use the data bank in their search for nominees. We have also informed para-church organizations (those who are rec-

commended by synod for support) of the existence of the bank, and of their freedom to use it.

III. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

The committee appreciates synod's recognition of the desirability of fully using women's gifts in the church (and, indeed, the gifts of all members) and affirms with synod the desirability of so doing. The Scriptures make abundantly clear that the use of all gifts is required for the building up of the church.

Although the committee is pleased that some progress has been made in diversifying the tasks assigned to men and women in the church, a glance at the boards and committees of the church—at the congregational, classical and denominational levels—makes clear that many tasks are still being assigned on the gender criteria, and consequently many women are not playing the active participatory role that their gifts require of them.

Aside from the scriptural demand that all gifts be used, this committee is convinced that the church suffers if it rigidly divides tasks according to gender. Given the way in which men and women are socialized in our society, they often bring different perspectives or sensitivities to various questions. To divide the work of the church strictly along gender lines allows valuable perspectives to be lost. (For example, there was no woman on the synodical committee to study marriage and divorce guidelines, and in many congregations there are no men involved in the education of young children.) In the church's theology and study of Scripture, also, women may have valuable gifts and perspectives to bring. Therefore, the committee suggests that women be encouraged to obtain theological education. The committee believes that the church will be better served and the gifts of all members more fully used if tasks are assigned according to gifts, rather than by gender.

The committee is convinced that much more can and should be done to encourage the full use of women's gifts and, furthermore, that the question of using women's gifts is intertwined with the question of encouraging the church to use the gifts of all of its members. This has not been done fully in the past, and although some progress has been made in using the gifts of groups such as young people and singles, the church still lays far too large a burden on men in the thirty to sixty age group, and makes far too little use of the gifts of its other members.

Therefore, we recommend the creation of a service committee designed to facilitate the church's use of its members' gifts, the committee to be given a three-year mandate, and to have its work and its value reviewed at the end of that time.

The committee shall have the following mandate:

1. to identify barriers, both organizational and attitudinal, to the church's use of the gifts of all its members and to recommend to synod and to local congregations ways consistent with Scripture in which those barriers can be removed,
2. to encourage committees, classes and boards to continue and expand

the practice of nominating and electing members of groups currently not being fully used,

3. to maintain the data bank, keep it up-to-date, enlarge it to include any interested member of the church, and encourage its use by church organizations and others approved by synod or the various classes,

4. to work with the Education Department of the Board of Publications to continue developing adult educational materials that will encourage fuller use of gifts,

5. to respond to consistories and local groups when they request advice, materials, or names of resource persons to help them bring about fuller use of the gifts of all members of the local congregation.

The committee calls to synod's attention our concern over the issues mentioned in Part IV of our Report to Synod 1976. While many issues were mentioned there, we wish to re-emphasize one of those concerns:

"We live in a society where changing roles for men and women are a reality. What structures or sensitivities will the church need in order to offer pastoral care to women caught in tension because of today's changes? How can the church offer pastoral care to men responding to similar tension as it becomes apparent in their families or jobs?"

Throughout the work of this committee, we have constantly been confronted with the *fact* of changing sex roles in our society and with the *implications* of those changes for family life and church life. These changes are not a passing fancy or fad. Many of them are the direct result of a change in the basic laws of both the United States and Canada—civil rights legislation that forbids discrimination against persons because of their sex. Major economists and sociologists have claimed that the most significant event of the 1970's is the ever-increasing number of women entering the work force.

The committee believes that these changes portend difficult problems in the church and in the structure of families who make up that church. The committee further believes that if the church refuses to recognize the force of these changes, and refuses to take steps to ameliorate their ill effects and strengthen their good effects, the church will find itself a decade from now with family, marriage, and male-female relationship problems that will be deep and pervasive. The committee strongly urges synod to begin *now* to prepare the church to meet these needs. We are fully aware that such problems surface at the congregational level and that synod can respond to them only indirectly. We are also fully aware that the symptoms of such problems are not distributed equally throughout the various parts of the denomination. We are nonetheless convinced that a major social change is underway and that what is currently happening in urban and campus related churches will spread to all but the most isolated areas within ten years.

In working to fulfill its mandate to help the churches make all possible use (within the guidelines of Scripture and the Church Order) of women's talents and abilities, the committee has discovered that this social change has had, and will continue to have, major effects on the church's ability to use its members' gifts for the building up of the kingdom. Persons caught in conflict and stress are not able to make the best

possible use of the gifts God has given them, and a church in which marriage and family life are experiencing stress and possible breakdown will not be a church which can dynamically bring the Word of God to the world.

We believe, therefore, that dealing with the issue of pastoral care for men, women and families experiencing the kind of social and emotional conflict that changing sex roles can bring about is vital to the future of the church's ministry, both to its own ministry and to those outside the church. The committee believes that, for the future health of the church, the changing shape of male and female roles in our society will require serious attention.

Therefore, we recommend that synod appoint a study committee to examine how the church can and should respond to the problems and changes created by changing sex roles, especially how the church can develop better pastoral care for its members in these changing times, and to present to the Synod of 1979 a plan for helping the church prepare itself and its members to meet the challenge of these issues.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS:

A. That synod appoint a committee to serve for three years with the mandate indicated in Section III.

B. That synod appoint a study committee to examine how the church can and should respond to the problems and changes created by changing sex roles in our society, especially how the church can develop better pastoral care for its members in these changing times, and to present to the Synod of 1979 a plan for helping the church prepare itself and its members to meet the challenge of these issues.

C. That synod discharge the present committee on the Use of Women's Gifts in the Church.

D. That Dr. William Stob and Mrs. Karen DeVos, chairman and reporter of the Committee on the Use of Women's Gifts in the Church, be given the privilege of the floor when this matter is discussed.

Committee on Use of Women's Gifts in the Church

W. K. Stob, chairman

K. R. DeVos, reporter

J. Bult De Jong

G. Huitsing

G. Prins

L. Slofstra

R. Van Reken

C. Vos

REPORT 41
A PROPOSED JUDICIAL CODE
(Art. 42)

I. HISTORY

The Synod of 1974 appointed the undersigned as a committee to "study and review the judicial code proposed by Classis Lake Erie, giving special consideration to the relationship between the judicial code and the Church Order and the relationship between the proposed judicial council and synod; to amend or revise the code as necessary, to receive and evaluate opinions communicated by the consistories and classes regarding it; and to submit to synod proposals regarding its adoption and implementation" (Acts of Synod 1974, Art. 73, p. 80f.).

In our report to the Synod of 1975 we interpreted this mandate as an implicit endorsement of the principle of a judicial code for the Christian Reformed Church. Accordingly, your committee devoted most of its effort to the preparation of a revised judicial code, incorporating, as we believed, many substantial improvements over the Classis Lake Erie version. We also made certain proposals about synodical procedures that would conform to the proposed code. Finally, we clarified the relationship between the Church Order and the proposed code, and in this connection recommended the addition of one sentence to Article 30 of the Church Order. (See Acts of Synod 1975, Report 50, pp. 617-626.)

Along with our report, the Synod of 1975 had before it two overtures on the subject of a judicial code. Overture 10, from Classis Northcentral Iowa, urged postponement of action for at least two years. Overture 30, from Classis Grand Rapids North, likewise urged postponement of action for at least one year. Synod's advisory committee, and then synod itself, concurred with the overtures by extending the life of the study committee for two years and referring its report to the churches for study and evaluation. Synod gave three grounds for its decision:

- a. The report of the synodical committee is a revision of the Judicial Code originally presented by Classis Lake Erie (cf. Acts of Synod 1974, Overture 3, pp. 626-636), and therefore warrants further study.
- b. Any addendum to our Church Order deserves more time for study and evaluation than can be given by the consistories in the short time allotted between the issuance of the Agenda for Synod 1975, and the meeting of synod.
- c. There is much about the proposed Judicial Code that needs critical evaluation from both a biblical and practical point of view.

II. MANDATE

The Synod of 1975 instructed your committee to "receive and evaluate responses from consistories and classes and present a final report to Synod of 1977" (Acts of Synod 1975, Art. 45, p. 44). We actively solicited such responses not only from the bodies mentioned but from individual church members, lay and ministerial. Our 1977 revision of the proposed Judicial

Code, which appears below as Part VI of this report, reflects the substantial impact of many of these responses.

III. COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE CHURCH

In our 1975 report we acknowledged the receipt of thirteen communications from church bodies and individuals. Since that time, in response to synod's bidding and your committee's printed notices and letters, twenty-three additional written communications have come to the committee. The list of sources below is intended to be complete.

Classis Pella
 Dr. Richard De Ridder
 Trinity CRC, Denver, CO
 Immanuel CRC, Hudsonville, MI
 New Era (MI) CRC
 Mr. John Terborg
 Redeemer CRC, Sarnia, ON
 Mr. John P. Bos
 First CRC, Lansing IL
 Mr. Marion De Vries
 Riverside CRC, Wellandport, ON
 Classis Grand Rapids North
 Richmond (BC) CRC
 First CRC, Orange City, IA
 Walker (MI) CRC
 First CRC, Redlands, CA
 Kettering CRC, Dayton, OH
 Brooks (AB) CRC
 La Grave CRC, Grand Rapids, MI
 Classis Northcentral Iowa
 Faith CRC, Grand Rapids, MI
 Highland Hills CRC, Grand Rapids, MI
 Mr. Charles Zandstra

In addition to those listed above, the committee expresses its appreciation to the following ministerial consultants, who consented to advise us at a crucial point in our deliberation: the Revs. C. Boomsma, W. Haverkamp, B. Nederlof, and W. Vander Haak.

IV. REVIEW AND ANALYSIS OF COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE CHURCH

A. A number of correspondents briefly endorsed the proposed code, while one or two others, even more briefly, informed us that they had no opinion to offer.

B. A number of other correspondents opposed the introduction of any judicial code at all, citing one or both of the following grounds: (1) it is unnecessary, and (2) it introduces legalism into the church. Some correspondents indicated their dissatisfaction with the committee's argument for a judicial code on the basis of Scripture (Acts of Synod 1975, pp. 618-619).

C. Some correspondents, while embracing the overall design of the proposed code, raised objections and suggested emendations to various provisions of the code. Usually these suggestions were based on the correspondent's own experience with judicial matters in the church, and had the effect of making the code longer and more complicated.

D. Worthy of special mention are those correspondents and advisors who objected in principle to our proposal for a standing Synodical Judicial Committee, on the ground that it detracted from the proper authority of synod. Finding this argument persuasive, we substantially revised Section F of the code in the present report.

V. NOTES ON THE REVISED JUDICIAL CODE

A. *Rationale.* After considering the various objections received to the introduction of a judicial code, your committee remains convinced that the church would be well served by its adoption. There is, to be sure, no demonstrative proof from Scripture for the use of a judicial code in the church, nor did we claim that such a proof exists. We also recognize that the Church Order, supplemented by procedural rules either explicitly adopted (e.g. those adopted by the Synod of 1971) or sanctioned by precedent, has in fact often sufficed to bring about the administration of justice in the church.

We regard the proposed judicial code as a natural development of principles and practices already in force among us. It is not intended to bring justice where there has been no justice, and certainly not to substitute the coldness of civil law for the warmth of the Spirit. Rather, we intend in this code to spell out the implications of some parts of the Church Order in a plausible way, and thereby also to encourage greater uniformity of procedure in the church when charges must be adjudicated.

To that end we have not hesitated to learn from established practices of the civil law, where these practices support the administration of that justice which the church also seeks. Yet the code does not supersede any part of the Church Order, nor does it place in jeopardy the spiritual character of the church's ministry, even in the presence of error or controversy.

We invite the synod, therefore, to review our earlier discussion of the scriptural basis for a judicial code in the church (Acts of Synod 1975, pp. 618-619); to study the code herein presented; and to decide prayerfully, in the light of our historical situation as a church and the considerations cited above, on the merits of the recommendations we present.

B. *Changes.* The present revision of the proposed Judicial Code incorporates a number of significant improvements over the 1975 version.

1. A preamble has been added which states clearly and concisely the function of the code.
2. Provision is made for a strengthened Protests and Appeals Advisory Committee to serve synod in its judicial capacity. In this connection Section F of the code has been entirely rewritten.
3. Requirements are simplified for those cases where an ecclesiastical body has not come to a judicial decision before some of its members are replaced by others. The new provisions are found in Articles 12 and 20.

4. An important paragraph inserted at the beginning of Article 10 clarifies the procedure whereby an assembly decides to constitute a formal hearing. This procedure, itself judicial in character, is subject to the same right of appeal as other judicial actions.

C. *Simplicity.* As noted above in Part IV, a number of well-considered suggestions came to the committee whose effect would be to make the code more detailed, more inclusive in scope, and more elaborate. Although we recognize the merits of these suggestions, and agree that more provisions could be added to the code, we have decided to keep it a *minimal* code. As the church gains experience with its use, a body of interpretation and commentary will develop, changes will no doubt, be proposed, and possible extensions of its application may be considered.

VI. THE REVISED JUDICIAL CODE

JUDICIAL CODE OF RIGHTS AND PROCEDURES

PREAMBLE TO THE JUDICIAL CODE

The Judicial Code is not a document of broad applicability. It is intended to be operative in a narrow area, and therefore it contains limiting language. It states that its provisions apply *only*:

- (a) in a judicial hearing;
- (b) when such a judicial hearing is conducted by a consistory, classis, or synod; and
- (c) when written charges requiring formal adjudication are filed.

The key provision is the last one: there must be written charges that require formal adjudication. The first determination that must be made by the consistory or other assembly before whom written charges are filed is this: Does this matter require formal adjudication?

In making this determination the consistory or other assembly would ordinarily be in a position to know that spiritual means have or have not been fully utilized. If such means have not been exhausted the assembly should seriously consider postponing the judicial hearing while further informal efforts are employed.

The assembly thus decides whether and when it will hear the matter. The Judicial Code gives guidance: it states that matters of admonition and discipline *do not* require a judicial hearing unless there are written charges which the assembly determines requires formal adjudication.

The Judicial Code thereby gives expression to the fundamental and primary role of spiritual means in all matters of admonition and discipline; it recognizes that these matters are best handled by informal counseling and entreaty; and if sanctions are required, it leaves their determination to the church under the Church Order.

A. SCOPE

Article 1

a. These provisions apply to judicial hearings before a consistory, classis or synod occasioned by the bringing of written charges requiring

formal adjudication. Such admonition and discipline of the church as does not involve the hearing of written charges requiring formal adjudication are not governed by these provisions.

b. Written charges requiring formal adjudication, whether brought by an individual against an individual or an assembly, or by an assembly against an individual or an assembly, may refer only to alleged offenses in profession or practice against the Word of God, the confessions of the church, or the Church Order.

c. The individual or assembly filing a charge against another individual or assembly shall be called a complainant and the individual or assembly against whom the charge is filed shall be called a respondent.

d. When the assemblies of the church conduct hearings, they act in a judicial capacity.

B. JUDICIAL RIGHTS

Article 2

Both the complainant and the respondent, if they are individuals, shall have the right to be represented or counseled by a member of the church in any judicial hearing.

Article 3

Both the complainant and the respondent shall have the right to be present at each original hearing and hearing on appeal provided for herein, except when the assembly withdraws to decide the issues raised by the hearing.

Article 4

The respondent and complainant shall have the right to have witnesses examined in their presence, except when the respondent fails to appear after due notice.

Article 5

A party against whom a judgment is entered shall have the right to appeal that judgment to the assembly next in order.

C. CHARGES

Article 6

Every charge, in order to receive a judicial hearing, must be presented to the assembly in writing, must set forth the alleged offense and must specify the facts relied upon to sustain the charge. Such specification shall declare, as far as possible, the time, place and circumstances of the alleged offense and shall be accompanied with the names of the witnesses and the titles of the documents to be cited in its support. A copy of the charge shall be transmitted to the respondent.

Article 7

A charge shall not allege more than one offense. Several charges, whether brought by one or more complainants against the same individual or assembly, with the specifications under each of them, may,

however, be presented at the same time and may, at the discretion of the assembly, be heard together. When several charges are heard at the same time, a decision on each charge must be made separately.

Article 8

a. A hearing for an alleged offense shall begin no later than one year from the time the charge is filed.

b. No charge may be filed for an alleged offense which occurred more than five years prior to the date on which the charge was filed.

D. ORIGINAL HEARING PROCEDURES BEFORE A CONSISTORY ACTING IN ITS JUDICIAL CAPACITY

Article 9

All hearings shall be conducted in a consistent Christian manner. A consistory composed of the elders and deacons, while acting in its judicial capacity, shall be so constituted as to avoid conflicts of interest. The administration of oaths shall not be required.

Article 10

The assembly shall in its judicial capacity determine whether the written charges are substantial, requiring formal adjudication. The complainant may appear before the assembly concisely stating his¹ charge and supporting evidence, whereupon the assembly shall determine whether to constitute a formal hearing.

The hearing, if ordered, shall proceed as follows:

a. The complainant shall repeat concisely his charge and his supporting evidence. The presiding officer may permit the form of the charge to be amended, but not its content.

b. The presiding officer shall request the respondent to plead to the charge, and his plea shall be recorded.

c. If the respondent pleads guilty, the hearing need not be continued. If the respondent denies the charge, the hearing shall proceed.

d. The respondent shall state concisely his defense and his supporting evidence.

e. The complainant shall first produce his evidence and witnesses. The respondent shall then produce his evidence and witnesses. All witnesses may be questioned by both the complainant and the respondent.

f. The complainant and the respondent shall, in turn, summarize their cases either by oral or written argument.

g. If either party objects to the regularity of the proceedings, the objection must be entered in the record. The presiding officer may sustain or disallow the objection. In any case he must be sustained by a majority of the consistory.

Article 11

If in any case the respondent, after due notice has been given him, shall refuse or neglect to appear at the time and place set forth for the

¹When the pronoun "his" is used herein, it refers either to an assembly or an individual, irrespective of gender.

hearing, the investigation or hearing may proceed in his absence. In all cases sufficient time shall be allowed for the respondent to appear at the given place and time and to prepare for the hearing. The consistory shall decide what constitutes "sufficient time."

Article 12

The final decision on any case shall be by majority vote of the consistory. Members who have not attended all the sessions and have not heard the case in its entirety shall read the record before a vote is taken.

Article 13

During the hearing, the presiding officer shall not comment on the merits of the case. This restriction does not apply when the consistory enters its final deliberations. After a decision has been reached, the presiding officer shall certify and announce the findings.

Article 14

The testimony shall be recorded verbatim if requested by any party to the proceedings. The record, including all exhibits, papers, evidence, and findings in the case shall be certified by the presiding officer and shall be the basis of any appeal which may be taken. The appellant and the respondent may have reasonable access to the record.

E. HEARING AND APPEALS PROCEDURES BEFORE A CLASSIS ACTING IN ITS JUDICIAL CAPACITY

Article 15

If a consistory is the respondent, the original hearing shall be before the classis and in accordance with the hearing procedures set forth in Article 10.

Article 16

In all cases of appeal to the classis from the consistory, the appellant shall within thirty days after the decision of the consistory give notice of appeal to the stated clerk of classis and to the consistory whose decision is appealed. Within the next thirty days, or such extension as the classis may authorize, the appellant shall furnish to the stated clerk of classis a written statement of the grounds of his appeal. The clerk of the consistory shall thereupon forward to the stated clerk the record referred to in Article 14. The hearing in the classis shall be limited to the grounds set forth in the statement and record.

Article 17

An appeal by an involved party shall not be heard in any case when the appellant has without just cause failed or refused to be present at his hearing on appeal.

Article 18

The right to appeal shall not be affected by the death of the person entitled to such right. His heirs or representative may continue to act in his behalf.

Article 19

If the appellant, having shown good cause therefore, desires to introduce additional evidence, the classis may remand the case to the consistory for a rehearing.

Article 20

In all cases the classis shall set a time for the hearing on appeal and send a notice as to the time and date of such hearing to all parties. After the statement and record have been considered and oral arguments concluded, the classis shall withdraw and shall hereupon consider and decide the issues of the case. The final decision on any case shall be by majority vote of the classis. Delegates who have not attended all the sessions and have not heard the case in its entirety shall read the record before a vote is taken. The classis may sustain or reverse in whole or in part the decision of the consistory, or it may return the case to the consistory with instructions for a new hearing.

Article 21

Appeal of the decision of classis may be made to synod. Such an appeal must be made within thirty days. When such an appeal is made a written notice together with a statement of grounds of appeal shall be sent to the stated clerk of synod and a copy thereof to the stated clerk of classis. The stated clerk of such classis shall thereupon transmit the decision of classis together with the record and papers of the case to the stated clerk of synod, who will place the appeal on the agenda of synod.

**F. HEARING AND APPEAL PROCEDURES BEFORE THE
SYNOD ACTING IN ITS JUDICIAL CAPACITY****Article 22**

Appeal of decisions of assemblies of the church acting in their judicial capacity, and such other matters requiring formal adjudication as synod shall undertake, shall be referred to the Synodical Advisory Committee on Protests and Appeals for consideration and advice.

Article 23

a. The Protests and Appeals Committee advising a given synod shall be appointed by the preceding synod. Approximately half the members shall be lay persons.

b. Any member of the Protests and Appeals Committee advising a given synod may be, but need not be, a delegate to that synod.

Article 24

a. Matters within the jurisdiction of the Protests and Appeals Committee shall be referred to it at any time after its members have been appointed.

b. The Protests and Appeals Committee shall meet between synods as frequently as its business requires, and normally shall convene a week before synod to prepare its recommendations.

c. As to appeals from decisions of consistories and classes, the Protests

and Appeals Committee shall permit complainants and respondents to present arguments.

d. As to other matters requiring formal adjudication which synod shall undertake, the Protests and Appeals Committee shall follow the hearing procedures described herein.

Article 25

Recommendations of the Protests and Appeals Committee shall be presented to the synod in writing, shall be accompanied with grounds, and shall be openly discussed in plenary session of synod.

Article 26

Synod may dispose of a judicial matter in one of the following ways:

- a. By deciding the matter;
- b. By referring it to one of its committees for settlement or reconciliation;
- c. By remanding it with advice to the appropriate classis or consistory; or
- d. By conducting its own hearing.

Article 27

If synod conducts its own hearing it shall follow the hearing procedures set forth herein.

VII. THE JUDICIAL CODE AND THE CHURCH ORDER

We wish to make very clear that the revised judicial code deals only with "judicial rights and procedures." It does not seek to regulate the normal discipline of the church as set forth in Articles 78 through 94 of the Church Order. These articles need not be amended or changed. The code does not take effect when the church is engaged with admonition and discipline.

The code concerns itself with and becomes effective only when there are written charges requiring formal adjudication. The code seeks to set forth the procedure the various assemblies should follow in formally adjudicating such written charges or appeals and makes clear the rights of the involved parties.

To be quite specific, the code does not seek to regulate the process of suspending or deposing an office-bearer of the church as now prescribed in the Church Order, unless written charges requiring formal adjudication are brought in response to such proceedings. The same is true when a consistory undertakes the admonition and discipline of church members. The judicial code does not transform this process automatically into a formal hearing, even though "charges" and "responses to charges" may in some sense be involved. The consistory must proceed in the work of discipline as it does now, under the Church Order. A consistory will not become either a complainant or a respondent in a formal judicial hearing except before classis or synod. And a consistory will itself sit in a judicial capacity ordinarily only when individual church members bring written charges against other church members that must be formally adjudicated.

It should not be assumed that any written charge, however frivolous, must be formally adjudicated under the code. This determination—which is itself subject to appeal—must be made by the assembly receiving the charge.

Your committee judges, therefore, that the adoption of the judicial code by synod would require only a minor but important addition to the Church Order. That the matter of judicial rights and procedures is important in the church of Jesus Christ is evident from Article 1 of the Church Order, where we read in part: “that in the churches all things are to be done decently and in order (I Cor. 14:40);” and therefore “regulates its ecclesiastical organization and activities in the following articles.” Since the present Article 30 of the Church Order deals with the manner and time of appeals, your committee decided to recommend the addition of an Article 30 (b), retaining the present Article as 30 (a). Article 30 would then read as follows:

- a. Assemblies and church members may appeal to the assembly next in order if they believe that injustice has been done or that a decision conflicts with the Word of God or the Church Order. Appellants shall observe all ecclesiastical regulations regarding the matter and time of appeal.
- b. When written charges requiring formal adjudication by an ecclesiastical assembly are made, the relevant provisions of the Judicial Code shall be observed.

VIII. THE JUDICIAL CODE AND SYNODICAL PROCEDURE

Since the proposed advisory committee on Protests and Appeals functions somewhat differently from the regular synodical advisory committees, we recommend that the following new section be inserted into the Rules of Synodical Procedure under the heading “Synodical Committees”:

C. Synodical Advisory Committee on Protests and Appeals

1. Mandate: (Cf. Art. 22) Appeals from decisions of assemblies of the church acting in their judicial capacity, and such other matters requiring formal adjudication as synod shall undertake, shall be referred to the Synodical Advisory Committee on Protests and Appeals for consideration and advice.

2. Membership: The Advisory Committee on Protests and Appeals shall be composed of nine (9) members elected by synod in conformity with the rules of election and term of office. Approximately half of the members shall be lay persons. The committee which advises a given synod shall be appointed by the preceding synod. Members of this committee may be, but need not be, delegates to that synod which it advises. There need be no regional representation but a fair denominational representation is desirable.

3. Meetings: The Protests and Appeals Committee shall meet between synods as frequently as its business requires, and normally shall convene a week before synod to prepare its recommendations.

4. Organization and rules governing this committee.

- a. The rules under VI, B2 apply with the exception of 2,g which will read:

During synodical discussions the committee shall be represented by two spokesmen who will have the privilege of the floor. These shall have precedence over every other speaker and shall not be limited as to the number and length of their speeches.

b. Recommendations of the Protests and Appeals Committee shall be presented to the synod in writing, shall be accompanied with grounds, and shall be openly discussed in plenary session of synod.

5. Synodical disposition of a judicial matter:

a. Synod may dispose of a judicial matter in one of the following ways:

(1) By deciding the matter;

(2) By referring it to one of its committees for settlement or reconciliation;

(3) By remanding it with advice to the appropriate classis or consistory; or

(4) By conducting its own hearing.

b. If synod conducts its own hearing it shall follow the hearing procedure described in the Judicial Code.

Note: The present Section VI, C becomes VI, D.

IX. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That Dr. Clifton J. Orlebeke and the Honorable John Feikens be permitted to represent the study committee at the Synod of 1977.

2. That synod adopt the Judicial Code as stated above in this report, Part VI.

3. That synod appoint an Advisory Committee on Protests and Appeals to serve the Synod of 1978, as provided by the Judicial Code.

4. That synod approve an addition to the Church Order, Article 30, retaining the present article as Article 30(a) and adding the following as Article 30(b):

“When written charges requiring formal adjudication by an ecclesiastical assembly are made, the relevant provisions of the Judicial Code shall be observed.”

The Judicial Code Study Committee

Franklin D. Steen, chairman

Clifton Orlebeke, secretary

John Feikens

Jerry Hoytema

Henry Stob

REPORT 42
MISSION PRINCIPLES
(Art. 61)

I. PERSONNEL

A number of the original appointees were unable to serve on the committee and alternate members were appointed in their place. A list of those serving appears at the end of the report.

II. BACKGROUND AND MANDATE

The report of the Christian Reformed Board of Foreign Missions (CRBFM) to the Synod of 1975 (cf. Acts of Synod 1975, pp. 183-185) referred to the greatly expanded programs of mission outreach of our denomination in the previous decade. This expansion included both diverse patterns of witness in local communities as well as expansion into new areas and new approaches by denominational "mission" agencies. Each of these agencies has expanded its witness and work with the specific approval and endorsement of the synod. Specific reference was made by the CRBFM in its report to the expanding mission programs of the denomination and the growth and intensified programming of such denominational agencies as the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee (CRWRC) and the Back to God Hour (BTGH) as well as the CRBFM. All of these mission agencies are mission-oriented and have mission concerns.

The CRBFM felt that our denomination had reached a stage in the development and expansion of its mission in the world where it has become necessary for the Christian Reformed Church once again to turn its attention to the basic theological and operational principles involved. An earlier study of mission principles had been completed in 1953 and served the church well. However, the context which occasioned its writing and the circumstances addressed were different from those which confront the church today and could not have been anticipated by the church twenty-five years ago. The broadening range of mission outreach which has since taken place as well as the number of denominational agencies engaged in mission both at home and abroad require a fresh look at the principles involved. The diversity of programming and supervision has at times led to overlapping of work in the same territory and created problems of interrelationships and supervision. The CRBFM, for example, is no longer the only agency which expresses and embodies the presence of the Christian Reformed Church outside the boundaries of Canada and the United States. The BTGH and the CRWRC have greatly expanded their ministries overseas in the past quarter century. The CRBFM felt that a restatement and updating of the principles which should govern our outreach should be initiated by the synod. The CRBFM consequently requested synod to appoint a committee to study the theological principles and the resulting strategy (with particular application to the programs and interrelationships) of our various synodically appointed mission agencies.

The following grounds were advanced by the CRBFM as to why synod should initiate such a study:

1. The last study of 1952-53 is no longer adequate to cover present Christian Reformed mission activities.
2. The present duplication of effort.
3. The problems encountered in administration and programming.
4. The need to avoid any suggestion of competition or duplication.
5. The need to enhance each agency's ministry by a more clearly defined interrelationship (Acts of Synod 1975, p. 185).

Synod, in responding to this request, appointed our committee and gave it this mandate:

That synod appoint a committee to study the theological principles and the resulting strategy (with particular application to the programs and interrelationships) of all our synodically appointed mission agencies.

Grounds:

- a. The last study, conducted in 1952-53, is no longer adequate to cover present Christian Reformed mission activities.
- b. There is at present duplication of effort among our agencies, and the danger of a spirit of unwholesome competition.
- c. There are problems encountered in administration and programming that could be alleviated by such a study and its implementation.
- d. There is a need to enhance each agency's ministry by a more clearly defined interrelationship (Acts of Synod 1975, pp. 58-59).

The CRBFM also addressed the Synod of 1975 with respect to the interrelationships of the CRBFM and the CRWRC. These interrelationships had been a matter of concern for a number of years. The CRBFM in 1972 had defined its concept of these relationships in a minute (ECM 344) which stated:

A. Field Conference

1. It shall be the policy of both boards that there be one Christian Reformed Church conference on any given field.
2. In any given field where both the CRBFM and the CRWRC minister, the conference shall be under the administration of the Board of Foreign Missions.

Grounds:

- a. This policy is consistent with all synodical decisions and pronouncements relative to permanent relief activities.
- b. This is consistent with the CRWRC constitution, V-A-2.
- c. All CRWRC and CRBFM appointees shall be given membership in the field conference subject to accepted rules of the given conference.

B. Field Personnel

1. The recruitment of personnel for permanent relief activity is the responsibility of the CRWRC which makes the appointment and is responsible for support of such personnel, with the concurrence of the CRBFM. This recruitment shall be for positions requested by the field conference and approved by both boards.
2. All CRBFM and CRWRC appointees shall be provided orientation

by their respective boards as well as by the sister board, if requested, as to field policy, organization, and program.

3. All program proposals and budget matters relating to both the CRBFM and the CRWRC shall be processed through the field conference and then submitted for approval by both boards.

4. Field personnel working in the context of the conference's relief ministry shall send a copy of their reports to both boards.

5. Logistical matters, such as salary, housing, transportation, furlough and deputation services shall be the responsibility of the respective boards, in consultation with each other so as to achieve a uniform or mutually acceptable policy (Acts of Synod 1975, p. 185).

Subsequent consultations between these synodical agencies were fruitful for producing greater mutual understanding of particular problems affecting the two boards. The definition of the relationship prepared by the CRBFM in the above minute was not wholly acceptable to the CRWRC, however. Meanwhile the CRBFM registered strong reservations regarding the feasibility of separate field organizations for the CRBFM and the CRWRC personnel in lands where both organizations operate. When mutual consultation could not settle the matter, the CRBFM requested the Synod of 1975 to recognize ECM 344 as the *modus operandi* until the requested study of mission principles was completed.

The problems of interrelationship referred to also had significance for statements in the proposed revision of the Mission Order of the CRBFM since that document defined membership in the field conference. The CRBFM proposed to the synod that

All Christian Reformed Church personnel serving a field under synodical mandate shall be eligible for membership in the field council if they are on regular assignment and have completed language and/or orientation requirements for their position (Acts of Synod 1975, p. 180).

This proposal was in harmony with ECM 344. Adoption of the proposed Mission Order was deferred by the synod until 1976 in order to give opportunity for CRC agencies, consistories, and missionary field councils and personnel to respond to the proposals. A final and slightly revised formulation was presented to the 1976 synod. At that time the CRBFM (the name was changed to the Board of World Missions - CRBWM) confined eligibility to membership in field councils to appointees serving under the CRBWM by proposing:

Section 3. Membership of field councils.

a. All board personnel shall be eligible for membership in the field council if they are on regular assignment and have completed language and/or orientation requirements for their position (Acts of Synod 1976, p. 179).

Synod, however, in effect adopted the principle of ECM 344 that there be one field council for all CRC personnel on a particular field and amended the CRBWM's proposal so that Article III-Section 3a now reads as originally proposed in 1975 by the CRBWM:

All Christian Reformed Church personnel serving a field under

synodical mandate shall be eligible for membership in the field council if . . . (Acts of Synod 1976, p. 17).

This same synod considered proposals of far-reaching significance for the coordination of denominational agencies (a task of the Synodical Interim Committee) by defining the SIC's responsibilities in this way:

The Synodical Interim Committee shall be responsible for promoting the planning, coordinating, and the setting of priorities of programs by each of the synodical agencies and by all of them together, in keeping with synodical guidelines and shall serve synod with periodic analysis and overall review of programs and resources of the denomination after consultation with the agencies (Acts of Synod 1976, pp. 50-51).

As a result and after consultation with the Stated Clerk our committee judged that its mandate was to prepare a statement of mission principles which will meet the contemporary situation of our church in its total ministry to the world and also be useful as a guideline for future correlation of mission agencies and expansion. The committee feels strongly that synod must exercise great care and good judgment in assigning areas of responsibility to our mission agencies (or in creating new ones) so that overlapping is avoided and areas of tension avoided because of overlapping mandates.

In fulfilling our mandate the so-called "mission agencies" were identified by the committee as including the Board of Home Missions, the Board of World Missions, the World Relief Committee, the Back to God Hour and the Chaplain Committee. Representatives of these agencies were invited and did meet with our committee. Each agency was given opportunity to respond to our mandate in whatever way it considered appropriate. We continued to consult with the Synodical Interim Committee through the Stated Clerk. We enjoyed splendid cooperation from everyone throughout our study. The frankness and openness with which areas of cooperation as well as problems of interrelationships between the agencies were discussed made our task pleasant and easier. Relevant materials were supplied and volunteered. We are grateful to have had a comprehensive view of the dedication and vision that characterize the labors of the personnel and members of the boards and agencies. There can be no question about the fact that all have one goal in mind: the glory of God through his church in mission. Where areas of difficulty and problems of interrelationships remain, we find that everyone is intensely interested in finding ways of working together and to plot a course out of the problems and difficulties.

We are grateful for the opportunity to serve the church with the results of our studies and investigations. The reports of the previous Mission Principles Study Committee (1952-53) were carefully reviewed. Many of the things contained in those reports remain valid and relevant to our present situation. Other things have changed. We did not feel it necessary to summarize or repeat that material. We do call attention to the Acts of Synod 1953, pp. 85-86, where fourteen mission principles on evangelism are listed as adopted by the 1953 synod. These principles merit the continued reflection and application of the churches, although we

have not duplicated them in our report. We felt that our mandate required of us that we prepare a set of principal statements with an accompanying commentary addressed specifically to the context in which our mandate was drawn up and not to all possible questions that concern the contemporary missionary enterprise of the church. For example, we have not given attention to the contemporary interest in and discussion of church growth theory and principles. The first part of our report will consist of our statement of principles which we feel are necessary to consider in relationship to such areas as the understanding of the interrelationships of our mission agencies. The application of these principles and the implications to be drawn from them for our various synodical agencies will be treated in the second section of our report.

III. THEOLOGICAL PRINCIPLES AND MISSION STRATEGY

Part One

A STATEMENT OF MISSION PRINCIPLES

1. **Norm** *The Bible is the self-revelation of the one, true, living God which expresses God's good news to sinful man and is the norm of the missionary activity of the people of God.*

God presents himself to mankind as the only true God. His self-revelation is found in the Bible in which he reveals himself as Creator and Lord of all creation. The Bible heralds God's continued claims to the loyalty of man whom he made in his image. Through that Word God continues to assert his rights over all creation. He will never abdicate his position, rights, claim or purpose. The call of God is to the service of one who is in our own day fulfilling his ancient purpose through people's response to him, and beyond and in spite of their response.

God presents himself to mankind not only as Lord but also as the only Savior (Isa. 43:11; 45:21) who in grace addresses fallen mankind and calls men back to their true loyalty (Jonah 2:8). This God is active in our world today, making known his love and forgiving grace to those who turn to him in repentance and faith. All men are sinners and stand in need of God's grace (Rom. 3:10-18) but "God shows his love for us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us" (Rom. 5:8).

The Bible is also the norm for the missionary activity of the people of God. Having been saved, our only option is to speak as God's ambassadors (II Cor. 5:20). From the Bible we receive the message we joyfully proclaim as God's good news. Through the Bible we receive not only the basic guidance we need to be God's ambassadors but also the norm for our missionary endeavors. Whatever we do in mission must be consonant with and in subordination to scriptural considerations.

2. **Author** *The Triune God is the author of mission.*

The triune God is the God of our eternal salvation (Heb. 5:9; 12:2). This salvation originated in God who before the foundation of the world loved us in his sovereign love and destined us to be his sons through Jesus Christ (Eph. 1:4, 5).

The Bible plainly states that God initiated, implemented and accomplished the salvation of man. This is the great mission of God. Jesus

Christ, the Son of God, is the one great Sent One of the Father (John 20:21) and gave his life as a ransom (Matt. 20:28). He now reigns over all things at God's right hand (Gal. 1:4; Matt. 28:19; Rev. 11:15). The Holy Spirit applies Christ's work in the hearts and lives of men. Through the Spirit we receive life and power.

God's plan is "to unite all things in Christ" (Eph. 1:10; Col. 1:20). Therefore we say that the triune God is the author of mission. Even though the good news comes to mankind through God's agents, it is *God* who is making his appeal through us (II Cor. 5:20). He is calling out of the world a people for himself (Acts 15:14; John 17:6). Our work and witness have validity only when they are viewed from the perspective of God's mission.

3. **Goal** *The goal of God's mission is the glory of God in the establishment and acknowledgment of his rule over all creation in our present age and for eternity.*

The entire Bible movingly pictures God at work in history accomplishing his will in establishing his rule over all of his creation, building his kingdom and destroying every power that exalts itself against him. God manifests his glory in the establishment of his kingdom. We continually pray as our Lord taught us: "Thy kingdom come." We carry on our mission in the context of the last days. The great day of the coming of our Lord will be the day when, having put down all his enemies, Jesus Christ will deliver the kingdom to God the Father after subjugating every rule and every authority and power. Then God will be everything to everyone (I Cor. 15:24-28). The final goal of mission is to be found in the Redeemer, not the redeemed.

The coming of the kingdom of God is more than the subjugation of his enemies. It is God's will that men should everywhere repent and come with joy into his loving fellowship and be received with joy into his kingdom (Matt. 25:34). God's kingdom comes in our own day whenever and wherever men acknowledge his rule and experience the deliverance he comes to bring: release for captives, sight for the blind, liberty for the oppressed, good news to the poor (Lk. 4:18; Isa. 61:1). These mighty deliverances are the signs of a new divine reign. Because of the rebellion of his creatures an altered situation had been brought about in this world. Mankind's sinful revolt brought all under the rule of sin and the influence of Satan and the powers of darkness. Apart from God, mankind lives in bondage and slavery.

In the person of Jesus Christ, God has come to establish his reign. Our groaning universe (Rom. 8:22) now sees and hears of the freedom Christ brings from its bondage to decay and obtains the glorious liberty of the children of God (Rom. 8:21). In Christ God comes to save and to rule. This is what makes the proclamation of the gospel God's thrilling good news to men. God's kingdom is at this very moment locked in combat with the empire of sin, and God is seeking to liberate his people from evil's grip (Mk. 3:22-27; Lk. 11:20). He calls people to become members of his kingdom community. When they accept the invitation, they enter upon a qualitatively different life. They are children of a radically new age (Matt. 11:11).

4. Message *The Bible is God's missionary message to man and expresses his claim upon mankind and all creation.*

The church must herald that gospel of the kingdom to all mankind. The Scriptures are the source of its message, for the entire Bible is the setting forth of the plan of God to reclaim the world and of his activity in achieving that end. The great subject of Scripture is the God who is the one and only Lord and Savior (Acts 2:32-36; 4:12). We declare to the world that "God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them" (II Cor. 5:19).

Evangelism accents the initial confrontation of God with sinful man. By the Word which is preached God expresses his claim upon his creature and his creation. Faithful proclamation not only expresses what are the blessings with which God floods the believing sinner but also the consequences that follow from rejection of God and his claim to man's obedience (John 3:18). "There is only one name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).

The pervasive theme of the Bible is the kingdom of God. Even the witness to Jesus Christ is viewed in the wider context of the kingdom. A kind of necessity to set himself and his mission in the context of the kingdom was spoken of by Jesus when he said, "I must preach the kingdom of God" (Luke 4:43). In the epistles this theme is frequently expressed in terms of the completed work of Jesus who is become Lord of all. His final victory will be heralded to all creation when this royal note shall be sounded: "the kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever" (Rev. 11:15). Again, "Hallelujah, for the Lord God the Almighty reigns" (Rev. 19:6).

This message is proclaimed by word and is demonstrated by deeds, for the call of God is to responsible service in the world. When this demonstration of our total commitment is disclosed through our lives, God is glorified (Matt. 5:16). When we fail in this, we risk having God's name blasphemed by the world because of us (Rom. 2:24). We are called to be "living epistles . . . known and read of all men" (II Cor. 3:3). The gospel we declare is also the norm for our own lives (Phil. 1:27).

5. Agent *God, whose election by grace takes up his people into his redemptive plan for mankind, sends and equips his church as his covenantal agent in his mission.*

Although God is the author of mission and mission is the work of the triune God and of Jesus Christ as God's *Sent One*, we are also sent. "As the father has sent me, even so I send you," Jesus said (John 20:21). "You shall be my witnesses . . . to the end of the earth" (Acts 1:8). The believing community proclaims, "We beseech you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God." God makes his appeal through us and has given us a ministry and a message of reconciliation (II Cor. 5:18-20).

It is our glorious privilege as God's people to be sent into the world to be his servants and witnesses (John 17:8). As individuals and as a church we are not permitted merely to bask in the gracious relationship God has established with us. Our redemption enables us to fulfill the purpose of our creation and as God's covenant people to be his appointed

co-laborers to lay the world, subjugated to God in Christ, at his feet, re-aligned to its Lord's will and experiencing the blessing of a life lived in stewardship to him (I Cor. 9:16; I Cor. 3:9).

This is the responsibility both of the individual Christian and of the church in community. The gifts God gives to his church are for the profit of all and designed "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. 4:12-13). We are the light of the world, the salt of the earth, the leaven in the meal (Matt. 5:13, 14). The entire church is a sent community.

Therefore, all the praise and glory belong to God who has taken us up into his glorious mission. "We have only done what was our duty" (Luke 17:10).

6. Response *God's royal claim calls mankind to a total response expressed in repentance and the obedience of faith.*

The redemption which God accomplished for and works in those whom he saves involves the salvation of the whole person. Jesus Christ saves man as man in all his relationships, i.e., both body and soul. He is not only made alive spiritually, but unspeakably wonderful things are now experienced and reserved for him when he will be resurrected and will share the full joy of his Lord (I Cor. 15).

Man enters that life through faith and obedience to Jesus Christ (Acts 2:38). "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God," Jesus said. (John 3:3). The fruit of this work of the Holy Spirit is "repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ" (Acts 20:21). That this is God's will for man is expressed in various ways in the Bible. "Repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" is given as a summary of the preaching ministries of John and Jesus (Matt. 3:3; 4:17). The same call to a complete and radical change of life is expressed in the duty to "bring forth fruits worthy of repentance" (Matt. 3:8). The apostle Paul tells us that repentance results from the goodness of God (Rom. 2:4), while Peter says that it is the will of God that all should come to repentance (II Peter 3:9).

It is this total response which we seek to accomplish through our mission. Men must be taught all that we have ourselves learned from the Lord Jesus (Matt. 28:20). The purpose of the mission of the church can be nothing less than God's purpose in his mission. God commands men that they should all everywhere repent (Acts 17:30). His command is our call to a worldwide mission which is not just doing good for goodness' sake but is based in the need for men to respond to God's demonstration of his goodness through us by repenting, believing, obeying; in short, the total renewal of life and a complete turning from sin to God. It is a totally new allegiance to which God calls mankind.

7. Approach. *The church in its mission must minister to the whole person and approach man in the context of his culture.*

Because God's royal claim upon mankind involves his claim to the total life of man, the church must also minister in mission to the whole person. This the church does first of all in the development and expression

of its own life. If this is lacking, then the incorporation into its fellowship of those who come to faith in Jesus Christ will serve neither the convert's nor the church's welfare. The life of the church must, therefore, project what it means to be the people of God, obedient to the Word of God. The church must be concerned that all its members reach the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ (Eph. 3:13). The gospel is not merely good news by which the sinner can be converted. It is also good news by which the Christian can continue to live.

The mission of the church must project both the wholeness of the gospel as well as the wholeness of the church's life expressed in obedience to the gospel. The church must be concerned that those whom it commissions to express that gospel should evidence in word and deed their own total dedication and commitment as well as that of the church in community.

The church is called to do the good as well as to proclaim the good (I Peter 2:11-17; Gal. 6:9-10). The claims of God in the gospel call us to produce fruits of love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness (Gal. 5:22). These are the order of the day for the witness. The claim of Christ to our total life rests heavily upon us, irrespective of the effect in the lives of others.

Therefore, in our mission activity we must always follow after that which is good, one toward another and toward all (I Thess. 5:15). Those whom we address must be addressed in love. We must speak to them as honorable, redeemable creatures of God. They may not be addressed as disembodied spirits but in the wholeness of their being (James 2:14-17). Like the Christ whom they serve they must identify with the people to whom they are sent, both in their joys as well as their weeping (I Cor. 9:19-23).

Jesus in his ministry preached but he also healed the sick, cleansed lepers, fed the multitudes, raised the dead, cast out demons. He made men whole again, physically and spiritually, granting healing and forgiveness to those who appealed to him. The gospel which centers in Christ expresses God's kingly rule and calls men to subject themselves willingly and gladly to that liberating and fulfilling rule. Satan does indeed claim to exercise dominion in this world (Matt. 4:9). The perverted structures of society which Satan inspires men to construct challenge the will of God in regard to righteousness and justice, love and mercy, humaneness and goodness (Isa. 5:7-12; Rev. 18; Gal. 5:19-21). Those who follow Satan's leading will not enter the kingdom of God.

In our mission, therefore, we address man where he is, in terms of the culture in which he lives. The gospel message is comprehensive in its address, totalitarian in its claims. It addresses man estranged from God, yet needing a living relationship with God in order to be truly man. The gospel is relevant to man's situation and the Spirit gives him power to change what needs reformation in his society. We must be sensitive as to how a man in the context of his society makes his decisions, understands freedom and responsibility and what community means to him. In the gospel approach the messenger must recognize that he meets a man *in society*, not as an isolated being.

Because the gospel calls upon the people of God to establish a truly Christian community on earth, the church is often compelled to engage in a "comprehensive" approach. This means that it often addresses the gospel to men on a number of levels: social, economic, agricultural, health, life-style, etc. The gospel touches all areas of life. But however this is done, those who are addressed in word and deed must be led to an encounter with the living God who alone saves. Living cultures are not static. They continue to change for better or worse with or without the presence of missionaries. We must be careful that we do not regard cultures as sacred.

Every culture must be evaluated according to God's criteria of righteousness and truth. Christ's evangelists must humbly seek to bring about the establishment of churches deeply rooted in Christ and closely related to their culture. Such churches must seek to transform and enrich their culture to the glory of God. Both in its missionary address to the world and in its communal life the church must remember that it is God's missionary agent in the totality of its life. Works of mercy, e.g., or education may not simply be for mercy's sake or for education's sake. Every form of witness that is employed must serve God's purpose and bring men to him.

**8. Strategies/
Methodologies**

The church, tutored by the Word and Spirit, must order its missionary expression as it orders its internal life and this must always be in accord with the nature of the gospel.

Both the church and the world are evangelized by the gospel. Just as the church in her internal life must constantly re-evaluate and reform its expression of the life it lives under Christ, so too it must continually subject its strategies and methodologies to the searching examination of the Spirit and the Word.

No single strategy of mission can be created which will suffice to meet all men everywhere. The cultures and resultant societies in which men live their lives are too diverse and make such an approach unrealistic and impossible. This means that the church must realize that the structures it creates for itself and its mission are frequently expedients only and can easily stifle creativity. There are biblical norms which we must obey, but the Bible nowhere spells out the "how" of the missionary enterprise. This the church must do as it follows the leading of the Spirit and the Word.

We conclude, therefore, that by careful analysis, planning and use of resources the church and its mission agencies must always seek to set such priorities in its work that are in accord with the culture and needs of the people in a given culture. The New Testament, particularly the Gospels and Acts, gives us ample illustrations as to how Jesus and Paul, e.g., adapted their approaches to different people within the fairly uniform culture of their day. There must be a similar freedom and liberty to adapt as needed in our methodologies and strategies, as well as in our organization for mission, as long as such methodologies and strategies are in accord with the genius of the gospel.

9. **Inter-church Relationships** *The church which emerges as the result of missions must be recognized as a complete, fully responsible church of Christ.*

The missionary represents the church which sends him. In recognition of the unity of the church and the Spirit's work, he should also give full recognition and trust to the newly emergent church or the church with which he works by becoming integrally related to the church which has come to expression in the area in which he serves. That church is the church to which all converts will be introduced and related. It is essential, therefore, that the missionary himself identify with that church, exercise his gifts in and through it, minister to and be ministered to by it, place himself under its admonition and discipline — in short, be a living, active member of it.

This also means that there is no room for a dichotomy which separates church and mission in an absolute sense. Each must counsel with the other and provision must be made whereby all parties to the work of Christ in a given place participate in all those decisions which affect the life and growth of the church in a certain land. A national church must be given early recognition by the sending church as a church possessing genuine status as part of the one church of Christ. God's grace enables the church to be born and express itself as his people. Such a church is indigenous, not because it draws its life from its environment but because its life flows from God who prepared a place for his people wherever his church is established by him.

Each given part of the church is not only free to express itself in accordance with its own nature and culture, but is under obligation to do so. There is no room to impose our own language, style of life and other accidentals on other sections of the church of Christ. At the same time this will guard us from becoming overbearing, insensitive, inconsiderate, selfish and self-preoccupied in our relationships.

In a very real way this demands that as soon as possible the church with which we are associated in mission become a partner with us in the planning of strategies, setting of priorities, as well as the establishment of goals for any mission endeavor carried on jointly. In Christ we share a world concern (John 3:16) and share in the one mission of the one church. There must be grateful recognition of the gifts and resources God has given to each part of the body (I Peter 4:10). Since no church is autonomous or self-sufficient, let alone independent of all others, a brotherly spirit ought to prevail within the church. This may even require representation of other churches to our denominational agencies. It certainly involves the sharing of resources, consulting one another, learning from one another and mutually serving each other in our relationships.

The body of Christ is both international and interracial. Integrated teams, recruited from nationals and expatriates, working in harmony for their Lord at home and abroad will demonstrate the true nature of the body of Christ (Eph. 2:13-16).

The power of the blood of the Lamb of God cleanses vile sinners and makes them joint heirs with one another in Christ (Rom. 8:17). That

blood also has the power to help us work together in love and unity despite the diversity of our cultural backgrounds. Christ is above culture and is able to make his servants transcend prejudice and bigotry.

It is a false conception to think of the early missionaries of the church as having no interpersonal, interracial or cross-cultural characteristics. Symeon may well have been a black man (Acts 13:1). Paul was a Roman Jew (Acts 22:3). Barnabas was a Hellenistic Jew from Cyprus (Acts 4:36). Luke was a Greek. Timothy was of mixed Jewish and heathen Greek parentage (Acts 16:1-3). Titus was an uncircumcised Greek (Gal. 2:3). Aristarchus was a native of Thessalonica. Tychicus and Trophimus were from Asia (Acts 20:4). They were from different racial and cultural backgrounds but they were all one in Christ.

The church as a community of believers, as a missionary agent of its Lord and in its relationship with other churches must be open for all races to serve God within its organizations. This feature of cross-cultural interaction and cooperation should not be limited to evangelism but must be a permanent feature of the life of the church of Jesus Christ on earth. Just as God gives different gifts to individual members of the body, so too he gives particular gifts to churches in all cultures for the edification of the church worldwide. Christians in different areas of the world need to open themselves to each other in sharing and working together so that they may be edified by their diverse but not divergent cultural gifts. The community Christ establishes is an open, loving, accepting, cooperating community. The very nature and beauty of its communal life ought to be an attracting power calling upon men to join its ranks (John 20:23; 17:3; I John 1:3).

10. **Structure** *The planted church must be assisted to be equipped, organized and trained to be a viable, ongoing, Christian community, capable of fulfilling its stewardship as God's missionary agent in its environment.*

The dominant position so long held by western Christianity is fast disappearing. God is raising up churches throughout the world which form a great new resource for world evangelization. These churches, too, must assume responsibility to reach not only their communities and cultures but also the entire world. New forms of cooperation and/or partnership in mission are developing as a result by which the unity and universality of the church are being demonstrated.

This mutual responsibility requires of us, first of all that we must do everything possible to assist the planted church to become equipped, organized and trained for service in its own culture. The resources which we share to attain that end are not limited to providing workers who merely engage in evangelism in the narrow sense of being preachers of the gospel. Assistance may necessarily and legitimately take many other forms. In short, our vast resources of personnel and wealth as well as gifts for building up the saints (Eph. 4:12) are not for ourselves alone but for the whole body of Christ which is infinitely greater than our own communion. Our goal and priorities must be so arranged that the church may become an authentic, ongoing church, prepared to minister to its own environment, consciously fulfilling its calling for its own day and place.

This also requires that care should be exercised that we do not impose our own structures or stereotyped methodologies upon other churches. The Bible provides us with rich resources and principles upon which to build churches which are true to scriptural givens on the one hand and varied according to their own circumstances on the other hand. We may not substitute for the old imperialism based on political models a new form of ecclesiastical imperialism which seeks to create carbon copies of ourselves in every area in which we minister and serve.

11. Allocation of Resources *The church must allocate its resources according to the situation, time and opportunities given it.*

Committed to God's mission we desire that every church will have national leadership whose style of ministry will be that of service, not domination. There is great need today to improve theological education and equip church leaders and members for ministry. There is need for effective training programs in doctrine, discipleship, liturgy, nurture, evangelism and work of mercy. We may not become guilty of neglecting church nurture for the sake of church growth.

To do this requires wise and considered allocation of resources. The determination of what needs to be done, how it can best be accomplished and what it takes to do it are not matters to be decided unilaterally. There must be continued consultation between churches (on the external level) and (internally) between agencies within the church. Since all agencies are intended to carry forward and assist the church in its mission, no agency may be permitted to become a law unto itself or to insulate itself from the benefits to be derived from mutual consultation and planning. We need to be watchful and discerning of ourselves because we are not immune to building and perpetuating our own "little kingdoms."

12. Administration *The church must be true to biblical principles in faithful administration of its mission.*

In her total life as a people of God the church must bear witness to those in its community that God is at work in his people. The church is a demonstration that life under the Spirit of God makes a difference. Thus the collective life of the church speaks clearly to its age that it is not just individuals who are demonstrating God's love, grace and mercy, but those who are thus commissioned represent the community of believers (I Thess. 1; I Cor. 12; Rom. 12). We are sent in Christ's name through his church (Luké 10:16).

By the very nature of the case much of the ministry of the church is carried on representatively. To facilitate orderliness in its communal life and to accomplish the varied tasks it is privileged to fulfill, the church commissions individuals to specific ministries. Although these ministries may differ in function and task, they are all alike valid ministries and do not differ in dignity and honor.

In a similar manner the church as a whole, represented in its broader assemblies and engaging in cooperative ministries, may legitimately assign specific tasks and their administration to such committees, boards or agencies as it desires. Greater effectiveness is frequently achieved

through such specialization. No committee, board or agency may claim to be the church. It only represents the church and that in a limited, specialized way. But even when its work is limited to a specific, specialized ministry, this is representative of the whole church. Cooperation and mutual consultation are required on all levels in order that the one, corporate character of the church in ministry may be clearly shown. The gospel is a treasure and each one must be careful how he builds on the one foundation laid in Jesus Christ (I Cor. 3:10). The church must responsibly and wisely carry out its work.

Expertise in various areas (evangelism, education, relief operations, special ministries, radio and mass media, etc.) requires certain divisions of labor and specialized focus. Most often these things can be done efficiently only representatively. There is good scriptural warrant for such a representative mode of activity (John 17:18; 20:21; Acts 9:15; 13:2).

Such varied modes of activity may well require varied forms of administration. However, the broader assembly must always act responsibly and wisely in making such assignments by preventing overlapping or duplication of areas of concern and by providing the means for integration and cooperation.

13. Non- Ecclesiastical

The church in its mission ought to cooperate with and make use of all means and organizations which enable it to fulfill its mission and which do not compromise the true and clear announcement and expression of God's good news.

We thank God for those agencies whose labors cross denominational boundaries and whose services are essential to the ongoing ministry of the church. Such labors as Bible translation, theological education, Christian literature, ministries of mercy, discipling materials, etc., are efficiently carried on by agencies which serve more than one church in mission. The organized church frequently needs such organizations which reach beyond the bounds of the denomination. They are expressions of the church as an organism.

Such organizations merit the support of the church when they render services which do not supplant the responsibility of the church itself, are not in competition with the church's own ministries and which meet the biblical principles applicable in their case. However, these organizations on their part must always bear in mind that the organized church has come down to us through history from Christ and the apostles, that they live out of, are nurtured by and are dependent on the historic church and cannot survive without it. They must engage in constant self-examination to evaluate their effectiveness as part of God's mission through Christ and his church.

The synod or broader assemblies of the church have a responsibility to make clear and positive decisions with respect to the official relationships and cooperative involvement in such specific adjunctive organizations. Many times these ministries began in response to needs recognized by the Christian community. Such agencies have frequently pioneered the way when the official structures of the church failed to exercise

vision or to give clear direction to the church as a whole. As long as the goals of such agencies are legitimate and praiseworthy, the church should avoid adopting a competitive stance toward them.

Part Two

IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS BASED ON THESE PRINCIPLES

It is the committee's purpose in this part of our report to reflect on the implications of these principles for the mission of the Christian Reformed Church and to define certain conclusions that follow from these principles and implications. Synod is reminded that our report concentrates on those areas of mission and mission principles which are the context of our mandate. Though tempted at times to do so, we have refrained from speaking to or seeking to define principles and guidelines that are not directly related to the context which called for this study. For this reason our report concentrates largely on the application of these principles to interagency concerns. We have not understood our mandate to include such important and far-reaching questions as church growth, liberation theology, evangelism strategies, urban missions, moratorium in missions, and the like. On these and other subjects much could be written, for our Reformed faith has important and necessary things to say concerning them. We trust that our efforts with their limited focus will nevertheless stimulate the church to reflection upon the mission God has privileged us to carry on in his name and authority. Similarly we sincerely hope that our report will assist the church to carry out its mandate with continuing self-appraisal as to how that mandate can best be fulfilled. If correction and reorientation are needed, we look to God for grace and wisdom to put his kingdom and his glory before our own little kingdoms and self-interests.

A. The mission of the Christian Reformed Church is part of the mission of the one universal church.

1. This mission must serve the goal of the mission of God: the manifestation of the glory of God, the coming in of his kingdom, the building up of the church and the welfare of men.
2. The church is God's missionary agent. In the totality of its life the church must demonstrate to the world and fellow Christians what it means to live in total commitment and obedience to its Lord and be the herald of the gospel in both word and deed.
3. The Bible is the norm for the church in the conduct of its missionary life and work.
 - a. The Bible provides the message we preach.
 - b. The Bible provides the principles and directions by which we work.
 - c. Although the Bible does not provide a detailed polity for mission, the forms of organization the church adopts for its work as well as the methodologies it employs must be in accord with the genius of the gospel.
4. The church must carry on its mission with reference to other churches and what they are doing.

- a. It must give full recognition to the national church as an expression of the church of Christ.
 - b. It must consult with such churches at all stages of its mission: the initiation, planning and execution, as well as the expansion or retrenchment of the mission.
 - c. Service to and with other churches is a necessary dimension of its work.
5. The church and its agencies must avoid adopting a competitive stance toward non-ecclesiastical organizations whose expertise, services and programs meet biblical principles and are valuable adjuncts to the church's specific mission.
- B. The Christian Reformed Church must seek to communally fulfill the mission of God. By the nature of the case it must carry out this operation through representative organs consisting of synodically appointed committees and boards.**
1. The Christian Reformed Church has one mission as mandated by its Lord, and its agencies represent the church and work toward one goal.
 2. Each agency represents the Christian Reformed Church and is a concrete expression of the members of the Christian Reformed Church in mission and of the unified intent of the church.
 3. Because each agency represents the church and works toward the one goal, it is neither an end in itself nor is it an exclusive preserve.
 4. However, in carrying out its assigned task, each agency must be allowed maximum latitude of action within the scope of its mandate.
- C. Synod, representing the Christian Reformed churches, is responsible for the joint mission efforts of the churches and does the work that is beyond the scope and resources of the local churches (Church Order, Arts. 28, 33a and 76).**
1. The primary responsibility for the integration and interrelationships of synodical agencies rests with the synod.
 - a. Specific and well-defined mandates must be given each committee (Church Order, Art. 33a).
 - b. Synod has already mandated the Synodical Interim Committee to establish and maintain such coordination and cooperation.
 2. The committees appointed and mandated by synod are directly responsible to synod or its appointed agent (Church Order, Art. 33a).
 3. Each agency on its part must responsibly work in harmony and cooperation, not in competition, with other agencies of the church.
 - a. Adequate communication between agencies is essential, especially when more than one agency is at work in a specific area.
 - b. In areas where more than one agency is operative, great care should be exercised in seeing to the compatibility of the workers of each agency with each other. Consultation and cooperation in recruitment, training and appointment are essential to this end.
 - c. Responsible stewardship requires that care be exercised in interagency relationships in keeping and maintaining a proper

perspective and balance with respect to the church's priorities and ability to support various kinds of work.

d. Agency personnel should possess the required gifts for their work and should be given adequate training in mission principles and practice. Interagency cooperation is essential to provide basic, uniform orientation to a field and culture. Each missionary in the wholeness of his or her life represents the whole Christ in all his offices as well as his church.

4. The communal acceptance of and commitment to God's mission and, therefore, the mission of the church is expressed in the united support of the mission. The denominational quota is a praiseworthy and beautiful communal expression of our communal identity with that task. At the same time this allows for and encourages each member and each church to express his/its identity according to his/its own nature, gifts and situation.

Part Three

SPECIFIC APPLICATION TO DENOMINATIONAL MISSION AGENCIES

The above implications and conclusions are based upon and derived from the statement of mission principles. In making these concrete and applicable to the interrelationships of our various mission agencies the committee had several objectives in mind.

We wished to remain true to the biblical data with respect to the nature of the mission of God and the church as well as the goal of mission.

We have sought to impress upon the church by means of our report and recommendations a sense of urgency respecting coordination and cooperation in the one mission. The structures which were developed in previous generations and circumstances were created to fill specific needs in the context of that time and age. The basic principles underlying the church polity which created these structures have not changed. But we are living in a new day and under circumstances our forefathers could not have predicted. We must build upon their work with care. Additionally, the outreach of the church has expanded to become a worldwide mission with varied facets. This, too, requires that we take serious account of how that work is organized.

However, in today's world with almost instantaneous communication no nation or people, no church or committee can realistically be an island by itself. Interchurch and international relationships are exceedingly complex and often bewildering. At the same time the exciting and encouraging possibilities we see everywhere to carry out our mission must goad us to be the best possible stewards of God's gifts and to reap in his harvest. The New Testament makes it abundantly clear that we are living in the time of harvest and reaping. The harvest is not just some vague, nebulous, future hope. It is a present reality. It is worth our while to do all we can to realize the greatest possible measure of success in God's harvest fields.

We make the following recommendations with respect to committee structures and interrelationships against the background of what was at

times a depressing sense of concern that our agencies have not always worked together as harmoniously and efficiently as they could have and should have. In order for our recommendations to become reality cooperation as members of one body with one goal under one Lord is an indispensable condition.

A. General recommendations with reference to all agencies.

1. All agencies should coordinate their present activities and projected new areas of involvement before initiating new programs.
 - a. The decision of one agency to initiate, expand or retrench often critically affects the program of another agency.
 - b. Such coordination must include the setting of priorities for our various denominational efforts and in this way facilitate cooperation and coordination.
2. If cooperation on the level of the fields is to be a reality, it is crucial that there be integration and cooperation on the agency (administrative) level. One way in which this can be expedited would be for each board or agency, besides meeting and consulting together periodically, to share their minutes and reports with each other.
3. When new areas of endeavor are proposed which conceivably would involve more than one agency, there should be cooperative exploration on the inter-board level so that priorities as well as levels of involvement and clear administrative lines are mutually agreed upon between the cooperating agencies.
4. The Christian Reformed Church cannot responsibly and efficiently carry on its mission only on the basis of annual reports to synod by each agency. Establishment of goals in long range coordinated planning must be implemented. Without this no united and comprehensive carrying out of the church's mission is possible.
5. The synodically appointed agencies must cooperatively work together to present the unified, big picture to the churches and synod. This will never be realized unless some mechanism is provided to bring about and accomplish such united action.
6. To do this it is essential that all agencies cooperate with the synodically designated coordinating agency (the Synodical Interim Committee).
7. No single methodology or strategy is applicable to all situations and circumstances. The church and its agencies must adhere to those methodologies which are consistent with the genius of the gospel.
8. The church of Christ is one and missionaries represent Christ and his church. It is their responsibility and privilege to identify in every possible way with the church in the area in which they work.
9. The church must allocate its resources in a responsible way. Since the resources of a single denomination are limited, great care must be exercised in keeping a proper balance between the various areas of work and ministry engaged in by the church.
10. There must be coordinated fund raising. Agencies must not engage in undue competitive fund raising.

11. All agencies must cooperate in a unified field council which is united in purpose and planning that they may achieve their synodically approved goals.

B. Regarding the Synodical Interim Committee (SIC)

Our study of the committee structures of our mission agencies provided convincing evidence of the need for some agency of synod to coordinate the work of synodical agencies. Various approaches could be taken. The Reformed Church in America, with whose representative we consulted, has established a General Program Council which does this for its General Synod. Our observations were distinctly positive toward such an arrangement by which synodical agencies meet and plan together in order to present a comprehensive, coordinated program to the church.

The synod of our church has given this function to our Synodical Interim Committee to serve as the church's coordinating agency. The Synod of 1976 decided that:

The Synodical Interim Committee shall be responsible for promoting the planning, coordinating, and the setting of priorities of programs by each of the synodical agencies and by all of them together, in keeping with synodical guidelines and shall serve synod with periodic analysis and overall review of programs and resources of the denomination after consultation with the agencies (Acts of Synod 1976, p. 50).

In addition, synod gave specific directives to other synodical agencies with respect to their relationships to each other and the Synodical Interim Committee. Our study gave convincing evidence of the wisdom and pressing need for this.

Specifically, *we recommend* that the Synodical Interim Committee continue to exercise leadership in assisting the church and its agencies to set and maintain their priorities, to do meaningful planning, and to accomplish responsible execution of mandates. We completely endorse synod's assignment to the Synodical Interim Committee, which included the following:

"5. That with respect to program planning, coordination, and the setting of priorities by the synodical agencies, synod decide:

"a. To instruct SIC to formulate, in consultation with each of the agencies, a set of guidelines to be used by each agency for analyzing its own mandate and programs.

Grounds:

- 1) A common set of guidelines is necessary for pinpointing areas of overlapping and inefficiency.
- 2) The guidelines have to reflect the individuality and specific function of each agency.
- 3) SIC is the logical instrument to formulate such guidelines.

"b. To instruct each of the synodical agencies

- 1) to engage in a thorough analysis of its mandate, programs, finances, and office operations, in keeping with the formulated guidelines and according to a mutually agreed upon schedule;

- 2) to keep SIC regularly and fully informed on the progress of this analysis;
- 3) to engage, upon the completion of the analysis, in a joint evaluation of it with SIC; and
- 4) to keep SIC regularly and fully informed on both the need for and progress in program coordination with other agencies, and to seek SIC's services whenever needed.

Grounds:

- (a) There is a continuing need for coordinating the work of the synodical agencies.
- (b) The agencies themselves have the fundamental responsibility for such coordination.
- (c) The required analysis can be carried out most efficiently by each of the agencies, since each is best acquainted with its own mandate and detailed programs.
- (d) SIC can promote coordination only when it is kept fully informed and is regularly consulted.

"c. To instruct its agencies and SIC to address themselves to long-range planning and the setting of priorities by each of the agencies and by all of them together, following the general pattern adopted for program coordination.

Grounds:

- 1) The denomination through synod should from time to time reflect on its priorities and examine its existing programs.
- 2) Planning enables the denomination to develop programs for carrying out its many-sided task in a responsible and opportune way."

(Acts of Synod 1976, p. 51)

The specific recommendations which follow with respect to other agencies are made with the above decisions of synod in mind.

C. Regarding the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee

Our committee was impressed with the potential and design of the CRWRC as a means by which the church expresses the will of God for the world, evidences the love of Christ and demonstrates the blessings the gospel brings. We believe it would be tragic and disobedient if in any way the integrity of the diaconal work were compromised. The task of the deacons is ministry through service, but this does not exclude a strong, clear, prophetic word. The Scripture clearly illustrates how some of the "Seven" of Acts 6 served as evangelists. Our Form for Ordination of Deacons states that "the work of deacons consists . . . in the relief of the distressed both with kindly deeds and words of consolation and cheer from Scripture." However, the diaconal ministry of the church as it comes to expression through CRWRC relates the diaconal office to more than one mission agency of the church. It is necessary to assist the CRWRC in bringing this office to its fullest possible expression. This requires that it be permitted a large measure of flexibility and immediacy of operation. Specifically, *we recommend:*

1. That greater effort be made to relate this ministry to the entire ministry of the church.

2. That CRWRC concentrate upon working in closer consultation, planning and correlation with other agencies, especially when non-emergency programs are contemplated.
3. The work of CRWRC must be compatible with the mission of the church. Doing good deeds may not become an end in itself but must serve the progress of the gospel.
4. The CRWRC constitution should be reviewed and revised to make provision in the CRWRC mandate for areas of ministry not presently and specifically provided for, and to delineate more clearly the inter-relationships that must apply in regard to other agencies. At present these matters are inadequately provided for.
5. The CRWRC must remain sensitive to the duty to work in close cooperation with national governments and churches, as well as with our own church agencies.

D. Regarding the Christian Reformed Board of World Missions

In years past the CRBWM was frequently the only expression of the Christian Reformed Church's presence beyond our continental boundaries. That situation no longer obtains since other agencies (e.g., Back to God Hour, CRWRC) also have a large measure of involvement in other lands and cooperate with other churches. It is imperative that all agencies integrate their programs to accomplish the most effective ministry possible. Specifically, *we recommend*:

1. That the provisions in the Mission Order of the CRBWM for field councils be understood as the basic structure for realizing mutual cooperation on fields where more than one agency is involved. In most cases we believe that the Mission Order as adopted and amended by the Synod of 1976 provides an adequate mechanism for such inter-relationships. Where this cannot be done through a single field council structure, the agencies involved must create the necessary method of cooperation and integration.
2. Minutes and reports of field councils should be sent to each agency involved in a specific cooperative ministry. Individual workers remain under the jurisdiction of their specific boards.
3. The CRBWM is capable of and ought to be utilized for providing the basic orientation for work in areas of cooperative effort.
4. The CRBWM has primary responsibility for insuring effective liaison with national churches.

E. Regarding the Back to God Hour

The potential that lies at the door of the church for witness and advance by way of mass communication is almost staggering. There is no limit to what can be done, given the necessary funds. Great care and responsibility must be exercised in achieving and maintaining a proper balance between this ministry and other areas of the church's ministry. In a number of instances we observed and were made aware of the fact that the various agencies and the BTGH do not have an adequate channel for the correlation of their activities. The willingness and readiness to serve each other is present, but little initiative is shown to accomplish this. As a result the BTGH is not well integrated into the whole ministry of the church in mission. Specifically, *we recommend*:

1. The BTGH is to be commended for and should be encouraged to maintain its sensitiveness to and consciousness of the need to speak in the context of each culture and for its use of nationals in its programming.
2. The BTGH should consult with other agencies before initiating any outreach into a new area to determine how this may benefit the total witness of the church and how it can be utilized in that mission.
3. This consultation must take place by continuing evaluation of existing programs.
4. The BTGH must consciously seek ways to maximize the results of its ministry by developing ways by which responses, etc., will be responsibly attended to and followed up.

F. Regarding the Christian Reformed Board of Home Missions

The CRBHM has demonstrated a keen awareness of its mandate to assist the churches in their evangelism and witness, providing assistance and direction in a number of ways. The board has also shown an awareness to what the churches must do in common and is alert to these opportunities. Specifically, *we recommend:*

1. That the CRBHM seek out ways to utilize the benefits and contributions of other agencies, e.g., Back to God Hour, CRWRC, Publications Committee, thus preventing unnecessary duplication and multiplying the benefits of other agencies' ministries. Conversely, there is need for other agencies (BTGH and CRWRC) to take into account and consult more closely with the CRBHM.
2. That the CRBHM cooperate closely with the Board of Publications in the production and distribution of materials so that these materials may have wider use throughout the churches. The CRBHM has conducted a number of important and valuable studies. They should be more widely disseminated among the churches.

G. Regarding the Chaplain Committee

The Chaplain Committee was once a part of Home Missions. During World War II there was a pressing need for chaplains and the number of chaplains increased rapidly. As a result a separate committee was organized, but the child outgrew the parent. At the present time it appears that while there is a decreasing need for military chaplains, opportunities for other forms of chaplaincy are both increasing and urgent: hospital, campus, industrial, counseling, etc. The Chaplain Committee is to be commended for its vision in seeing the many areas in which the church can minister.

This development raises an important question, however. Should the Chaplain Committee once again become a part of home missions? The answer will depend to no small degree on what criteria are applied in defining the mandates of these respective agencies. If, as we believe, the work of the Chaplain Committee assignment is no longer limited merely to rendering services but becomes an evangelistic arm of the church, there is need to consider whether it should again become a part of the CRBHM. It could remain a specific sub-committee, members of which need not be classically delegated but synodically appointed, retaining also an executive secretary for this purpose. Whatever is done, care

must be exercised to preserve the specific focus of this ministry and to prevent duplication and overlapping of function by separate agencies.

Specifically, *we recommend:*

That synod clearly delineate the relationship of the Chaplain Committee to the CRBHM. The mandates of the Chaplain Committee and the CRBHM should be reviewed so that synod may decide whether there is need for some form of structural reorganization.

IV. SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS

A. That synod recognize the Rev. Robert Recker (chairman) and Dr. Richard De Ridder (secretary) as representatives of this study committee at synod and that they be given the privilege of meeting with the advisory committee of synod and the privilege to speak at synod when this report is under consideration.

B. That synod adopt the Statement of Mission Principles as guidelines for the church and its agencies in carrying out the mandate the church has received from its Lord.

Grounds:

1. This Statement of Principles reflects the application of scriptural data to the contemporary situation of Christ's church.

2. Continued reflection upon and implementation of these Principles are the on-going responsibility of the church in mission.

C. With respect to coordination and cooperation of synodical agencies:

1. That synod mandate the Synodical Interim Committee (SIC) to present a plan to the Synod of 1979 by which the present Interagency Advisory Council is restructured in such a way that with the SIC it becomes an Interagency Council for Coordination and Planning and in this way be made a positive, functioning entity for planning, coordination of activities and resolving of difficulties between the agencies. This plan shall define interagency relationships in such a way that it will:

a. Provide a forum for mutual counsel and advice between the agencies.

b. Determine priorities in the total program of the church.

c. Coordinate the programs of the agencies.

d. Assist in and implement long-range interagency planning.

e. Provide a forum in which the implications of new outreach by the agencies can be reviewed in relation to the effect and implications this may have on the work of other agencies.

f. Provide a method by which differences between agencies can be adjudicated and resolved.

g. Serve as a corrective to undue competition between agencies.

h. Provide the Christian Reformed Church a total picture of the work of the church.

Grounds:

a. Such an Interagency Council for Coordination and Planning will maintain the integrity of the mandate and task of each of the agencies while providing for their effective cooperation and coordination.

- b. This will maintain a proper balance between agencies since each agency will have the required freedom to work within its mandate, yet always with a view to the whole.
- c. This places the responsibility on the agencies to work together in coordinating their programs while maintaining the necessary latitude required for the discharge of their mandate.
- d. This is in accordance with the present synodical mandate to the SIC.
- e. This will provide the synod the guidance it needs for making its decisions regarding the work and programs of the church.
- f. This is in harmony with the Church Order, Article 33, which provides that
1. The assemblies may delegate to committees the execution of their decisions or the preparation of reports for future consideration. They shall give every committee a well-defined mandate, and shall require of them regular and complete reports of their work.
 2. . . . synod shall appoint a synodical interim committee, to act for (it) in matters which cannot wait action by the (synod itself). Such (a) committee shall be given (a) well-defined mandate and shall submit (its) actions to the next meeting of the (synod) for approval.
 2. That synod specify that this plan shall be developed by the SIC and the agencies in partnership and that this plan shall take account of the principles, implications and specific applications in this report.
- Grounds:*
- a. This provides for the full representation of each agency in the development of this plan.
 - b. This provides for a specific agency (SIC) as the body responsible for initiating and maintaining the cooperation needed for producing such a plan.
 3. That synod instruct the agencies to cooperate fully with the SIC in the development of the plan of coordination.
 4. That the SIC present a progress report to the Synod of 1978.
- D. That synod declare that the committee has completed its assignment.

Committee on Mission Principles

Robert Recker, chairman
 Richard R. De Ridder, secretary
 Harold Bruxvoort
 John Cook
 Jacob Heerema
 Arthur Peelen
 Herman Vande Riet
 David Vander Ploeg
 Douglas R. Vander Wall
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REPORT 43

JOINT COMMISSION RCA/CRC FOR STUDY OF
THEOLOGY OF EVANGELISM

(Art. 32)

I. BACKGROUND

The appointment of a Joint Commission of the Reformed Church in America and the Christian Reformed Church to study the theology of evangelism originated from an address to the 1973 Synod of the Christian Reformed Church by Dr. Herman Ridder, representative of the RCA to the synod that year. Dr. Ridder extended a number of invitations to the CRC on behalf of the RCA, one of which was that our two denominations appoint a joint commission whose mandate would be the study of the theology of evangelism. Five representatives were subsequently appointed to represent each church on such a joint commission.

This joint commission submitted its report to the respective synods of the churches in 1975 in the form of an Evangelism Manifesto. This manifesto was referred to the churches and denominational boards and agencies for study and reflection. The joint commission was also re-appointed for an additional two years in order to receive and review responses to the manifesto and to prepare a report defining the practical implications of this manifesto for the evangelistic outreach of the churches.

II. SUBSEQUENT DEVELOPMENTS

Approximately one hundred responses were received from individuals, churches, boards and agencies of both denominations. These responses were helpful to the commission even though they represented a wide range of emphases and suggestions. One of the frequent responses called for the addition of Scripture references to the manifesto, a proposal to which our commission gave immediate endorsement. The revised and final copy of the manifesto which follows in a later part of this report includes these scriptural references. We believe that the addition of this material demonstrates the basic biblical grounding of the manifesto and can serve the purpose of using the manifesto for a study of evangelism.

The 1976 Synod of the Christian Reformed Church did not give the requested authorization to the joint commission to prepare and distribute a study guide based on the manifesto (whereas the General Synod of the RCA did give this authorization). However, the RCA published the manifesto in an attractive pamphlet format which has had wide distribution and elicited much favorable comment both within and outside our respective communions. The joint commission appointed Dr. William Brownson and Dr. Carl Kromminga to prepare a series of five articles based on the manifesto to appear biweekly and simultaneously in the *Church Herald* and *The Banner*. We thank the editors of our church papers for their splendid cooperation in making possible the publication of this material. Many appreciative, unsolicited commendations have

been received to these articles. The commission is happy to make these articles available to a publisher or organization interested in reprinting them with questions added for use as a study booklet. The Revs. Wesley Smedes and Donald Jansma have been appointed to make arrangements with those who may be interested in using the manifesto and the articles in this way.

III. THE MANIFESTO

We submit the following draft of the Evangelism Manifesto with accompanying Scripture references to our synods and churches:

AN EVANGELISM MANIFESTO

As Christians in the Reformed tradition, holding to the Scriptures as the Word of God, we joyfully confess our faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord and our unity with all Christians in the world mission of his church. We share the newly expressed concern of believers everywhere to understand the nature of evangelism and its place in our total task. We deplore our own tendencies in thought and action to separate gospel proclamation from compassionate ministry. We believe that both are rightly understood only in the light of the Bible's pervasive theme—the kingdom of God.

THE PROCLAMATION OF THE KINGDOM

We affirm that to evangelize is to proclaim the good news of God's reign. The sense of public proclamation is always dominant in the biblical use of the term. Evangelists are "bringers of the gospel." The direct object of the verb "to evangelize" is rarely the hearers or recipients of the message. That is, the apostles are not usually said to "evangelize" people. They "evangelize" a word, a content, *to* people (Acts 8:4; 15:35; Rom. 1:15). What they "evangelize" is variously described as "the gospel" (Rom. 1:15), "the Word of the Lord" (I Peter 1:25), "the faith" (Rom. 10:8; Gal. 1:23), "Jesus" (Acts 5:42; 17:18), "Christ" (Phil. 1:18), or, comprehensively, "the kingdom of God" (Acts 8:12; 20:25; 28:23, 31).

The proclamation is "good news" (I Peter 1:25). The note of gladness is an essential part of it. To evangelize is to bring "good tidings of great joy" (Isa. 52:7, 8; Luke 2:10) at which believing hearers "break forth into singing" (Isa. 54:1; 55:12; Acts 2:41-46; 8:5-8, 35, 39; 16:30-34). The "kingdom of God is like a treasure . . ." (Matt. 13:44).

In both Testaments to "evangelize" is to proclaim a victory, to *herald* a new reign (Isa. 61:1; Luke 4:18, 19). At heart, it is to testify that "the kingdom of God has drawn near!" (Matt. 4:17; 10:7; Mark 1:14, 15).

This "kingdom," in biblical usage, refers not primarily to the divine sovereignty in a general sense, but to the active, saving reign of the triune God in history. The coming kingdom is not static but dynamic, not so much a concept as a ruling power. To proclaim "the kingdom of God has drawn near" is to herald those mighty events in which God's royal rule has invaded the earth in the coming of Jesus Christ and in

the power of the Holy Spirit. It is to bring the thrilling news of God's victory in the death and resurrection of his Son over all the powers of darkness that have enslaved mankind and made his good creation subject to bondage (Rom. 8:19-25; Col. 1:13, 14). It is to tell of what God has done to bring forgiveness to the guilty, help to the poor, release to the captives, sight to the blind, deliverance to the oppressed. It is to announce to the whole creation a divine reign of justice and peace (Luke 2:14; Acts 10:36; Eph. 2:17).

Together with this grand announcement, the proclamation of the kingdom brings a summons. Hearers are called to renounce all sin, each false lord, every rival sovereignty, and to submit through repentance and faith to God's saving reign in Christ (Mark 6:12; Acts 17:30; 26:20). The proclamation demands commitment to God's lordship and obedience to his will in the world (Matt. 7:21). Although the decisive victory over the forces of evil has been won, the conflict still rages (Eph. 6:11,12). Christ is risen; the Spirit has been poured out upon the church; the powers of the coming age are at work in the world, but the end is not yet. Hosts of darkness resist God's sovereignty; rampant evils oppose his will. To repent and believe is to side with God's purpose in this conflict —assured of ultimate victory, while contending God's righteousness in every sphere of life (I Cor. 15:54-57; Acts 26:16-18).

We affirm, accordingly, that all "evangelizing" in the New Testament sense of the term includes the joyous proclamation of God's saving rule, together with the call to repent and believe the gospel (Acts 20:21).

THE SIGNS OF THE KINGDOM

The proclamation of God's kingly rule brings with it the reality proclaimed. "Evangelizing" is never seen in the New Testament as a merely human activity or as a word which stands alone. "The kingdom of God does not consist in talk, but in power" (I Cor. 4:20). The gospel of the kingdom comes "not only in word, but also in power, and in the Holy Spirit, and with full conviction" (I Thess. 1:5). In our Lord's ministry, evangelizing always occurs in connection with other signs that the kingdom has drawn near. "Preaching good news to the poor," for example, is closely linked with "setting at liberty those who are oppressed." As evidence that the kingdom of God has come in his ministry Jesus gives the following: "the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up and the poor have good news preached to them" (Matt. 11:5; Luke 4:18, 19). The acts of healing and restoration are clearly distinguished from "evangelizing," yet they are not isolated from it. In like manner the life of the church itself, as a loving, serving community, bears witness to the proclaimed kingdom. Her works of mercy and power are among the signs of its presence (Acts 1:8).

We affirm, then, that all evangelizing in the New Testament sense of the term is accompanied by the signs of God's kingdom among his people and springs from their active concern for the full deliverance and restoration of all to whom the gospel is addressed. Only in this way is the church's message an authentic heralding of God's saving rule. The

caring ministry of the Christian fellowship and her redemptive action in the world form the indispensable context for faithful proclamation. We must show ourselves "ready to share not only the gospel of God but also ourselves . . ." (I Thess. 2:8).

THE IMPERATIVE OF THE KINGDOM

Christ sends his church to make disciples of all nations (Matt. 28:19, 20). The gospel of the kingdom brings the only hope of salvation for lost mankind (Acts 4:12). All stand under the judgment of which it warns; all need the forgiveness and new life it offers; all are summoned to the commitment it demands (John 3:16-21).

The same good news preached to the world must be constantly heard afresh in the church, for the call to repent and believe, to submit to God's gracious reign, is a call to growth as well as to conversion. The church lives by the gospel it proclaims (II Cor. 5:15).

The Spirit calls God's people to live in genuine community and to pursue love and justice in the world (I John 1:3, 4; I John 3:16-18; I Tim. 6:17-19; Titus 2:11-14). Thus the church by its life and work points to the ruling power of the risen Lord.

We affirm, therefore, our responsibility to proclaim, to manifest and to serve the kingdom of God. We confess our dependence on the Holy Spirit for power to fulfill our calling until Christ comes in glory. In gratitude for the grace given us, and in confidence that our labor is not in vain, we commit ourselves anew to this mission, praying as we go, "Thy kingdom come!" (Matt. 6:10).

* * * * *

IV. IMPLICATIONS

The commission calls the attention of the churches to the resources available to them in working out in their specific circumstances the implications of the manifesto. We believe that the manifesto with the accompanying Scripture references is an invaluable tool to come to an understanding of the basic kingdom perspective that ought to mark the church in mission. The Brownson-Kromminga articles elaborate upon the contents of each of the sections of the manifesto and can easily be adapted for use in a group study on evangelism.

A. We are also concerned that our churches do actually evaluate their evangelism programs in the light of the manifesto. Our commission can only suggest a few areas on which the manifesto touches such as the following:

1. *Preaching.* Does our preaching take account of the full kingdom proclamation and have a kingdom perspective? Are the congregations also evangelized as described in the New Testament? Does the church address in a meaningful, relevant way the issues raised in our day? Does our preaching reflect a keen awareness of the need to be alert to what is happening in the world around us? In our preaching and worship do we project the joy and peace that is consistent with the character of the gospel as "good news"?

2. *Congregational life.* Is the life of our congregations and Christian communities a model of kingdom life? In how far are we actively par-

icipating in presenting to our society what it means to be a kingdom community? Do we know how to live as kingdom citizens?

3. *Community outreach.* What are our goals in mission? Why are we engaged in mission? Where are our priorities? How have we determined them? Do we present by our outreach what the liberation Christ brings means for us and others? Does the gospel message take on "flesh" in our communities?

4. *Cooperation.* What perspectives govern our relationships with other Christians, churches and organizations? Have we allowed barriers to separate us from other Christians? Do we join hands together to accomplish what needs to be done and what can best be done jointly instead of individually and competitively?

5. *Community Involvement.* Are we as kingdom citizens alert to the need to be prophets to our society? Do we encourage and support our fellow Christians to be involved in our communities in order to demonstrate the kingdom perspective?

These are but a few suggestions by which we can measure ourselves, not in terms of a manifesto but in the light of what Scripture requires of us and what is our stewardship as God's children.

B. We also direct the attention of our churches to specific areas to which attention could profitably be given both on the local and the interdenominational levels.

1. *Joint RCA/CRC endeavors already underway.* We note with gratitude that in a number of ways our churches are already fruitfully engaged in cooperative endeavors. A coordinated evangelistic program is being carried on in the inner city of Detroit. On the classis level campus ministries are mutually supported in Muskegon, Michigan, and at Grand Valley State Colleges in Allendale, Michigan, for examples. For many years our churches have cooperated in the support of institutions such as Bethesda, Pine Rest, Bethany Christian Home, etc., all of which are manifestations of the kingdom and fruits of our mutual Reformed vision.

2. *Possible areas where we might work together in evangelism.* The commission makes the following suggestions to our churches, assemblies and agencies.

a. *Hispanic work.* As far as cross-cultural evangelism is concerned, the commission felt that the Hispanic and Jewish populations in America provide important target communities for Reformed evangelism. As regards Hispanic work, the goal of a joint evangelistic effort among Hispanic people would be to form a Hispanic Reformed Church in America, planted and supported by both our denominations but free to choose an organizational structure independent of both and expressing the basic concepts of the Reformed heritage in terms of the Hispanic language and culture.

b. *Jewish Evangelism.* We suggest that the General Program Council of the RCA and the Board of Home Missions of the CRC discuss ways of developing new approaches to Jewish evangelism, especially in the light of recent religious developments among the Jewish people and their importance in current world history.

c. *Overseas Work.* We suggest that the General Program Council of the RCA and the CR Board for World Missions discuss ways of assisting each other overseas, especially in the sharing of personnel. The Middle East and South America are mentioned in this connection.

C. We also recommend that our respective synods encourage the sharing of information and studies between various agencies of our denominations. Cross-fertilization of ideas, the enlargement of each other's vision, sharing the benefits of special studies, etc., are some of the dividends which can be realized from such mutual sharing of information and resources. An example of this from recent experiences is found in the church growth studies carried on by both denominations.

The commission expresses its sincere thanks for the privilege of working and studying together. It is gratified with the reception our efforts have been accorded thus far. This joint report and recommendations are being sent to the synods of our respective churches with the prayer that what we have done may bear much fruit to God's glory.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

A. That synod recognize Dr. Richard S. Wierenga (co-chairman) and Dr. Richard De Ridder (secretary) as representatives of the joint commission at synod and that they be given the privilege of meeting with the advisory committee of synod and the privilege to speak at synod when this report is under consideration.

B. That synod accept the Evangelism Manifesto as a guideline for further study and action by the churches, classes and denominational agencies.

C. That synod take note of the recommendations under section IV above and refer these to the appropriate agencies and to the churches for implementation wherever and whenever circumstances permit.

D. That synod declare that the joint commission has completed its assignment and is now discharged.

For the Reformed Church in America:

Edwin G. Mulder, co-chairman
William C. Brownson, Jr.
Paul R. Fries
Donald Jansma
Richard Rhem

For the Christian Reformed Church:

Richard S. Wierenga, co-chairman
Richard R. De Ridder, secretary
Roger S. Greenway
Carl G. Kromminga
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REPORT 44
CHURCH ORDER ARTICLE 13a
 (Art. 46)

I. MANDATE

Synod 1976 issued the following mandate to this committee:

“That synod appoint a committee to study Church Order Article 13a in the light of the guidelines for understanding the nature of ecclesiastical office and ordination (Acts of Synod 1973), with a view to providing specific guidance to classes and synodical deputies in the application of Article 13a to specific tasks and situations.

“That synod mandate this committee to answer specifically questions such as:

- a. What does the definition of ordination (guideline 9) mean in relation to Article 13a?
- b. What specific areas or tasks are “strategic to the church’s total ministry” (guideline 9)?
- c. What distinction, if any, exists between a call to “ordinary ministerial tasks” (Article 11a) and a call to “extraordinary ministerial tasks” (Article 13a)?
- d. What does it mean that a task is “spiritual in character and directly related to the ministerial calling”?
- e. Should provisions be made for those who for legitimate reasons wish to leave the ministry of the Word temporarily for other occupations? Could they return to the ministry of the Word? If so, how? What about pension benefits?
- f. What is the nature and extent of the “ministerial calling” (the sustained call to the ministry of the Word and sacraments) in the distinction from the calling to each of the other ecclesiastical offices?” (See Acts of Synod 1976, Article 73, pp. 81-83.)

II. HISTORY AND OBSERVATIONS

The occasion for synod addressing this matter in 1976 was a communication from three synodical deputies who informed synod that “they could not agree in their advice to Classis Alberta North regarding the ministerial status of Dr. Sidney DeWaal, newly appointed Dean of King’s College” in Edmonton, Alberta (a position that Dr. DeWaal has since declined).

At the same time the deputies expressed their common concern regarding the difficulty of interpreting and applying Article 13a of the Church Order to this and a variety of other situations. They suggested that “either a much broader definition of the office of the minister of the Word is needed (one that can incorporate all the variations thus far introduced under Article 13) or else we should stick with the definition to which we believe the Church Order adheres” in Article 11 of the Church Order.

The Summary of Statistics in the *1976 Yearbook of the Christian Reformed Church* (p. 91) indicates that Article 13a is being applied in an increasing number of situations. Of 915 active ministers of the Word in 1976, 107 or 12% are serving in "extra-ordinary" positions. Of concern is the apparent lack of agreement by classes and synodical deputies as to the proper interpretation and application of Article 13a to specific situations. (We suspect, however, that the most serious questioning pertains to a very small number of such positions now approved under Article 13a).

Also of significant import to this entire discussion are the "Guidelines for Understanding the Nature of Ecclesiastical Office and Ordination" adopted by the 1973 Synod—many implications of which are far-reaching and heretofore little explored and even less applied.

In addressing its mandate and the various issues raised by the mandate, your committee sought the insight and advice of twenty potentially interested ministers throughout the denomination. We express our thanks to those thirteen who did respond, many of them with especially helpful observations and insights. In the light of these responses and our own deliberations, two facts became increasingly clear:

1. *The Church Order regulations on this matter were put together in "patchwork" fashion.* Article 11 of the Church Order describes the minister of the Word in a manner that does not anticipate service outside a local congregation. Article 12 then declares that this is applicable to a minister in a mission setting. Subsequently, Article 13a makes provision for "extra-ordinary" tasks outside the local congregation—a provision that formally contradicts (both in duties and in setting) the inclusive description of a minister of the Word in Article 11. Article 13b (adopted in 1976) then adds to this shaky pyramid by introducing the phrase "ordinary ministerial tasks"—building on the already unfortunate wording of "extraordinary" in Article 13a.

2. *The Church Order fails to define the ministry of the Word, particularly in the light of the varied ministerial vocations in the Christian Reformed Church today.* As was indicated before, Article 11 of the Church Order is *not* a definition of the ministry of the Word. At best it is simply a description of the tasks of one ministerial vocation (albeit the most common)—a pastor of a local congregation.

It is our considered opinion that the essential nature and responsibility of the ministry of the Word as an ecclesiastical office (as it is given expression in a variety of settings) should be clearly defined by the Church Order, and furthermore that all approved ministerial vocations must flow from and find focus within the scope of that definition.

III. REVISION OF ARTICLES 11-13

It is in the light of the above considerations that this committee recommends the revision of Articles 11-13 of the Church Order, as follows:

Article 11

The purpose of the ministry of the Word is to gather in and build up the members of the church of Jesus Christ. The primary task of a minister of the Word is to explain and apply the Word of God.

Article 12

a. A minister of the Word serving as pastor of a congregation shall preach the Word, administer the sacraments, conduct public worship services, catechize the youth, and train members for Christian service. He, with the elders, shall supervise the congregation and his fellow office-bearers, exercise admonition and discipline, and see to it that everything is done decently and in order. He, with the elders, shall exercise pastoral care over the congregation, and engage in and promote the work of evangelism.

b. A minister of the Word also may serve the church in other ministerial vocations such as Bible teaching, counseling and pastoral care, evangelism and missions, training and enabling other ministers of the Word, and other work which relates directly to the purpose and primary task of a minister of the Word.

Article 13

a. A minister of the Word shall be supervised in doctrine, life and duties by the calling church.

b. A minister of the Word may enter another ministerial vocation only after the calling church has demonstrated to the satisfaction of classis, with the concurring advice of the synodical deputies, that said vocation is consistent with the purpose and primary task of a minister of the Word. He shall be supervised in his duties by the calling church in cooperation with other congregations, agencies or institutions involved.

c. A minister of the Word may be loaned temporarily by his calling church to serve as pastor of a congregation outside of the Christian Reformed Church, but only with the approval of classis, the concurring advice of the synodical deputies, and in accordance with synodical regulations. Although his duties may be regulated in cooperation with the other congregation, the supervision of his doctrine and life rests with the calling church.

IV. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Although the several questions posed by the mandate to this committee are interrelated, we will attempt specific response to each of the questions, in the order presented. The answers also serve to reflect and substantiate the proposed revisions of Articles 11-13 of the Church Order above.

A. What does the definition of ordination (Guideline 9) mean in relation to Article 13a?

The Synod of 1973 made several statements that should be kept before us in regard to ordination and the range of ministerial vocations:

“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” (Guideline 3).

“From the beginning these particular ministries were functional in character . . . to enable the church to carry out Christ’s work in the world most effectively” (Guideline 4).

“‘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 . . ." (Guideline 9).

We remind ourselves that these statements are made regarding *all* offices in the church, and not just the office of the ministry of the Word. Furthermore, these statements provide the basis for a broader range of particular ministries within the familiar offices (minister, elder and deacon), and also for the possibility of additional offices. The church makes such judgments in the light of what is considered to be "most effective" (Guideline 4) and "strategic for the accomplishment of the church's total ministry" (Guideline 9).

But what about the great variety of ministerial vocations that now fall within the office of the ministry of the Word by way of Article 13a? What is the rationale for including them in the *ministerial* office (and not in the office of elder or deacon for example)? If the offices of the church are "functional in character" (Guideline 4), what similar function characterizes the many and varied ministerial vocations?

Contrary to the suggestions of some, chaplains do not justify ministerial credentials on the basis of being the healing arm of the church, for that is primarily the function of the office of deacon. Nor do administrators justify their ministerial vocation by ruling in the name of God the King, for that is the common function of the office of elder. Nor do all ministers of the Word find their common denominator in Christian servanthood, for that must be the mark of *all* Christian service. The common denominator for all ministers of the Word is their ministering of *the Word*.

We propose that all ministers of the Word function within the definition of the ministry of the Word as stated in the recommended revision of Article 11:

"The purpose of the ministry of the Word is to gather in and build up the members of the church of Jesus Christ. The primary task of a minister of the Word is to explain and apply the Word of God." This purpose and primary task should govern and characterize the professional vocation and regular duties of *every* minister of the Word—within a local congregation or beyond it.

We also contend that a corps of theologically educated and professionally trained ministers of the Word performs an important function for the church—that of providing biblically informed and professionally competent leadership, both within the church and on her behalf to the world. This is not a matter of status and professionalism, but a matter of desired qualifications and strategic function.

A third consideration, which may well be the crux of the matter, is that the ministry of the Word is an *ecclesiastical* office. The ordination or setting apart for office is performed by the church. The purpose of the office is to gather and build up the church. And the explaining and applying of Scripture is the "official" task assigned to and required of the office by the church (also see Church Order Article 54a).

It follows, then, that every one who occupies the ecclesiastical office of the ministry of the Word must be *directly accountable to the church* as an organization (consistory, classis or synod) for his work. This includes

those ministers of the Word who are employed by church-related or even private Christian organizations. They retain official accountability to the church that calls them and gives them office.

On the other hand, those who are engaged in what are generally regarded as ministerial vocations, but who are not under the officially approved supervision of the church as an organization, should not be permitted to retain ecclesiastical office.

To summarize, the purpose and primary task of all ministers of the Word is to minister the Word. A common function for all ministers of the Word is to provide biblically informed and professionally competent leadership for the church. Because the ministry of the Word is an ecclesiastical office, all those who hold that office must be directly accountable to the church as an organization.

B. What specific areas or tasks are "strategic" to the church's total ministry (Guideline 9)?

In large part, this question is answered by the 1973 synodical statement:

"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 . . ." (Guideline 4).

With the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the church itself determines what are "strategic tasks." Theoretically, the church can choose to validate any number of "strategic tasks" that it judges to be essential to its total ministry and witness.

For a long time the Christian Reformed Church recognized the office of Professor of Theology, a vocation that is now included in the office of minister of the Word. As recently as 1976 the synod considered (but rejected) the naming of "layworkers in evangelism" as a distinct office in the church. In 1977, therefore, the Christian Reformed Church recognizes only three such "strategic tasks"—that of deacon, elder and minister.

At the same time, the Christian Reformed Church has seen fit to endorse a great deal of variety within this framework, particularly within the office of the ministry of the Word. The rationale for this diversification appears obvious: increasing ministerial vocations other than the pastorate are available to a growing number of theologically trained persons, and these vocations enable the church to fulfill her calling more effectively in and to the world. Your committee believes that this diversification and specialization within the ministerial office is valid and ought to be encouraged, along the lines proposed in Articles 11-13 of the Church Order.

C. What distinction, if any, exists between a call to "ordinary ministerial tasks" (Article 11a) and a call to "extraordinary ministerial tasks" (Article 13a)?

Please note first of all that your committee has abandoned the above terminology in favor of the term "ministerial vocations." This term is descriptive of the pastorate as well as the other vocations listed in the proposed Article 12b.

In the light of all that has been said thus far, we make only two simple and obvious distinctions between ministers of the Word who serve as pastors, and those who serve the church in other ministerial vocations.

The first is that of *the setting* for ministry. A pastor labors primarily within the context of the local congregation. A minister of the Word such as a chaplain or Bible teacher or administrator or theological professor labors primarily outside the context of the local congregation.

The second distinction is that of *the specific tasks*. While the pastor ordinarily will be a "generalist" with responsibility in the various areas and aspects of the life of the congregation (see proposed Article 12a), the minister serving in some other approved vocation usually will be a "specialist" in some aspect of the church's ministry to herself and the world. (See proposed Article 12b.)

At the same time, we reiterate that in all other aspects (purpose, primary task, supervision and approbation) the call to the office of the ministry of the Word is essentially the same. (Again refer to proposed Articles 11-13.)

D. What does it mean that a task is "spiritual in character and directly related to the ministerial calling?"

It was the suggestion of a number of those who wrote the committee, as well as the opinion of the committee itself, that the language of "spiritual in character and directly related to the ministerial calling" is jargon and should be abandoned. It gives credence to the false notion that some things are spiritual and others are not, and directly (if unintentionally) contradicts the Reformed view of the wholeness of life and the totality of the Lordship of Christ. As one minister wrote,

"It is exactly the clergy-laity distinction that lies at the basis of ordination as traditionally conceived, where clergy are involved in 'spiritual' work and laity are not. But do any of us really believe this anymore? Is not the radical distinction among mankind between those who are in Jesus Christ and those who are not; and that all those in Jesus Christ are thereby spiritual people? And are we not constantly calling Christ's spiritual people to be spiritual in the whole of their lives, including all of their labors in earning a living and in supporting the Lord's work? If a Christian is involved in some work that is not 'spiritual,' must we not help him to make of it a spiritual work or lead him in finding some kind of work that is spiritual? Haven't we been trying to get rid of that old distinction between 'kingdom work' and other kind of work? Does a Christian have business being in anything but kingdom work? Is there any other kind of call from the Lord than a sacred calling, and have we not, since Calvin, professed that all men have a calling (vocation) from the Lord? May we go on promoting the myth that one calling is more sacred and spiritual in character than another? Surely it is time for open repudiation of the clergy/laity distinction and the spiritual/secular distinction when we are speaking about Christians!"

Thus, our answer to the above question is: The statement does not say what we want it to say, and therefore should not be used.

Nevertheless, the apparent intent of the statement is to provide some identification for the office of the minister of the Word, and further to require that each approved ministerial position will be in fact a meaningful and appropriate expression of the essential nature (purpose and primary task) of the ministry of the Word. In our opinion, these concerns are met adequately through the reformulation of Articles 11-13 of the Church Order as proposed (see Section III of this report).

E. Should provisions be made for those who for legitimate reasons wish to leave the ministry of the Word temporarily for other occupations? Could they return to the ministry of the Word? If so, how? What about pension benefits?

The first two parts of the above question should be answered affirmatively, for two reasons. The first reason, which we shall explain further in response to the next question (F), is that we know of no biblical warrant for requiring that the ministry of the Word be "for life," whereas the offices of elder and deacon are not. A second reason is that there are numerous Christian occupations that can be well served by a person with theological training and ministerial experience, but that are not ecclesiastical in nature and are not directly related to the purpose and primary task of the ministry of the Word. Let us be clear about this matter! Just because a (former) minister of the Word is able to do a job does not automatically make that job either ecclesiastical or directly related to the purpose and primary task of the ministerial office.

As a matter of fact, in frequent instances we think it would be appropriate and even helpful if a minister of the Word could honorably and without prejudice set aside his ordination for a specific time (such as two years minimum, five years maximum) while he engaged in an occupation that did not satisfy the requirements of Articles 11-13 as proposed. Essentially such action is no different than in the case of elders and deacons who conclude a term of service on the consistory, only to be re-elected and installed at a later date. When the other assignment is completed, the (former) minister could then follow the appropriate steps for returning to a ministerial vocation.

As to how a minister can be released and make return to office, we suggest that it take place in keeping with the stipulations of Article 14 of the Church Order. The Article itself need not prejudice release from the ministerial office for a non-ministerial vocation. The limitation of Article 14 is that it does not make provision for the minister (once he has been released) to seek *return* to the office. We propose therefore that the synod also adopt the following addition to Article 14—

Article 14c

c. A former minister of the Word who was released from his office temporarily can be declared eligible for call upon approval of the classis from which he obtained his release, with the concurring advice of the synodical deputies. Upon acceptance of a call, he shall be re-ordained.

The question about pension benefits should not be difficult to answer. Pensions are for services rendered. If a man serves the church in the office of the minister of the Word for a specified number of years, he

should be eligible for a specified percentage of benefits. It also might be stipulated by synod that if a man were to obtain temporary release from the ministerial office with the expectation of returning to that office within a specified number of years, he could be permitted to remain as a member of the fund, so long as his continued membership is not at the expense of the denomination. Synod can instruct the Ministers' Pension Fund Committee to respond to such situations accordingly.

We add, almost parenthetically, that in obtaining a temporary release from the office of the ministry, more than likely the greatest confusion will be occasioned by the customary title of "Reverend" and Internal Revenue Service provisions for "ordained clergymen." We simply observe that the customary ministerial title has no biblical or ecclesiastical endorsement to begin with, and furthermore that Internal Revenue Service practices should not be a significant consideration in our ordering the life and ministry of the church.

F. What is the nature and extent of the "ministerial calling" (the sustained call to the ministry of the Word and sacraments) in distinction from the calling to each of the other ecclesiastical offices?

The direction of our response to this question already was suggested in the response above. We know of no biblical warrant for requiring that the ministry of the Word must be a sustained call (for life), whereas elders and deacons are called to serve in their respective offices for specified periods of time. Interestingly, the Church Order itself suggests that at least *by nature* a distinction is *not* to be made among the offices of the church:

"The offices instituted by Christ in his church are those of the minister of the Word, the elder, and the deacon. These offices differ from each other only in mandate and task, not in dignity and honor" (Article 2). The Church Order thereby emphatically disclaims any essential or qualitative difference among the offices.

What distinctions are made, therefore, are based primarily on practical considerations. As Dr. De Ridder of our seminary wrote to us on this matter:

"... the real issue has been solved for our church not in the nature of the office so much as in the things we expect from the man who holds the office. When we ask a man to devote his full time, even his life, to service for the church and in its name, we assume certain obligations to that person that are different from those which we assume when we ask a man to give part-time service in offices such as those of elder and deacon. Although it is possible that we could also create offices and functions for elders and deacons that would require the same commitment as the minister makes (e.g. deacon-at-large or others who serve as elders in functions such as church education and evangelism), these are the exception."

To conclude, the nature and extent of the several ecclesiastical offices is not a complicated issue so long as we remember that most stipulations governing the offices, either singly or as a group, are neither sacred nor biblically enjoined. To put it another way, the nature and extent of ecclesiastical office is what the church says it is.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

- A. That synod grant the privilege of the floor to the chairman and reporter of the study committee, the Revs. James R. Kok and Alfred E. Mulder.
- B. That synod adopt the recommended revisions of Articles 11, 12 and 13 of the Church Order (see Section III of this report).
- C. That synod adopt the following regulations for the application of (proposed) Article 12b of the Church Order to specific tasks and situations:
1. The calling church shall secure the prior approval of classis, in consultation with the synodical deputies, for each new ministerial position referred to above, by providing to classis the following information:
 - a. The official position description (purpose, duties, qualifications, etc.) as determined by the calling church, in consultation with cooperating agencies as applicable.
 - b. An outline of requirements for reporting to the calling church, and supervision by the calling church, in consultation with cooperating agencies as applicable.
 2. Prior to calling a minister of the Word to a military or institutional chaplaincy, the calling church also is urged to obtain the endorsement of the Chaplain Committee of the Christian Reformed Church.
 3. The church visitors of classis shall inquire annually into the supervision of the calling church toward said minister(s), as well as the reporting of said minister(s) to the calling church. The church visitors shall inform classis of departures from the approved provisions for supervision and reporting.
- D. That synod adopt the recommended addition to Article 14 of the Church Order (see Section IV,E of this report).
- E. That synod instruct the Ministers' Pension Fund Committee to adjust its regulations as necessary to meet the provisions of Article 14c of the Church Order.
- F. That synod instruct the Liturgical Committee to propose a new form for the ordination (and installation) of ministers of the Word, especially in the light of the Guidelines for Understanding the Nature of Ecclesiastical Office and Ordination (Synod 1973), and (the proposed) Articles 11-13 of the Church Order.
- G. That synod discharge the study committee with thanks for its work.

Study Committee on
Church Order Article 13a

James R. Kok, chairman
Alfred E. Mulder, reporter
Meindert Bosch
John Hooyer
Martin Van Dyke
Larry Van Essen
Durant Van Oyen

REPORT 45
NEW CONFESSION COMMITTEE
(Art. 59)

Your committee is thankful that we can come to synod with a substantial report this year. We began our work with a mandate from the 1971 synod. We have worked at the tasks assigned then, and have received several new ones along the way. In order to indicate the changes in our mandate and the background to the recommendations in this report, we begin with a brief history of our activities.

I. HISTORY:

The 1971 synod received two overtures which requested that the church re-express the faith in a new confession. Synod appointed this study committee to consider how the faith can be confessed in contemporary ways, whether the churches find an augmented confession necessary, and in which areas such a new confession would speak.

Our committee studied the confessions and what it is to confess the faith today, surveyed the churches, and recommended that, while the churches are not ready to augment their confession now, the confessional task of the church does require our attention. Synod agreed and continued the committee, to explore "contemporary ways of confessing," and to promote further study of our confessional task. Such study was promoted by writing and speaking.

In the report to the 1973 synod we made several suggestions to make our present confessions more accessible to members (preaching, translating, teaching, versifying). A revision of the booklet *The Christian Reformed Church—What it Teaches* was requested. And, since synod from time to time confesses the faith in connection with current issues, we asked for a study of the status of such pronouncements and for their publication. Synod agreed to these requests. The booklet *Synodical Decisions on Doctrinal and Ethical Matters* was published in 1976 and is a convenient resource for the church. The matter of translating the present confessions was left with the committee. The Psalter Hymnal Supplement Committee was alerted to the possibility of setting various parts of the confessions to music. They were interested in this, but their composers have not come forward with anything on this yet.

In 1975 we recommended a new translation of the Canons. Synod instructed our committee to complete work on that. Our request for a sharing of experiences in using new methods of communication in confessing the faith was passed on to the churches by synod, but went unanswered. We continued to comment on confessional developments in other churches. And synod gave us more work to do by referring the discussion on Answer 80 of the Catechism to us for recommendation.

In summary, four items, on which we report in the next section, have been part of our mandate:

1. confessional developments in other churches,

2. the translation of our present confessions,
3. Answer 80 of the catechism, and
4. the confessional task of the church today.

(References in the Acts of Synod 1971, pp. 624, 673, 109, 110; 1972, pp. 402-414, 30, 31; 1973, pp. 494-499, 65; 1975, pp. 539-542, 105, 106.)

II. ACTIVITIES:

A. *Confessional Developments:*

1. *The "testimony" of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in North America:*

The Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America (which is a church in ecclesiastical fellowship with the Christian Reformed Church and a fellow member in the North American Presbyterian and Reformed Council) is basically committed to the Westminster Standards. Periodically this church prepares and adopts a "Testimony" which brings the Westminster Confession up to date. Such a testimony consists mainly of addresses to issues not completely covered by the historic confession; in rare instances the older confession is also modified by introducing some qualifications.

This church is currently working on a contemporary testimony. The "Explanation" attached to their proposed testimony contains the following paragraphs:

The Westminster Confession of Faith is one of the historic creeds of the Presbyterian and Reformed Churches. The Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America believes that this Confession is based on, and subordinate to, Scripture. The truth it presents is of inestimable value for contemporary society.

However, changes in the application of truth are needed because of changing situations in each generation. Some current topics of vital importance for the Christian Church were unknown in the 17th Century. Therefore the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America presents its Testimony applying Scripture truth to the contemporary situation. This Testimony is placed in a column parallel to that which contains the Confession.

Wherever applicable, to aid in the usefulness of these documents, notations are made at the headings of each chapter to the Larger and Shorter Catechisms.

All of these documents, the Westminster Confession of Faith, the Testimony of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, and the Larger and Shorter Catechisms, bear equal weight, except that where noted, earlier documents are to be interpreted by the later ones.

This procedure is a useful device for enabling the church to speak to contemporary issues in a confessional context.

2. *"Our Song of Hope" of the Reformed Church in America:*

In 1974 the Reformed Church adopted "Our Song of Hope" as a "provisional standard for a period of four years ending in 1978."

This confession begins with the song:

We sing to our Lord a new song;
 We sing in our world a sure Hope:
 Our God loves His world,
 He called it into being,
 He renews it through Jesus Christ,
 He governs it by His Spirit.
 God is the world's true Hope.

It ends with the prayer:

Come, Lord Jesus:
 We are open to your Spirit.
 We await your full presence.
 Our world finds rest in you alone.

These two parts of the confession are set to music and are meant to be sung by the congregation.

Between the opening song and the closing prayer are 21 stanzas, which can be recited by the congregation and be the subject of preaching and study. They cover seven aspects of hope:

- I. Our hope is the coming of the Lord
- II. Our song in a hopeless world
- III. Jesus Christ our only hope
- IV. Our hope in God's words
- V. Our hope in daily life
- VI. Our hope in the church
- VII. Our hope in the age to come

The confession repeats some of the traditional teachings of the church in modern language. For instance, the third stanza confesses the virgin birth of Christ in this way:

Our only hope is Jesus Christ.
 After we refused to live in the image of God,
 He was born of the virgin Mary,
 sharing our genes and instincts,
 entering our culture, speaking our language,
 fulfilling the law of our God.
 Being united to His humanity
 we know ourselves when we rest in Him.

The confession also addresses contemporary issues in the life of the church and speaks, for instance, of the task of the Christian citizen and of the mission of the church in stanzas ten and sixteen:

As citizens we acknowledge the Spirit's work in human government
 for the welfare of the people,
 for justice among the poor,
 for mercy towards the prisoner,
 against man's oppression of man.
 We must obey God rather than men,
 waiting upon His Spirit,
 filled with the patience of Christ.

The Spirit sends His church
 to call sinners to repentance,
 to proclaim the good news
 that Jesus is personal Savior and Lord.
 He sends it out in ministry
 to preach good news to the poor,
 righteousness to the nations,
 and peace among mankind.

Since this is an important event in the life of a church closely related to us, our committee wanted to share a sample of this confession with those who read our report. The Reformed Church welcomes its study by those in other churches and invites their comment. "Our Song of Hope" has been published by Eerdmans in a booklet which contains a commentary and appendices by Eugene P. Heideman, as well as the text and music for the song.

Our committee finds valuable affirmations in this confession. We are also attracted to its style and to the concept for its use within the congregation. We appreciate its attempt to make a biblical address to contemporary issues which are not covered in the present confessions.

We must say, however, that the song also contains some questionable items; the questions about them are not cleared up by the commentary but are rather intensified. Due to its poetic form "Our Song of Hope" does not speak with precision, a precision that is certainly needed in a confessional statement at this time.

We conclude, therefore, that, while we are impressed by this effort to speak and to sing of the Christian faith in our day and in our language, this provisional confession of the Reformed Church would not serve our church as a supplementary confession.

B. Translation of present confessions:

1. Canons of Dort

A sub-committee is working on a new translation of the Canons of Dort, as instructed by Synod of 1975 (Acts of Synod 1975, p. 105). We hope to have a progress report by the time of synod.

2. The Belgic Confession

We have examined our present translation of the Belgic Confession and have not found the kinds of inaccuracies that led us to recommend a new translation of the Canons.

We have discovered, however, that the Belgic Confession is often used in catechism instruction, especially with adult inquirers. And we are concerned that its present archaic language and cumbersome style do not allow this confession to be as accessible to the church as it might be. For instance, how clear is such a sentence as this one from article 32?

Therefore we admit only of that which tends to nourish and preserve concord and unity, and to keep all men in obedience to God.

The adult education department of the Board of Publications also plans a study course on the Belgic Confession. We feel that a new trans-

lation would be beneficial to such a course. In fact, such a translation could well be produced more efficiently if the committee that is to do it were to do it jointly with the Board of Publications.

The Belgic Confession does not rely on "prooftexts" as the other confessions do but weaves the biblical material into the substance of the confession. The lack of clear references on these quotations is a hindrance to students of the confession. This need could also be met in a new translation.

We are aware of the fact that the Reformed Church uses a different translation than we do. It was prepared by Mr. VanderLugt. It is a one-man translation, and it is not as satisfactory as we would wish.

We recommend that synod instruct a committee to prepare a new translation of the Belgic Confession to increase its usefulness within the churches and to keep pace with the other two confessions which do and will appear in new translation.

We do not see the time of translating the confession as an occasion to make changes in the content of the confession, but rather to provide the churches with a readable, accurate, and properly referenced translation.

C. *Question 80 of the Catechism:*

We were asked to:

- a. Receive and evaluate responses from the churches.
- b. Study the question of the relevance of Question and Answer 80 in the light of recent developments in Roman Catholic theology and practice.
- c. Serve the Synod of 1976 with advice. . . .

(Acts of Synod 1975, p. 106)

1. *Responses from the Churches*

The responses of the churches came in after the deadline of January 1, 1976. This is one reason why we did not report earlier.

Thirty-nine churches responded.

Sixteen churches wanted to keep "80" in. The main reasons given were that the answer is correct, we must not tamper with a historical document, and that a confession must dare to reject what is wrong.

Sixteen churches wanted to delete part of "80". The main reasons these churches gave were that it was not in the first edition, they felt that the practice, and perhaps the teaching, of the Roman Catholic church has changed on this matter, and they accepted the overture's grounds.

Three churches, and some included in the above, wanted to make other changes than those suggested in the overture. These changes included adding the material on the mass in a footnote in fine print, going to the Reformed Ecumenical Synod, and deleting the four most offensive words.

2. *The Relevance of Question and Answer 80 in the Light of Recent Developments in Roman Catholic Theology and Practice*

The lasting relevance of "80" lies in its clear statement of our assurance of salvation to which the Lord's Supper testifies.

What "80" states about the mass is an accurate summary of the teaching of the Council of Trent. It teaches that "after the consecration of the bread and wine, our Lord Jesus Christ, true God and man, is truly, really, and substantially contained under the species of these sensible things."

Also, "that all the faithful of Christ may, according to the custom ever received in the Catholic Church, render in veneration the worship of latria, which is due to the true God, to this most holy sacrament." And that if anyone says that such worship must not be given to the sacrament "and that the adorers therefore are idolators: let him be anathema."

In the Profession of the Tridentine Faith we also read: "I profess, likewise, that in the mass there is offered to God a true, proper, and propitiary sacrifice for the living and the dead. . . ." (Schaff, *Creeds of Christendom*, II, pp. 126, 131, 137, 208)

We note that "80" practically quotes directly from Trent. As a historical document it is therefore certainly relevant to its time.

Although there may have been recent changes in Roman Catholic practice of the mass, and although some explanations of the teaching of Trent have been attempted, there has been no formal repudiation of this teaching. We see no good reason, therefore, to recommend a change in "80".

3. *Our advice:*

We recommend that synod make no changes in Question and Answer 80 of the Heidelberg Catechism.

Grounds:

- a. The responses from the churches, as noted above, are inconclusive. The small number of responses also indicates that this is not a troublesome issue for the churches.
- b. "80" appears to be historically accurate. The statements of Trent which "80" rejects have not been repudiated by the Roman Catholic church.
- c. Although the language in "80" appears sharp, such indignation at the withholding of assurance of salvation from believers is not inappropriate to a confessional statement. Trent speaks rather sharply too. And the acts of confessing and denying are frequently coupled in the New Testament.
- d. "80" must be understood in terms of its main emphasis: our assurance of salvation through the "full pardon of our sins by Christ's only sacrifice."

D. *The Confessional Task of the Churches*

Five years ago the synod judged that the Christian Reformed Church was not ready at that time to augment its confession. But it judged also that the confessional task of the churches required the churches' attention. Both of these positions were supported by the responses to a questionnaire sent out by the committee. After having urged various groups to study the confessional responsibility of the churches, the synod decided to make no further commitments on the subject of a new

confession at that time, but to wait for the fruit of the reflection of the churches under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

The committee now suggests that after five years of low-key activity around the subject of confessions, it is time to consider once again the need for a new confession. The terms in which we make this suggestion are the same as those proposed five years ago. The committee is *not* suggesting *the replacement of any one of the current confessions* of the Christian Reformed Church; but *a new document* which will enter into crucial areas which are not covered by those confessions.

The case for a new confession may be summarized in the following four propositions:

1. There is a great crisis confronting the church in the pervasive secularization of modern life. This is not a crisis of one denomination alone, but confronts the Christian Church as a whole. This crisis has wide ramifications in many areas of the church's life and confession. And the classical confessions of the Reformation age do not address this crisis directly, since it has arisen after the time in which they were written.

2. We are living in a vastly different age from that which the Reformation-age confession writers experienced. There are many ways to describe that difference, in terms of transportation, communication, space exploration, ecological problems, nuclear warfare, and many others. But religiously that difference is not so diffuse. It has a focus, one of basic importance to our life and testimony.

Since Reformation times the Christian West has passed through the Enlightenment and the French Revolution, the scientific revolution, the space revolution, and more. The upshot of all this is a secularized society and a radically changed position in the world. Emphases which were foreshadowed in the Renaissance and temporarily eclipsed by the Reformation have now come to full fruition. We live in an age of uninhibited emphasis upon man and his capabilities. There is, indeed, some groping when those capabilities appear to be inadequate, but that groping hardly leads men back to the God of the Bible.

3. The response of Protestantism to the pervasive secularization of life has been one of accommodation. The most precious elements of the Christian faith are transformed, subtly translated so that Christian terms no longer have the same meaning. The faith of man is a faith in himself, his hope is a mundane hope, and his love, even at best, is limited by earthly horizons. This all constitutes a drastic change in the situation of the Christian faith. If we take a sober look at ourselves, it is difficult to maintain that secularist ways of thinking have made no inroads upon the members of our own churches.

4. The confessions written in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries do have some implications for this situation, but do not speak directly to it. Every one of them bears the marks of the times in which they were written. Particularly pertinent is an assumption which they all held in common. Their concentration was on Europe, and their assumption was that all of Europe was Christian. While the stance of

the Christian Church with respect to the unbelieving world can be detected in their language, their definitions and pronouncements were made in distinction from other churches, confessions, and theologies, all of which professed to be Christian. The need for distinctions between Christian theologies still exists. But it is eclipsed by the need for defining the stance of the Christian Church in a world in which the living God is not necessarily or even probably a presupposition for thought and action.

A few of the areas in which a supplementary confession could make a real contribution are the following:

The confessional description of the relations of *church and state* needs a positive statement, not merely a correction of a mistake made many centuries ago. Clarity on this score could do much to clarify also the relations of church and society.

The nature of the *Christian hope* is a subject on which our confessions say little. Not only is it important in view of various views of the millennium, which have created a good deal of confusion in the church, but clarity on this subject will do much to chart the course of obedient action which the church is to follow in its life in the world.

The *mission of the church in the world* is a subject approached only indirectly in our present confessions, but it is perhaps the central question facing the church in its contemporary life. On this score also there are a host of views and approaches which cannot all be harmonized with each other or with a Reformed view of Scripture.

One may add, without further comment, the doctrine of man, the doctrine of revelation, and the doctrine of the Holy Spirit as areas in which a confessional statement is needed.

The committee proposes a modest approach to this evident need. In the first place, in order both to reflect the supplementary character of the proposed new document and to allow the church to decide for itself whether to consider it a confession in the classical sense, we propose that we speak of it as a "testimony" rather than a "confession." In the second place, rather than spring immediately into a writing effort, we propose that a special committee be appointed to address a forthcoming synod (probably two years hence) on various matters related to the writing of such a "testimony." Its mandate should include the specification of the areas which the testimony should cover, the procedure to be followed in preparing the testimony, the feasibility of cooperating with other churches closely related to our own, and the kinds of qualifications desired in the committee members. Recommendations on these matters should be submitted to the synod (of 1979) for approval, and that synod could then decide in what direction, at what rate, and by what means to proceed.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

A. We request that the chairman and reporter of the committee be given the privilege of the floor during the discussion of this report.

B. That synod instruct a committee to prepare a new translation of the Belgic Confession.

Ground: This would increase the usefulness of this confession in the church and match the concern for contemporary language that has been shown in the translations of our other two confessions.

C. That synod make no changes in Answer 80 of the Heidelberg Catechism.

Grounds:

1. The responses from the churches are inconclusive. The small number of responses also indicates that this is not a troublesome issue for the churches.

2. "80" appears to be historically accurate. The statements of Trent which "80" rejects have not been repudiated by the Roman Catholic church.

3. Although the language in "80" appears sharp, such indignation at the withholding of assurance of salvation from believers is not inappropriate to a confessional statement. Trent speaks rather sharply too. And the acts of confessing and denying are frequently coupled in the New Testament.

4. "80" must be understood in terms of its main emphasis: our assurance of salvation through the "full pardon of our sins by Christ's only sacrifice."

D. That synod declare that there is need to move in the direction of a testimony which addresses itself to the secularization of modern life.

Grounds:

1. Secularization is a major new crisis in the life of the church, which affects its thought and action in many important areas.

2. A confessional address to this situation is called for to guide the obedient action of the church.

E. That synod appoint a committee to make recommendations to the Synod of 1979 on the following questions:

—the specific areas to be covered by the testimony

—the procedure to be followed in producing the testimony

—the advisability of cooperating in this work with other churches closely related to our own

—the qualifications desired in the members of a committee appointed to draft the testimony

F. That synod dismiss our committee when the present assignment with regard to translating the Canons has been completed.

New Confession Committee

L. Oostendorp, chairman

M. Greidanus, reporter

H. Arens

S. DeYoung

J. H. Kromminga

F. Van Houten

REPORT 46
PSALTER HYMNAL SUPPLEMENT
(Art. 79)

In working at the mandate given us by previous synods, we have become acutely aware, as a study committee, of the far-ranging importance of the work assigned to us. A corrected edition of the Psalter Hymnal Supplement, revised in the light of responses from the churches, is now available from the Publishing House. Regarding the directive to continue "an on-going program of education" in new hymnody and "revision of existing songs in the Psalter Hymnal" (Acts of Synod 1972, p. 49), we should like to report on two projects and to make two recommendations for synod's action.

I. PENDING PROJECTS

A. We have carefully prepared for publication in the Banner (into 1978) groups of new hymns and psalms, sometimes written by our own people, that will be especially serviceable to the congregations during specific seasons of the church year (e.g. Advent, Lent, Reformation Day), around key liturgical moments of the order of worship, and during the sacraments.

We request that synod authorize these to be printed at quarterly intervals in the Banner so as to serve the churches with such liturgical songs, and so that this kind of education and leadership be continued at least until the Synod of 1978 (cf. below Recommendation 2).

B. We have sought the help of several seasoned ministers to work on a topical index for the present (1959) Psalter Hymnal which we reported was begun last year (Acts of Synod 1976, p. 610). We believe such an index will greatly help to unify the preaching ministry and congregational song. The psalms and hymns are to be indexed as to biblical texts, the church year, liturgical moments in the order of worship, key points of the Heidelberg Catechism, and topics and key words.

II. RECOMMENDATIONS

A. We recommend that synod appoint a committee to revise and improve the Centennial Edition of the Psalter Hymnal.

Grounds:

1. Recent synods have called for songs that meet the developing needs of the church, and it is fitting that each generation, mindful of our continuing Reformed tradition, act to be faithful in reforming more normatively its congregational song.
2. Lacunae exist in the present Psalter Hymnal edition, which the Psalter Hymnal Supplement can only partially fill.
3. It is necessary to clarify, improve and/or revise texts and musical settings of some of the psalms and hymns and rethink their arrangement in the light of the Liturgical Committee Report of 1968.

4. So that the improvement of the church's song not be accomplished piecemeal, as under the present mandates to the Psalter Hymnal Supplement Committee (Acts of Synod 1972, p. 49), it would be wise to undertake a sustained, thorough revision of the church's liturgical songs that build upon the 1959 collection and those songs of the Psalter Hymnal Supplement and Banner pullouts that have proved worthy, adding to these whatever is needed for stronger worship services.

5. Based on earlier experience of our denomination it will take about eight years for a committee to produce a responsible collection which is true to our Reformed tradition and fills current liturgical needs.

B. With the Liturgical Committee we recommend that synod mandate these two committees and representatives of the Education Committee to devise and present to the Synod of 1978 recommendations for motivating and instructing the membership of the Christian Reformed Church in the history, theology, and practice of Reformed liturgy and music.

Grounds (cf. the report of the Liturgical Committee) :

1. Our Reformed heritage in worship cannot be taken for granted, and without stimulating the general awareness of our people as to the crucial nature of song and liturgy in congregational worship, there is a possibility that our Reformed *theology* will be undermined by non-reformed *hymnody* and *liturgy*.

2. In our day of pressures toward congregationalistic authority, there is even greater need to foster a common Reforming mind on liturgy and music for worship; so some way needs to be found to give sustained, *educational* leadership to keep liturgical and musical order in the churches.

3. The modest attempts at education in hymnody and liturgy by denominational committees and agencies suffer from being too fragmented and need to be better coordinated for more effective service.

Our committee serves with much joy and blessing. We believe it would not be improper to single out our secretary Marie J. Post as deserving special thanks from synod for carrying on an unending amount of correspondence that is necessary for us to get our work done. May we say also, if synod should affirm recommendation A, that at least two members of the Psalter Hymnal Supplement Committee be appointed to the Psalter Hymnal Revision Committee so as to assure continuity in the denomination's efforts at maintaining a vital hymnody.

Psalter Hymnal Supplement Committee

J. Hamersma, chairman	J. Worst
M. Post, secretary	B. De Vries
M. McGervey	J. Vriend
C. Seerveld	B. Polman
G. Warmink	

REPORT 47
DR. HARRY BOER'S
CONFESSIONAL-DIFFICULTY GRAVAMEN
(Art. 75)

The committee appointed by the Synod of 1976 to deal pastorally and personally with Dr. Boer's confessional-difficulty gravamen met for the first time on August 25. At this meeting the committee organized itself into a working body, discussed its mandate and procedures, and in a preliminary way parcelled out the areas of special concern to the various members of the committee for further study. Before our second meeting, held October 15, the chairman of the committee, the Rev. Clarence Boomsma, received a letter from Dr. Boer, which had been written before Dr. Boer received a report on the work and progress of our committee. In his cordial letter to Mr. Boomsma, Dr. Boer informed the committee that in his judgment his difficulty could not be satisfactorily dealt with by means of a confessional-difficulty gravamen, but called for a confessional-revision gravamen as the best and most efficacious way of serving the church. In a subsequent letter to our committee, Dr. Boer stated "I declined the offer of counsel on the ground that no amount of counseling could meet the one irreducible demand that I lay upon the church, namely that it, i.e., the denomination, *either* make an official and public statement of the scriptural basis for the doctrine of reprobation *or* declare the doctrine to be no longer binding on the church and its officebearers."

By his decision to present to the Synod of 1977 a confessional-revision gravamen, Dr. Boer brought to a conclusion the work of our committee. In the light of Dr. Boer's expressed views, the committee decided to acquiesce in his judgment that he proceed by submitting a confessional-revision gravamen to the Synod of 1977. The committee acquiesced because in Dr. Boer's judgment the matter can not be dealt with as a confessional-difficulty gravamen and because, as was indicated by the Synod of 1976, Dr. Boer has the right to submit a confessional-revision gravamen.

Synodical Committee Appointed to
Deal Pastorally and Personally
with Dr. Harry Boer's
Confessional-Difficulty Gravamen
Clarence Boomsma, chairman
Henry Zwaanstra, secretary
Bastiaan Nederlof
Edwin Roels

GRAVAMEN

CONFESSIONAL-REVISION GRAVAMEN

SUBMITTED BY DR. HARRY R. BOER

(Art. 75)

I submit herewith for synodical *examination* and *adjudication* a gravamen against the Reformed doctrine of reprobation as taught notably in the Canons of Dort Chapter I, Article 6 and Chapter I, Article 15. The relevant parts of these articles are:

That some receive the gift of faith from God and others do not receive it, proceeds from God's eternal decree (Chap. I, Art. 6).

What peculiarly tends to illustrate and recommend to us the eternal and unmerited grace of election is the express testimony of sacred Scripture that not all, but some only are elected, while others are passed by in the eternal decree; whom God out of his sovereign, most just, irreprehensible, and unchangeable good pleasure, has decreed to leave in the common misery into which they have wilfully plunged themselves, and not to bestow upon them saving faith and the grace of conversion . . . (Chap. I, Art. 15).

By the doctrine of reprobation, therefore, I understand that credal confession of the Christian Reformed Church which teaches an unchangeable decree made in eternity by God which has the same irrevocable binding power as God's decree of election and which effects the declaration set forth in Chapter I, Article 15 above.

My gravamen in its broadest lines may be set forth in the following three propositions:

1. The inclusion of any teaching in the official creeds of the church implies that the teaching in question is unambiguously taught in the Scriptures of the Old and/or the New Testament.
2. The "express testimony of sacred Scripture," (Chap. I, Art. 15), which the Canons claim teach the doctrine of reprobation is in fact not to be found in the Scriptures.
3. The doctrine of reprobation ought therefore to be excinded from or become a non-binding part of the creeds of the Christian Reformed Church.

Excluded from the gravamen are any objections to the doctrine of election. I stand wholly committed to the scriptural teaching concerning the sovereignty of God in the salvation of men. To save it from the disregard in which it is increasingly being held in the Christian Reformed Church is no small part of my motivation in submitting this gravamen.

* * *

A gravamen in its very nature challenges the *scriptural validity* of a given teaching. It overleaps credal and theological authority and appeals directly to the Bible itself. Gravamina should therefore neither depend

on nor be refuted by credal or theological considerations. In a proper gravamen procedure neither creed nor theology has any authority. Insofar as creed and theology agree with the teaching that the gravamen calls into question, to that extent creed and theology are themselves on trial. A gravamen therefore appeals to Scripture and should be judged by the Scriptures alone.

The specific nature of the appeal to Scripture made by this gravamen should, however, be noted. The gravamen does not adduce scriptural data that contradict the doctrine of reprobation. It rather does this:

1. the gravamen demonstrates that the scriptural data adduced by the Canons in support of the doctrine is not valid, is not relevant to the matter in hand, has no bearing whatever on the teaching in question.
2. the author of the gravamen professes not to know of any data in Scripture that can with any show of validity, relevance or bearing be adduced in support of the doctrine.
3. the appeal of the gravamen is therefore not to the speaking but to the silence of Scripture.

If this appeal to the silence of Scripture with respect to the credal teaching of reprobation is sustained, then by that fact the doctrine has no right to be a part of the church's creed. For a creed, as understood in the Reformed community, is in its very nature solely and exclusively a witness to the plain, undoubted and indisputable teaching of the Word of God.

* * *

The scriptural support given for the doctrine of reprobation in the creeds is limited to the Canons of Dort, and in the Canons to the First Head of doctrine. There the following texts are adduced:

1. "*For known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world (Acts 15:18 A.V.)*" (Chap. I, Art. 6).
2. "*Who worketh all things after the counsel of his will (Eph. 1:11)*" (Chap. I, Art. 6).
3. "*Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? (Rom. 9:20)*" (Chap. I, Art. 18).
4. "*Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with my own? (Matt. 20:15)*" (Chap. I, Art. 18).
5. "*O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments and his ways past tracing out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord, or who hath been his counsellor? or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed to him again? For of him, and through him, and unto him are all things. To him be the glory forever. Amen. (Rom. 11:33-36)*" (Chap. I, Art. 18).
6. "*He hath mercy on whom he will and whom he will he hardeneth (Rom. 9:18)*" (Chap. I, Rejection of Errors, Par. 8).
7. "*Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given (Matt. 13:11)*" (Chap. I, Rejection of Errors, Par. 8).
8. "*I thank thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou didst hide these things from the wise and understanding, and didst reveal them*

unto babes; yea, Father, for so it was well-pleasing in thy sight (Matt. 11:25, 26)" (Chap. I, Rejection of Errors, Par. 8).

Before examining these passages it is well to note precisely what it is that they as "the express testimony of sacred Scripture" must establish. The following are the major elements in Chapter I, Article 6 and Chapter I, Article 15 which are said to reflect the testimony in question.

The center of gravity in the decree of reprobation is quite clearly *an act of God*. This act is described both *negatively* and *positively* in the Canons. Negatively, God "leaves the non-elect . . . to their own wickedness and obduracy" (Chap. I, Art. 6). The non-elect are "passed by in the eternal decree," God "permitting them . . . to follow their own ways" (Chap. I, Art. 15).

These negative actions or non-actions of God cannot, however, obscure the fact that in them and behind them there works powerfully a deliberate and positive action on God's part. This the Canons make very clear. That some do not receive the gift of faith "proceeds from God's eternal decree" (Chap. I, Art. 6). God's leaving of the "non-elect" to their own wickedness is done "in his just judgment" (Chap. I, Art. 6, 15). God's leaving the reprobate in the common misery into which they have plunged themselves is the result of the exercise of his "sovereign, most just, irreprehensible and unchangeable good pleasure" (Chap. I, Art. 15). Finally, the negative-positive complex of divine actions is given the status of a distinct decree in the words, "And this is the decree of reprobation . . ." (Chap. I, Art. 15).

Supporting data from Scripture must therefore establish in terms of "express testimony," that is, plainly, unambiguously:

1. the existence of a divine decree
2. which has been made in eternity
3. which condemns a segment of mankind to eternal death as described
4. and which is characterized by distinctly positive as well as negative actions on God's part.

In this gravamen the following paragraphs examine whether the data which the Canons themselves adduce as "the express testimony of sacred Scripture" in support of the doctrine of reprobation do indeed carry the weight of evidence they are alleged to contain.

Analysis Of Textual Material

1. "*For known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world (Acts 15:18, AV).*"

This is the only text cited in the Canons that has been taken from the Authorized (or King James) Version (AV), published in 1611. All others are taken from the American Standard Version (ASV) of 1901, which is based squarely on the monumental British revision of the Authorized Version in 1885. The difference between the AV and the ASV is the difference between a translation based on manuscripts of admittedly inferior value and that of one based on far more reliable manuscript material. The text in the ASV reads: "says the Lord who has made all these things known of old." The words "known unto God" become "the Lord who has made . . . known;" "all his works" become "all these things" and "from the beginning of the world" becomes "of old."

The quotation is found in the speech of James at the Jerusalem conference of apostles and elders called to determine the attitude of the church to the Gentiles, recorded in Acts 15. There in the ASV we read: "Symeon hath rehearsed how God first visited the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name. And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written, 'After these things I will return, and I will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: that the residue of men may seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who maketh these things known from of old' (vss. 14-18).

It is patent that there is not even a remote connection between the eternal decree of reprobation and the verse adduced in its support by the authors of the Canons. Why then is it used? In adducing this text the Synod of Dort apparently resorted to a principle of biblical interpretation which vitiates the validity not only of the use of this passage, but of others as well, as we shall see. That principle consists of the following two elements:

1. The truth of the doctrine of reprobation is assumed.

2. A general reference to God's action in eternity, or what is construed as eternity, logically includes reprobation since the decree was made in eternity.

Applying this principle to the AV text, the words "from the beginning of the world" are understood to imply eternity, since all God's works are known to him at that point. Reprobation is a part of "his works," therefore Acts 15:18 teaches reprobation.

In 1942 the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church approved a revision of the English translation of the Canons with the proviso that all quotations from Scripture in the English translations of our standards shall be from the ASV consistently. It was stipulated, however, that when the ASV rendering would not be a faithful translation of the rendering in the original Canons, the translation committee would be allowed to give a literal translation of such a passage. In that event, however, an asterisk should refer to a footnote in which the reading of the ASV shall be indicated. The committee correctly adopted the AV rendering but the 1959 revised Psalter Hymnal does not, in the section containing the creeds, carry the footnote reference to the ASV reading. (See footnote 1.)

2. "*Who worketh all things after the counsel of his will (Eph. 1:11)*" (Chap. I, Art. 6).

In all the writings of the New Testament there is no more elevated praise or more profound revelation of God's redemptive purpose in Christ than is found in Ephesians 1:1-14. There is in it not the slightest whisper concerning, nor the remotest reference to, the dark shadows of an eternal rejection of men from the presence and the life of God. The air is full of light and joy and doxological worship. Nevertheless, the words, "the counsel of his will" lend themselves admirably to the application of the principle of biblical interpretation set forth in the preceding paragraphs. The decree of reprobation is assumed and is therefore necessarily contained in "the counsel" of God's will.

3. "*Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? (Rom. 9:20)*" (Chap. I, Art. 18).

These words are adduced by Dort against those who "murmur at the free grace of election and the just severity of reprobation." Our interest lies in their reference to reprobation. Here again the decree of reprobation is regarded as a scripturally established fact, and man's silence in the presence of God's decision is therefore requisite. It is a strongly admonitory word that would be in order if the Canons had indeed established the scriptural character of the doctrine.

4. "*Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? (Matt. 20:15)*" (Chap. I, Art. 18).

This question is the application of Jesus' parable of the laborers who had worked various lengths of time in the vineyard and received the same wages. Those who had worked the longest grumbled at not receiving more than the workers who had not borne the burden of the day. To them the landlord replied, "Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own?" If this is intended to illustrate God's right to reward his servants as he wills, no exception can be taken. But that has nothing whatever to do with reprobation. Strangely, Dort did not quote the remaining words of the landlord, "Or do you begrudge my generosity?" That would certainly exclude a reprobation reference. The exclusive reference is to *degrees of reward*, and it is intended to illustrate the nature of the kingdom of heaven (vs. 1). The partial quotation of the landlord's answer and the omission of the key sentence for the understanding of it, leave the impression of God's incontestable right to dispose of "his own" (i.e. humanity) as he wishes. This, however, is not what the parable means or what the quoted partial answer in its context says. It speaks neither about reprobation nor about election, but about God's sovereign right within the community of the redeemed to bestow his goodness as pure grace.

5. "*O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments and his ways past tracing out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord, or who hath been his counsellor? or who hath first given to him and it shall be recompensed to him again? For of him, and through him, and unto him are all things. To him be the glory forever. Amen. (Rom. 11:33-36)*" (Chap. I, Art. 18).
6. "*He hath mercy on whom he will, and whom he will he hardeneth (Rom. 9:18)*" (Chap. I, Rejection of Errors, Par. 8).

These two passages are so closely related that they may fitly be discussed together.

Romans 9-11 constitute a unit of thought. At the same time, the three chapters climax the discussion on sin and redemption in chapters 1-8. Paul's doxology in 11:33-36 concludes therefore not only the unit of which it is a part but also the whole of the first eleven chapters.

Early in the epistle (chap. 4) Paul had indicated that the gospel is not for Jews only but also for Gentiles. Faith was reckoned to Abraham

as righteousness. But this blessing he received not after but before he was circumcised. Therefore the gospel is meant for the uncircumcision as well as for the circumcision. In chapters 9-11 the manner in which the Gentiles come to the faith is set forth. Through the trespass of the Jews salvation comes to the non-Jews. This in turn makes Israel jealous and thus gives her occasion to return to the obedience of faith. This has further joyful consequences. If the trespass of Israel means riches for the world, how much more her full inclusion in the fellowship of the covenant.

But let not the Gentiles boast about their position and their privilege. Let them stand by faith. Jewish branches were broken off that Gentile branches might be grafted into the tree of the people of God. When Israel returns to obedience, however, the Jewish branches can be grafted in again. Equally, Gentile branches can because of sinful pride be cut off. Therefore neither may boast and neither may despair. Both were consigned to disobedience that God might have mercy on all.

In the course of his argument Paul alludes to God's hardening of Pharaoh's heart as an illustration of his sovereign right to harden whom he will as well as to have mercy on whom he will. Not only election is a demonstration of God's sovereign will, but also the hardening of the heart. It is wholly unclear, however, that God's hardening of Pharaoh's heart teaches reprobation. For two reasons. First, a sufficient cause for the hardening of Pharaoh's heart is God's statement to Moses, "I have seen the affliction of my people who are in Egypt and have heard their cry . . . I know their sufferings . . . and I have seen the oppressions with which the Egyptians oppress them" (Ex. 3:7-9). There is neither occasion nor need to resort to an eternal decree of reprobation to explain God's hardening of Pharaoh's heart. Similarly, there is no more need to posit an eternal decree to explain God's word to Pharaoh, "For this reason I have raised thee up . . ." (Rom. 9:17; Ex. 9:16), than there is to explain the no less momentous word to Habakkuk: "for I am working a work in your days, which ye will not believe though it be told you. For, lo, I raise up the Chaldeans, that bitter and hasty nation . . ." (Hab. 1:5-6). The occasion is totally patent in the historical situation. Why must there be a decree of reprobation as background for the one case, while in the other we see the exercise of God's chastising providence?

In the second place, Romans 11:7-32 teaches very clearly that in Paul's own time the hardening of all Israel with the exception of the elect is not intended as an ultimate judgment. It does not flow out of an eternal decree of reprobation. Repentance can undo the divinely imposed judgment of a hardened heart. That is precisely the ground for the hope of Israel's inclusion in the family of God (Rom. 11:12). Is the Gentile less privileged than the Jew in the New Testament dispensation? Or is there perhaps an eternal decree of reprobation that causes the hardening of the heart with respect to the Gentiles but not with respect to the Jews?

It is this powerful interaction of divine initiative, human response whether Jewish or Gentile, and the divine answer to the human response that elicits from Paul his magnificent doxology (Rom. 11:33-36). If the authors of the Canons were taken with his use of "judgments" (which

in the plural has a definite historical ring about it), they quite overlooked that God's consigning all men to disobedience fully accounts for the word "judgments." They equally overlooked that God's judgments in history have a redemptive intent. The word can, in fact, be understood without a punitive connotation. Bauer's authoritative *Lexicon of New Testament Greek* as translated and edited by Arndt and Gingrich gives its meaning in Romans 11:33 as "the fixed purpose of divine grace."

By all of which it is not proposed that there are no eternal backgrounds to God's actions in history. In the incarnation of our Lord the eternal enters into time and works mightily there. The salvation of God's people lies anchored in their election from eternity. On these matters Scripture is plain and full to overflowing.

The question with respect to reprobation is rather this: may God's response to the sin and unbelief of men — which response is fully accounted for by the historical situation in the light of law and gospel — have imputed to it an eternal cause for which no warrant is to be found in Scripture? Sin and unbelief are exceedingly dark mysteries on the origin and cause of which Scripture sheds no light. Redemptive revelation with Christ and his work at its center is not concerned with their explanation but with their conquest and elimination from God's world.

All who wish to find backgrounds, occasion or explanation for unbelief in any other area than that of human responsibility within the dimension of history will forever have their way barred by Jesus' lament over Jerusalem, "How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you would not!" (Matt. 23:37). And what shall we say about God's grieving over the waywardness of Israel written down by Isaiah, "What could have been done more to my vineyard that I have not done in it? Wherefore when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes? . . . For the vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah his pleasant plant: and he looked for justice, but, behold, oppression; for righteousness, but, behold, a cry!" (Isa. 5:3-7). If God himself speaks in this way, with what right do we hold the church to believe that the not-receiving of the gift of faith "proceeds from God's eternal decree" and then support this affirmation with quotations from Scripture that are not relevant to the point?

It is a betrayal of our stewardship of the gospel when we burden it with our rationalistic theories which, when we have set them forth in formidable confessional language, we proceed to deny by a silence that is as massive as their theological formulation is awesome and their biblical basis non-existent.

7. "*Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given* (Matt. 13:11)" (Chap. I, Rejection of Errors, Par. 8).
8. "*I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou didst hide these things from the wise and understanding, and didst reveal them unto babes; yea, Father, for so it was well-pleasing in thy sight* (Matt. 11:25, 26)" (Chap. I, Rejection of Errors, Par. 8).

These two passages may also appropriately be treated together. The only way in which Matthew 13:11 can be considered to play an evidential role is to understand that the words "to them it is not given" (to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven) designate "them" as reprobate. We ask: was their inability to understand a permanent condition? Was it the result of an eternal decree of reprobation? If so, what is the ground for that assertion? Within two years after speaking these words Jesus commanded the disciples to be his "witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria . . ." Acts 1:8. They were not commanded to speak in parables. They spoke in straightforward language, as Acts makes plain on page after page, presenting Jesus as the fulfillment of prophecy. How is this to be squared with the Dortian interpretation of Matthew 13:11? (See footnote 2.)

But more than that. Jesus' words rest squarely on Isaiah 6:9, 10, which Matthew quotes in chapter 13:14-15. Did Isaiah have in mind a permanent condition of unbelief in the people of Israel which arose out of an eternal decree of reprobation? Was Isaiah speaking to a different kind of people than those whom Hosea, his contemporary, lashed in the first ten chapters of his book? How would the theologians of Dort then explain God's heartrending cry in chapter 11: "How can I give you up, O Ephraim? How can I hand you over, O Israel? . . . My heart recoils within me, my compassion grows warm and tender. I will not execute my fierce anger, I will not again destroy Ephraim, for I am God and not man, the Holy One in your midst, and I will not come to destroy" (Hos. 11: 8, 9). Would the men of Dort deny that the Jewish branches, broken off the covenant tree because of disobedience, can be grafted in again (Rom. 11:17-24)? Can God not remove the veil of a hardened heart when a man turns to the Lord (II Cor. 3:12)? With what right is Isaiah considered to be speaking different language to Judah than Hosea did to Israel? Was not the sin of the Northern Kingdom hastening it to an earlier and even more severe judgment than that which awaited Judah? And why is Jesus considered to be speaking different language in his ministry than Paul did in Romans 9-11 and in II Corinthians 3?

Is it not more scriptural to say that Judah's blindness in Isaiah's time and the blindness of the Jews in Jesus' time (and in Paul's) was the self-created judgment on their disobedience than to attribute it to an eternal decree which is nowhere mentioned or implied or hinted at in the respective contexts concerned? And would this not spare us the embarrassing theological contortions we have to resort to in order to conform to the simplicity of the gospel?

As to Matthew 11:25, 26, it is true that God hides his wisdom from the wise and understanding and reveals it to babes. It is equally true that the wise and understanding can become babes. And it is blessedly true that wise and understanding not only can but do become babes in Christ. St. Paul and St. Augustine head a distinguished list. The kingdom of heaven grows continually by rebirth and conversion at all levels and among all conditions of men. In which way does this circumstance point to an eternal decree of reprobation?

Finally, we must take note of Romans 9:11, 12, 13 quoted in Chapter I, Article 10. This passage was not listed with the texts adduced by Dort in support of reprobation because it is used in an article dealing only with election. In the context of the First Head of Doctrine of the Canons, however, our interest in Esau as the object of reprobation is eminently relevant. The passage reads:

"For the children being not yet born, neither having done anything good or bad, . . . , it was said unto her (namely to Rebekah), The elder shall serve the younger. Even as it is written, Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated" (Rom. 9:11, 12, 13).

In the popular Christian mind these verses are often understood to have been quoted by Paul from Genesis. This is in a very important part incorrect. The words, "The elder shall serve the younger," were spoken to Rebecca before the birth of her twin sons (Gen. 25:23). The words, "Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated," are quoted from the very end of the Old Testament in Malachi 1:1-3. In interpreting these quotations as they are used by Paul, it is most necessary to understand that they are separated by some thirteen hundred years of history. The first quotation was spoken in first order concerning two individual people, Esau and Jacob. The second was spoken in first order about two nations, Edom and Israel, here referred to after their respective primal fathers, Esau and Jacob.

Malachi's prophecy begins with God's protesting his love for the nation of Israel in the face of Israel's questioning his love (Mal. 1:2). God says to Israel, I have loved you; yet you say, wherein have you loved us? To which the Lord replies, Is not Esau Jacob's brother, yet I loved Jacob, but I hated Esau. (It may here be noted that most authoritative translators read: *Is not Esau Jacob's brother rather than Was not . . .*: RSV, New English Bible, International Critical commentary, Keil and Delitzsch, J. Ridderbos in *Korte Verklaring*. The present tense emphasizes Malachi's contemporary situation as between Israel and Edom. The New English Bible even reads: I love Jacob, but I hate Esau.)

It is very clear from Old Testament usage that Esau was a common name for the nation Edom: Genesis 36:1, 8, 19; Jeremiah 49:8, 10; Obadiah 6. Not only is Edom called Esau, it is also called Jacob's brother: Deuteronomy 37:7; Amos 1:11; Obadiah 10, 12. Similarly, Israel is also called Jacob: Isaiah 41:8, 42:24; Jeremiah 30:10, 18; Malachi 2:12.

In the discouragements that post-exilic Israel experienced it began to doubt God's love for them. But, God replies: How can you question my love? Look how I have dealt with your enemy Edom. Because of his opposition and cruelty to you I have laid waste his hill country and left his heritage to jackals. If he rebuilds the ruins that I have made, I will tear them down again. Implicit in all this is Israel's understanding of the primal history of the two peoples. Jacob was chosen over Esau to be with Abraham and Isaac a father of Israel. Of Jacob replacing Esau who had the right of primogeniture the central thrust is: God dispenses his love not according to merit or prestige or power, but according to his sovereign choice and mercy. "For the children being not yet born, neither having done anything good or bad . . . it was said unto (Rebecca)

‘The elder shall serve the younger.’” But even these words have a substantial corporate, in addition to their immediately individual, meaning, for God’s word to Rebecca was, “two nations are in your womb . . . two peoples . . . the elder shall serve the younger.” That certainly included that the elder Esau would serve the younger Jacob. But this individual brother-to-brother relationship wholly subserves in the history of redemption the larger context of Israel’s and Edom’s mutual relationships.

In that history God has shown his love positively by electing Israel to be his people and guiding them with his providence. He had shown it negatively by resisting, defeating and ultimately eliminating the threat to the life of Israel that Edom posed. God’s hatred of Edom has no independent meaning. It subserves and demonstrates God’s elective love for Israel. But this divine hatred did not exist when God chose Jacob and replaced Esau from his right of primogeniture. In doing so it was not God’s intent to manifest hatred for Esau but to demonstrate his right to bestow his mercy without regard to human rank or merit. God’s hatred was real but it was historically occasioned. It arose and grew in response to Esau’s attitude to Jacob and to Edom’s attitude to Israel.

We note therefore that the divine hatred in question has as its primary reference a nation, not a man; that it arose not as an expression of a reprobatory decree in eternity; and that its expression demonstrates God’s love for Israel.

Now the question is: When Paul quoted Malachi to demonstrate God’s elective grace, did he so decontextualize Malachi’s words as to individualize the obviously corporate meaning of “Jacob” and “Esau”? For Dort’s conception of predestination which the adducing of this text is intended to buttress is highly individualistic. This is not in itself wrong. There is certainly in God’s dealings with men individual election and individual rejection. But that is very definitely not the kind of election and rejection that Malachi is speaking about. The emphasis there is altogether on the corporate. What then did Paul mean in quoting Malachi’s corporate “Jacob I loved but Esau I hated” in intimate conjunction with his teaching concerning election? On the answer to this question hinges the validity of the frequent adducing of these words in support of the doctrine of reprobation in Reformed theology, a use which Dort indirectly but very really supports by its quotation.

Having set forth in Romans 1-8 the doctrine of salvation — one might say the structure of salvation — Paul faces in chapters 9-11 an agonizing question. How is it possible that the Jews, his fellow-countrymen, his own flesh and blood, through whom salvation was mediated to the world, should be cut off from the grace of God? Among the Gentiles Christ was widely accepted but the Jews had rejected him. Israel’s history having climaxed in the coming of the Messiah, can Israel now reject him? Is that the end of Israel’s story? The answer is: No, that is not the end. There is in Israel a remnant of true believers. So deeply, so firmly has God established Israel as his people that it remains the stock onto which all Gentiles who believe will be grafted. There is not a Gentile tree of the covenant alongside the tree of covenant Israel. Salvation is and remains of the Jews. There is only the covenant people born from Abraham and descended through Isaac and Jacob who constitute the

basis for the new people of God. This is the teaching of Romans 9-11 and with special explicitness in chapter 11.

It is true that not all are Israel who are of Israel. The elect obtained the promise, the rest were hardened (Rom. 11:7). But those who were hardened can again believe. They can again be grafted into the tree from which they had been cut off. Again, it is true that God has mercy on whom he will and whom he will he hardens (Rom. 9:14-21). But this hardening need not be to the point of eternal death. It is not the hardening that arises out of an eternal decree of reprobation. For if those who are hardened do not persist in their unbelief, they will be grafted in again, for God has the power to do this (Rom. 11:23). So there is a hardening that has come upon a part of Israel, until the full number of the Gentiles shall have come in, and so all Israel shall be saved (Rom. 11:26).

Paul's view of Israel's future is therefore a bright one. God has not cast off his people. On the contrary, they remain the stock that forms the root and trunk of the tree of salvation. It is not the Gentiles who support the root, it is the root that supports them (Rom. 11:18). Being the tree and being branches of the tree is the result of election; being cut off from the tree is always the result of unbelief. According to Romans 9-11, faith arises out of election. But equally, according to Romans 9-11, there is no eternal decree that withholds repentance and faith from anyone. Unbelief is from the beginning to the end of Scripture the fault and responsibility of man himself.

We can now see more clearly what Paul meant by his quotation from Malachi, "Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated." Paul meant the same thing that Malachi meant, but now in the more universal framework of the New Testament understanding of salvation. Jacob the junior twin was chosen to be a father of Israel over the senior twin in a society in which primogeniture was everything. In this way God demonstrated the sovereign nature of grace in the life of his people in a manner that could not be misunderstood. This electing love God made effective in the history of Israel by his protection of the covenant people against the enmity and aggressiveness of Edom (Esau). As election and God's protection of its fruit were active and effectual in Malachi's day, so they were active and effectual in Paul's day and would remain so till the end. If any might arises against them, as Egypt and Edom did against Israel, whether it be death or life or angels or principalities or things present or things to come or powers or height or depth or any other creature, he shall not permit it to separate his people from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord (Rom. 8:38, 39). In that protection Israel's elect remnant is included. It is included in such a way that through faith and obedience the elect remnant can yet branch out to become in due time "all Israel."

But the divine protection in which God's hatred of the enemies of his salvation comes to expression has nothing to do with either personal or collective reprobation as an eternal decree. It has no more to do with it than do the words, "The elder shall serve the younger." For after all, Esau could quite conceivably have accepted his rejection from the position of primogeniture and have become an example of submission to

God's sovereign dispensation. This did not in fact happen. But the fact that it did not happen by no means makes Malachi's, "Esau I have hated" a necessary implication of God's intent in depriving Esau of his right by birth. On the contrary, God's "Esau I have hated" is his response to Esau's rebellion against his intent of demonstrating his sovereign grace. This is especially true of Edom's historic rejection of the covenant people in which they reject the decision of God for the structuring of his salvation. Therefore, and therefore alone, were they hated. And of that rejection they are able to repent and be grafted again into the tree of the covenant as were the Gentiles.

We conclude: from the viewpoint of ultimacy, the source of faith is not a mystery: It is a gift of God. From the viewpoint of ultimacy, the origin of unbelief, like that of sin itself, is a mystery. We cannot penetrate into it. The statement in the Canons, "That some receive the gift of faith from God and others do not receive it, proceeds from God's eternal decree (Chap. I, Art. 6)," is in its second part untrue and constitutes a denial of the non-disclosure in the Word of God of any cause of unbelief other than the heart of man. The rejection in the Conclusion of the Canons of the charge "that in the same manner (*eodem modo*) in which election is the fountain and cause of faith and good works, reprobation is the cause of unbelief and impiety" is not a credible withdrawing of the clearly contrary teaching of the Canons in Chapter I, Arts. 6 and 15. Rather it must be seen as a drawing back at the brink from the enormity of the consequences of a theological rationalism made by men who, on the one hand, did not have the courage to stand by what they had written and, on the other hand, refused to break with the logical premise that led them to it.

* * *

This concludes the examination of "the express testimony of sacred Scripture" for the doctrine of reprobation as given by the Synod of Dort itself. The analysis that has been made shows that the texts adduced assume throughout rather than establish an eternal decree of reprobation. They fall altogether short of proving the biblical validity of the doctrine in that they do not show

- (a) the existence of a divine decree
- (b) which has been made in eternity
- (c) which condemns a segment of mankind to eternal death as described and
- (d) which is characterized by distinctly positive as well as negative actions on God's part.

I do not consider it my responsibility similarly to analyze the exegesis of texts adduced by Reformed theologians from other parts of Scripture. I am not bound by the exegesis of theologians, however prestigious their names or otherwise meritorious their theologies. I am bound by the confessions of the Christian Reformed Church and by them alone.

Further, it must be pointed out that the present gravamen has been constructed with little or no attention given to the doctrine of election. This was done of set purpose. In Reformed theology, election and reprobation are the two inseparable faces on the one coin of predestination. Nevertheless, the doctrine of reprobation is not only altogether distinct

from election but stands in anithesis to it. It therefore requires a biblical and theological underpinning corresponding to this distinctiveness.

It is my position that so sinister and doomful a teaching as reprobation, whether a massive segment of mankind, generally considered in Reformed theology to be the great majority of the human race, past, present and future, is consigned to everlasting damnation before they ever came into being, must, if it is to be confessionally held, be directly, explicitly and unambiguously taught in Scripture itself. No consensus of theologians, no authority of the church, no weight of history or tradition is entitled to regard or obedience so long as such consensus, authoritative declaration or weighty tradition are not based squarely and fully on the Word of God written (Belgic Confession, Article VII, notably the words, "Therefore we reject with all our hearts whatsoever does not agree with this infallible rule"). This is the essence, the heart, the soul, the *sine qua non* of my gravamen.

I say this with the more conviction because I am fully aware of the correlation that has historically been made between election and reprobation to establish the latter as a scriptural teaching. This correlation is that reprobation is a logical consequence of the doctrine of election. It can be found in unblushing statements of Reformed theologians from John Calvin to Louis Berkhof. It is the correlation that obtained in the crucial period before the Synod of Dort. In 1611 a major effort was made by the provincial governments of Holland and West Friesland to resolve the Arminian controversy as between the Remonstrants (who opposed the Reformed doctrine of Predestination) and the Contra-Remonstrants (who held the Reformed position). In the resulting conference, participated in by six leading theologians from each side, the Contra-Remonstrants made clear their basic position on reprobation:

When we posit an eternal decree of election of certain particular persons, it is clearly to be understood from this that we also teach an eternal decree of rejection or abandonment of certain particular persons, for there can be no election except there also be rejection or abandonment. When out of a given number some are elected, then therewith the others are rejected, for when one takes all he does not elect. As for example, when out of the ten thousand Gideon chose three hundred, he thereby rejected all the others. When Moses says of the Jews, "the Lord has chosen you out of all the peoples," (Deut. 7:6), then he understood thereby that he did not elect the other nations, that is, rejected them. (See footnote 3.)

For this teaching they had excellent support in John Calvin who introduces his discussion of reprobation in his *Institutes of the Christian Religion* thus:

Many professing a desire to defend the Deity from an invidious charge admit the doctrine of election, but deny that anyone is reprobated . . . This they do ignorantly and childishly, since there could be no election without its opposite reprobation (Bk. III, Chap. 23, par. 1).

And again: . . . in the person of Abraham, as in a withered stock, one people is specially chosen, while others are rejected (Bk. III, Chap. 21, par. 5).

It is strange indeed to read that in the view of our highly and justly respected theological mentor the nations other than Israel are "rejected." It is a central teaching of Scripture that Israel was chosen in order to be the means of preparing God's salvation for the nations. Abraham was chosen that he might be a blessing and that in him and his descendants all the families of the earth might be blessed (Gen. 12:1-3; 18:18; 22:18; 26:4; 28:14; 49:10). He was called in uncircumcision in order that he might be the father of all who believe without being circumcised, and likewise of the circumcised (Rom. 4:9-12). We have learned, however, that reprobation exegesis in the Reformed tradition is an unprincipled, ruthless exercise that bends any desired Scripture to its fore-ordained meaning.

It is therefore for us of the Christian Reformed Church not a matter of self-gratulation that one of our best known theologians has contrived at once the baldest and the most nonchalant formulation of the essence of Reformed reprobation theology:

The doctrine of reprobation follows naturally from the logic of the situation. The decree of election inevitably implies the decree of reprobation. If the all-wise God, possessed of infinite knowledge, has eternally purposed to save some, then he *ipso facto* also purposed not to save others. If he has chosen or elected some, then he has by that very fact rejected others (L. Berkhof, *Reformed Dogmatics*, Vol. I, p. 100.)

Some text references follow which are not quoted, let alone exegeted. With such a theology specific biblical textual foundations are irrelevant.

In view of this very strong deductionistic emphasis in Reformed theology, notably illustrated in the position taken by the Contra-Remonstrants in 1611, it is altogether remarkable that the logical correlation between election and reprobation finds no place in the Canons. Reprobation is not presented there as an implicate or necessary consequence of election. Quite the contrary: reprobation is said to be squarely based on "the express testimony of sacred Scripture."

It would appear that Dort was not willing to give to a theological deduction the standing, weight, authority and dignity which an official confessional declaration of the church confers on its teachings. Only direct and explicit scriptural statements warrant formulations that may fitly be made credal. The sound instinct which the synod revealed in this respect is to be praised. That its appeal to Scripture in the matter of reprobation was not warranted by the textual data which it adduced does not cancel the principle that led the synod to adduce them.

In the course of his discussion of predestination, Calvin gives a counsel by which he consciously endeavored to govern his theological thought. Regrettably, he did not himself follow it in the very matter to which he directed it. This in no wise deprives it of its value or of the genuine practical meaning which it otherwise had for him. It merits being quoted in full:

. . . the moment we go beyond the bounds of the Word we are out of the course, in darkness, and must every now and then stumble, go astray and fall. Let it therefore be our first principle that to desire any other knowledge of predestination than that which is

expounded by the Word of God, is no less infatuated than to walk where there is no path, or to seek light in darkness. Let us not be ashamed to be ignorant in a matter in which ignorance is learning. Rather let us willingly abstain from the search after knowledge, to which it is both foolish as well as perilous, and even fatal to aspire. If an unrestrained imagination urges us, our proper course is to oppose it with these words, "It is not good to eat much honey; so for men to search their own glory is not glory" (Prov. 25:27). There is good reason to dread a presumption which can only plunge us headlong into ruin (Bk. III, chap. 21, par. 2).

* * *

I am a minister of the Word of God. I am not a minister of theological deductions, or of ecclesiastical conclusions, or of religious traditions that have only age and uncritical acceptance to commend them. I do not believe, and I refuse to entertain, that my election "*ipso facto*" requires a corresponding reprobation of others. I do not read in Scripture that the sovereign grace that elected me to be a child of God without regard to any merit on my part has as its logical and necessary opposite a sovereign wrath that damns men to an existence of everlasting death without regard to any demerit on their part. As I believe in *sola gratia* for salvation, so do I believe in *sola Scriptura* for my understanding and proclamation of that salvation, and even more for the church's understanding and proclamation of salvation.

It is my belief that in taking this position I stand on firm Reformed ground. For that reason I submit herewith for synodical *examination* and *adjudication* this gravamen, this confessional revision gravamen, against what I judge to be a grievously unbiblical, therefore unReformed, indeed, unChristian doctrine.

Harry R. Boer

Footnotes:

1. In his published translation of the Canons of Dort, *Calvin Theological Journal*, November 1968, Dr. A. A. Hoekema observes the synodical requirement. Translating the passage substantially as it is found in the AV, his footnote, page 136, reads: "Translated from the Latin. This rendering, found also, with some modification, in the King James Version, represents a poorly attested Greek text. The Revised Standard Version has here: 'Says the Lord, who has made these things known from of old'."

2. In his significant study, "The Purpose of the Parables According to Matthew 13:10-17," in *New Dimensions in New Testament Study*, 1974, edited by R. N. Longenecker and Merrill C. Tenney, Dr. B. Van Elderen points out that the passage "appears in different forms in the three evangelists," Mark 4:10-12; Luke 8:9, 10 and that these differences bear measurably on their respective interpretations. The discussion is in part highly technical, but it is invaluable for understanding the Matthew passage in its full scriptural context, not least from the viewpoint of our present concern (especially pp. 188, 189).

3. Translated from the article, "De Leer der Verwerping van Eeuwigheid op de Haagse Conferentie van 1611," by A. D. R. Polman (pp. 182, 183), in *Ex Auditu Verbi*, 1965, a Festschrift presented to Professor G. C. Berkouwer on the occasion of the twenty-fifth anniversary of his professorship at the Free University, Amsterdam. The quotation is my translation from the Dutch text of "Schriftelijke Conferentie gehouden in 's-Gravenhaghe inden Jare 1611" etc., as cited by the author.

OVERTURES

Overture 1 — Funding of Student Internships (Art. 64)

Classis Minnesota North overtures synod to facilitate financially its decision of 1975 to make earning the Master of Divinity degree a prerequisite for candidacy for ordination in the Christian Reformed Church by funding through the seminary budget one half of the stipend paid to the student intern serving a church or its agency.

Grounds:

1. In the intern's professional preparation the local church serves the whole denomination.
2. The local church funds the time and expertise which its pastor furnishes as field supervisor.
3. The benefits of the intern's services are limited and yet the local congregation pays the full cost.
4. More equitable funding of the interning program will make participation more feasible for churches not now able to finance an internship.
5. Placement of interns should be made according to the greatest educational benefit to the student and the ministry.

Classis Minnesota North
Carl J. Toeset, stated clerk

Overture 2 — Classical Ratification of Synodical Decisions (Art. 17)

Classis Grand Rapids North overtures the Synod of 1977 to revise Article 96 of the Church Order to read as follows:

"This Church Order, having been adopted by common consent, shall be faithfully observed and any revision thereof shall be made only by synod, provided that before any revision shall become binding and effective it shall be ratified by the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the classes. The Stated Clerk shall submit the proposed revision adopted by synod to the next meeting of each classis following adjournment of the synod, and the classis shall ratify or reject the proposed revision prior to the commencement of the next synod; otherwise its failure to act within the prescribed time shall constitute a ratification of the proposed revision."

Grounds:

1. Church Order is the constitution of the CRC and therefore any changes should be ratified by the churches and not just by representatives.
2. This procedure will involve more of the membership and leadership of the denomination, instead of just a limited number.
3. This will provide a check and balance system upon the group dynamics in the decision making as is natural in any synodical meeting.
4. History reveals that because synod does not have the same delegates each session, each synod has its own character and perspective. The above recommended procedure would utilize more effectively and completely the denominational character and perspective.

Classis Grand Rapids North
John H. Bergsma, stated clerk

Overture 3 — Additional Statement on Homosexuality Requested (Art. 20)

After synod's decision of 1974 not to accede to Classis Lake Erie's overture to amend the 1973 Synod's decision on homosexuality, the consistory of the Kettering Christian Reformed Church has again studied the report of 1973. We are con-

vinced that the pastoral advice should be modified to state clearly that a lustful thought toward a person of the same sex is a sin.

We suggest that the following paragraph be added to the pastoral advice:

Lusting after a person of the same sex is a sin just as lusting after a person of the opposite sex is a sin.

Grounds:

1. The pastoral advice identifies homosexuality as sin but says nothing about lustful thoughts toward persons of the same sex. The advice should be complete and leave no room for possible conclusion that only the explicit act is a sin.
2. Matthew 5:27-30.

Kettering Christian Reformed Church
Dayton, Ohio

Henry K. Rempe, clerk

At its meeting in September 1976 Classis Lake Erie rejected the request of the Kettering Consistory to submit the above overture.

Overture 4 — Initiate Study of Dr. Verhey's View of Scripture (Art. 70)

Classis Alberta North overtures the Synod of 1977 to initiate an examination of Dr. Allen Verhey's view of Scriptures, in particular regarding his acceptance and interpretation of scriptural historical data in the light of our confessions.

Grounds:

1. The doctrinal views of Dr. Verhey have become the concern of the denomination at large through the widespread publication of his views expressed during his classical examination.
2. The concern of the churches regarding faithfulness to Scripture on the part of her ministers demands synodical action.
3. Dr. Verhey as a minister in the Christian Reformed Church is presently working under a cloud of suspicion because of public allegations neither sustained or denied.

Classis Alberta North

Henry Jonker, stated clerk

Overture 5 — The Scope of Fornication (Art. 76)

Classis Zeeland respectfully overtures synod to affirm Christ's singular exception to the permanency of marriage as that of fornication (*porneia*), and reject the proposed and broadened scope of fornication in the Marriage Guidelines Report: "that the scope of *porneia* be understood to include certain other illicit sex related acts, as well as wilful and prolonged desertion which in the judgment of the consistory can only be regarded as the equivalent of unchastity" (Acts of Synod 1976, p. 486, Rec. 2, b, 3)).

Grounds:

1. The report itself concludes in recommendation 2,b,1) "that *porneia* be understood as being the only permissible ground for divorce that is sanctioned in the Bible." The report states (II,A,4, last par.): "(1) *porneia* in Matthew 5:32 and 19:9 does not refer to 'spiritual adultery' or 'infidelity of any kind' but refers to sexual infidelity; (2) although the meaning of *porneia* is broader than *moicheia*, its primary reference in Matthew 5:32 and 19:9 is to adultery; (3) the word *porneia* in Matthew 5:32 and 19:9 should be translated as 'unchastity' and be understood to include such sexual infidelity as incest and homosexuality; and (4) because of the association of *porneia* with 'harlotry' and 'prostitution' the accent appears to fall on persistent and unrepentant unchastity rather than on the single act itself."
2. The report does not give scriptural evidence, notwithstanding the reference to I Corinthians 7:12-15, to support the broadening of *porneia* to include "other kinds of actions, situations, and conditions that in the judgment of a consistory can only be judged to be the equivalent of unrepentant unchastity"

in signaling the complete breakdown of a marriage and the unlikelihood of its resoration" (Acts of Synod 1976, p. 476).

3. Wilful desertion, as proposed by the report in recommendation 2, b, 3) is not allowed by Paul in cases involving two *Christians* who are under Christ's Law of love. Actually in I Corinthians 7:15 Paul encourages believers to *remain married* to an unbelieving partner, if the latter desires.

4. The report gives no new grounds to change what synod declared in 1906 and clarified in 1957 that on the basis of I Corinthians 7:15 wilful desertion is not a second ground for divorce.

Classis Zeeland

Arthur Besteman, stated clerk

Overture 6 — Popular, Simpler Statement on Biblical Authority (Art. 65)

Classis Zeeland respectfully overtures synod to appoint a committee with the mandate to provide the denomination with a more popular and simpler form of the contents of the 1972 report on the Nature and Extent of Biblical Authority.

Grounds:

1. Many were awaiting the more popular form of presentation promised by the Synod of 1972 (Acts of Synod 1972, p. 69) but cancelled later (Acts of Synod 1976, p. 39).

2. The question of the nature and extent of biblical authority is still of vital interest and concern and will likely continue to be for some time.

3. The biblical authority report, because of its profound presentation of material and professed goal of giving guidance to theologians and biblical scholars, does not serve the church as a whole very well in its study and understanding of this subject.

4. Much of the restlessness related to the Report on biblical authority arises from the fact that in its present form it has parts which leave one puzzled as to their meaning with resultant misunderstandings. Three illustrations are given:

a. In attempting to gain a perspective on the nature and authority of Scripture by viewing it in relationship to the content and purpose of Scripture, the endeavor seems to shortchange the common historic confession concerning the full authority of the Word of God. There is but one nature of authority—it is divine; and the extent covers the entire Word. The report speaks of this:

"The Bible addresses man with divine authority. The Holy Spirit inspired men to write the Scriptures, and by means of inspiration God himself is the author of Scripture. Thus Scripture speaks with the authority of its divine author" (Acts of Synod 1972, p. 506).

But it seems to shortchange the historic confession in the following paragraph:

"This affirmation of the nature and extent of the authority of Scripture as a divine, plenary authority is basic to every true faith-response to God's Word. However, this faithful confession requires further elaboration. What it is that God specifically says in the authoritative Scripture can be grasped only by a faithful hearing and interpretation of Scripture itself. While the entire Scripture speaks with divine authority, this divine authority is understood concretely and specifically only when one takes account of what God said, how he spoke, to whom he spoke, etc. Thus a description of biblical authority requires an understanding of the content and purpose of the divine message as well as the acknowledgment of the authority of the divine author of Scripture" (Acts of Synod 1972, p. 506).

Does this quotation limit biblical authority to the subjective understanding on the part of the reader?

b. The report in describing the content of Scripture as a redemptive, saving revelation of God in Jesus Christ, takes pains to state that "all Scripture presents this redemptive saving message as it unfolds the theme of creation, the fall and redemption . . . Scripture's message is not partly redemptive, and partly non-redemptive. All Scripture is redemptive in char-

acter . . ." (Acts of Synod 1972, p. 507). This is putting a good deal of cargo in the word 'redemption'. Usually this is not what is meant by the word 'redemption'. It would seem that such important matters as the self-revelation of God, the glory of God (see Belgic Confession, Art. 2), the holiness and righteousness of God, the last judgment and eternal condemnation do not come to their own. The report lacks clarity on this matter, which in turn leads to uncertainty and unrest.

c. The report on biblical authority seeks to affirm the historicity of biblical events, even as creeds affirm the historical nature of the events of which the creeds speak:

"All of these confessional statements clearly teach the good creation of the world and man in the beginning by God. Likewise they clearly teach an historical fall involving the two progenitors of the human race at the beginning of human history. They trace mankind's present corruption to this event which occurred in Paradise. It is clear from these statements that any denial of creation or of the historicity of the fall as an event at the beginning of human history is in conflict with our confessions. And we believe that these confessions are faithful to Scripture in these affirmations and should continue to be faithfully confessed by us all" (Acts of Synod 1972, p. 529). (Cf. Belgic Confession Art. 12, 14.)

A broad freedom of interpretation, however, is allowed for those events which the creeds do not specifically affirm as historical:

"As the written revelation of the history of redemption, the Bible was originally addressed to definite situations and to people living under particular circumstances. These situations and circumstances affect what is said and how it is said. . . ." (Acts of Synod 1972, pp. 511-512).

"The committee wishes to make several observations about the principles used to support this new interpretation. The claim that Paul at times functions in a rabbinic manner is not to be rejected out of hand. To support that claim appeal has been made to the following: Paul's mention of the rock that followed Israel (I Cor. 10:4), his use of allegory in Galatians 4:24ff., his identification of Moses' opponents as Jannes and Jambres (II Tim. 3:8), and the fact that Paul quotes from the three divisions of the Old Testament—as did the rabbis—to prove a point. If such an interpretation of these items is valid, the suggestion that Paul at times reflects his rabbinic background can be viewed as a legitimate implication of organic inspiration, i.e., that the Holy Spirit uses men as they are with their own personality, education and background" (Acts of Synod 1972, p. 532).

This freedom of interpretation is summarized in pastoral advice number 6:

"Synod reminds the churches of our brotherly obligation to respect such freedom of biblical interpretation as falls clearly within the bounds of our creedal forms of unity, while recognizing, of course, that in all things we are bound by the Word of God" (Acts of Synod 1972, p. 543).

In connection with pastoral advice number 6 the report says, "While maintaining that our creeds witness authoritatively to the central truths of Scripture, we must recognize that our creeds also countenance a certain freedom of exegesis and allow for differences of insight on some specific matters of biblical interpretation. We should therefore abide by the spirit of our creeds in not requiring of ourselves or others more than our creeds themselves require of us. In matters on which the creeds speak we must honor their authority. Where the creeds allow for a certain freedom of interpretation, there we must exercise Christian toleration. In all things, however, we are bound by the Word of God" (Acts of Synod 1972, p. 543).

The 1972 report on biblical authority thus leaves open the question of the historicity of a speaking serpent in Eden, the earthquake at the time of Christ's resurrection, and such questions. As a result of this broad "freedom of exegesis" we now witness bewilderment, restlessness, and misunderstanding in the church at large.

5. Synod's decision in 1974 not to sustain overture 21 (See Acts of Synod 1974, p. 105) has not removed the fact that there is need in the denomination to

have a more popular and pointed form of presentation of the contents of the Report on the Nature and Extent of Biblical Authority.

Classis Zeeland

Arthur Besteman, stated clerk

(At the request of Classis Zeeland the study of a committee of classis on the 1972 Report on Biblical Authority will be reproduced and sent to all synodical delegates, without editorial change.—Wm. P. Brink, S.C.)

Overture 7—Inferences of 1972 Report on Biblical Authority

(Art. 65)

Classis Zeeland respectfully overtures synod to formulate brief statements of specific positions which the 1972 report on The Nature and Extent of Biblical Authority will not allow (or rejection of specific positions which may be thought to be taught or allowed in 1972 synod's Report 44) by giving answer to such questions as:

1. Does the report allow a position which places biblical authority based upon divine authorship and biblical authority based upon redemptive content in opposition to one another?
2. Does the report allow a position which holds that general revelation can be rightly understood apart from the light given in Scripture?
3. Does the report allow a position which allows any interpretation of general revelation to diminish the unique authority of Scripture or control the interpretations of Scripture?
4. Does the report allow a position which views the divine authority of the Bible as dependent upon or qualified by an interpretation or understanding of the Bible?
5. Does the report allow a position which uses symbolical or figurative interpretation so as to deny the actuality or historicity of the event described?
6. Does the report allow a position which distinguishes between event and later report so as to make it impossible to say anything about the event?
7. Does the report allow a position which holds that the cultural situation to which or in which Scripture was written negates, limits, or compromises the authority of Scripture?
8. Does the report allow a position that says the Scriptures are not authoritative when not understood or when unbelievers reject it?
9. Does the report allow for a position that espouses universal redemption when it affirms that "the divine plenary authority of Scripture is expressed in its totally redemptive saving message" and when it says, "Scripture is not partly redemptive and partly nonredemptive?"
10. Does the report allow a position that claims the Bible is not perspicuous but grasped only by scholars?

Grounds:

1. Synod appointed the committee to prepare 1972 synodical Report 44 and subsequently presented it to the church for help in the further study and understanding of the matter of biblical authority. Now that the church has problems regarding the report as well as concern and fears as to what the report in several areas may be taken to teach, it would seem that synod ought now to give help and stability to the church.
2. Such declarations would bring more clarity to 1972 synod's Report 44 and our understanding of it.
3. Such statements would make the report more serviceable in guiding our people.
4. Such statements would bring the church as a whole into greater unity about synod's report on The Nature and Extent of Biblical Authority, much as resulted by the addition of the Rejection of Errors to the Canons of Dordt.

Classis Zeeland

Arthur Besteman, stated clerk

(See note appended to Overture 6—WPB)

Overture 8 — Reconsider 1976 Decision re Office of Evangelist (Art. 77)

The question of the position of the layworker in evangelism has been an issue in our denomination for many years, being first officially considered in 1946. Many study reports have been submitted to subsequent synods with no solution to the problem.

The Synod of 1969 determined that no solution could be arrived at until the nature of ecclesiastical office and ordination had been clarified. This was done with the adoption in 1973 of 12 guidelines (Acts of Synod 1973, pp. 62, 63, and 64). For example: Guideline 9 is a clear statement defining ordination as "the appointment or setting apart of certain members of the church to particular ministries that are strategic for the accomplishment of the church's total ministry . . ." (Acts of Synod 1973, p. 63).

Since this matter has been resolved, and since 1976 synodical Report 37 states, "the real issue of the place of the layworker in our ecclesiastical structure has been less a question of *whether* he should be ordained to office than to *what* office" (Acts of Synod 1976, p. 521), and since the types of offices have been thoroughly explored, it should be mandatory that synod resolve this question.

Therefore, Classis Chicago North overtures the Synod of 1977 to reconsider the action of the 1976 synodical session re Report 37, in which synod returned the question of the position of the "layworker in evangelism" to the churches for further study (Acts of Synod 1976, pp. 60-63, 85, 86).

Grounds:

1. Due to the long history of struggling with this problem, it has been thoroughly researched and defined.
2. Agreement has been reached in critical and key areas by adoption of 12 guidelines stated in the report of 1973.
3. There is recognition that further action now hinges on the question: "To what office the layworker shall be ordained?" (Acts of Synod 1976, p. 521).
4. The churches themselves cannot resolve the question placed before them by the Synod of 1976 (Acts of Synod 1976, p. 86).

Classis Chicago North
Jack Reiffer, stated clerk

Overture 9 — Propriety of Matters Before Synod (Art. 72)

Classis Hamilton overtures synod to address a sincere note of warning to its Synodical Interim Committee to exercise more caution in allowing unnecessary items of business to appear before synod without its prior appearance in the Agenda for Synod. (See Acts of Synod 1976, Art. 46 (12), p. 44 and Art. 66, p. 72.)

Grounds:

- a. This robs the churches of the necessary opportunity to remain informed before decisions are reached.
- b. This approach could easily lead to an abuse of ecclesiastical power contrary to good Reformed Church Polity.

Classis Hamilton
A. H. Venema, stated clerk

Overture 10 — Implement Decision re Office of Evangelist (Art. 77)

Classis Hamilton overtures synod to appoint a committee to receive the reactions of the churches to Report 37 of the Acts of Synod 1976, "Implications of the Guidelines for Office and Ordination of Layworkers in Evangelism" and to present recommendations to a following synod.

Grounds:

- a. The status of "Layworkers in Evangelism" has been studied for many years and should not be left unsettled. After defeating the recommendations of both Majority and Minority Report 37, the synod referred this matter to the

churches for further study but failed to make provision for settlement by a future synod.

b. The church owes to its many "Layworkers in Evangelism" a clarification of their status in the church.

Classis Hamilton

A. H. Venema, stated clerk

Overture 11 — Tentmaking Ministries

(Art. 58)

Classis Northcentral Iowa overtures the Synod of 1977 to interpret Church Order Article 13 and Church Visitors Questions regarding the minister (question 8), in such a way as to allow for a tentmaker ministry such as is described in "A Policy for A Tentmaker Ministry" (appended) through point VI.

Grounds:

1. Such an interpretation is allowed by the Report on Ecclesiastical Office and Ordination of the Synod of 1973 (Guidelines 9 and 12, pp. 63, 64).

2. Biblical evidence allows such a ministry:

a. Paul, at least on occasion, worked in such a way (Acts 18:3; I Cor. 4:11, 12; Acts 20:34; I Thess. 2:9, 3:8).

b. Though he establishes as an ordinance of the Lord that a minister "should live of the gospel" (I Cor. 9:14), Paul was happy to point out that he did not make use of the privilege of this ordinance of the Lord (I Cor. 9:15).

c. There are areas which cannot justify a full-time Home Missionary, but which would benefit greatly from a focused Reformed witness.

Supplementary Material: "A Policy for a Tentmaker Ministry."

(The Supplementary Material will be duplicated and sent to all synodical delegates without editorial change.—Wm. P. Brink, Stated Clerk)

Classis Northcentral Iowa

John Elenbaas, stated clerk

Overture 12 — Home Mission CRC-RCA Church Directory

(Art. 57)

Classis Northcentral Iowa overtures synod:

1. That our Board of Home Missions be mandated to work with the respective Board of the Reformed Church in America, to produce a directory of Christian Reformed Churches and Reformed Churches in America.

a. This directory shall be produced every three years to save expenses of producing and mailing a directory annually.

b. Churches shall be informed of new fields opening in either denomination, through both denominational magazines.

c. This directory shall be sent to all Christian Reformed Churches and Reformed Churches in America.

2. That synod require that we work together with the Reformed Church in America so that:

a. Our churches are required to notify the nearest Reformed Church in America when a member of our church moves into an area where only a Reformed Church in America is found.

b. Synod request the Synod of the Reformed Church in America to require its churches to notify the nearest Christian Reformed Church when a member of their church moves into an area where only a Christian Reformed Church is found.

c. If one of our members moves into an area where neither church is present, that consistory shall notify its Home Mission Board. When such information is received by the Board of Home Missions of one denomination, it will be passed on to the Board of Home Missions of the other denomination.

d. The appropriate changes shall be made in the questions under Article 41 as they appear in the Classical Credentials.

Grounds:

1. Our churches would benefit by being informed of Reformed Church in America members moving into their areas.
2. Reformed Churches in America would benefit by being notified of Christian Reformed members moving into their areas.
3. Members would benefit by being involved in a "Reformed" church even if their specific denomination did not have a church in that area.
4. Each Board of Home Missions would have accurate information regarding a "core group" of "Reformed" Christians to consider for opening of new fields.

Classis Northcentral Iowa
John Elenbaas, stated clerk

Overture 13 — Revise World Mission Order

(Art. 23)

The representative of Classis Chicago South on the Christian Reformed Board of World Missions was a member of the board's executive committee and moved to another classis last year. The newly adopted Mission Order for World Missions (see Acts of Synod 1976, p. 179, Art. II, Section 12, items b and d) permitted our former delegate to serve until the close of the annual board meeting this year. Consequently Classis Chicago South was not represented at the annual meeting of the board by a voting member from its churches.

We therefore present the following overture:

That synod change Arts II, Section 12, items b and d, of the Mission Order for Christian Reformed World Missions so as to allow for the attendance of the former representative at the executive committee meetings *until* the annual meeting and to seat the new delegate *at* the annual meeting as a voting member of the board.

Grounds:

1. This would provide for representation of classis on the board by an actual member of classis.
2. This would provide continuity on the executive committee by allowing the former delegate to complete his year of service.
3. This retiring representative could be present at the annual meeting on request of the board if the board should deem this necessary.

Classis Chicago South
Richard M. Hartwell, stated clerk

Overture 14 — Denominational Ambassador re International Poverty,

(Art. 43)

The consistory of Alpine Avenue Christian Reformed Church overtures synod to instruct the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee to appoint a person who

1. shall be *ex officio* a member of the "Task Force on World Hunger" which the Synod of 1976 instructed the executive directors of the CRWRC and World Missions to convene;
2. shall be or become knowledgeable on the causes of and solutions to international poverty;
3. shall spend most of his time in Washington and Ottawa becoming familiar with
 - a. the power structures,
 - b. the legislation being proposed which has any bearing on the world poverty and/or injustice,
 - c. the implications of decisions of governmental agencies,
 - d. the miscarriages of justice in carrying out of legislation which in itself had noble goals;
4. shall advise our members of legislation to support or oppose;
5. shall work with other Christian organizations, secular organizations, legislators, and other influential persons in government to promote justice in eco-

conomic matters and an alleviation of poverty in various countries, including our own;

6. shall write such articles as are needful;

7. shall bring to the study committee, to CRWRC, and to synod any suggestions and programs that will attain the goals of this overture.

Grounds:

1. Practical

a. Quotation from Advisory Committee 7, pages 56, 57 of 1976 Acts of Synod: "The committee recognizes . . . that the problem is more than hunger, but involves political, moral, economic, and educational dimensions as well."

b. This overture will aid in providing "concrete applications and implementation for our congregational and denominational life" (Recommendation 2.c., p. 57 *ibid*).

c. Decisions by governments and governmental bodies of the United States and Canada have vast repercussions in the daily lives of fellow Christians and fellow image-bearers throughout the world.

d. Although the activities of the CRWRC have been magnificent, the size of our denomination precludes our being a major factor in solving world poverty merely by the distribution of money, goods, and know-how.

e. Individual persons and congregations have neither the time nor the background knowledge to determine what should be a Christian response to proposed laws and governmental policy on the national and international level.

f. The governments of the United States and Canada are responsive to their citizens if there is sufficient groundswell of sentiment. These governments have in turn been partially successful in some cases (Russia re Solzhenitsyn; Chile) in relieving injustice in other lands. We are responsible to provide the pressure of God's will in every situation in which we have influence.

g. Since the world of international trade and politics is very complex, individual efforts often do not attain the desired end. For example, eating less meat, using less fertilizer, and avoiding waste are worthy proposals. Yet even when they are done, more food is not gotten to poor people.

h. It is in our own interest to alleviate world poverty since areas of poverty are fertile ground for communism, which, on the whole, has been repressive, atheistic, and a threat to good order.

i. The goal of this overture is that the CRWRC, being the most appropriate agency available to us, should advise individuals of our denomination as to the best way they can exercise their Christian citizenship re world poverty. The goal is not to involve the church in making political and economic judgments.

2. Biblical

a. The Bible teaches that God's people are to be concerned for the poor (Deut. 15:7ff; 24:18ff; Prov. 22:9; Luke 3:11; Rom. 12:20 *et al*).

b. The Bible teaches that our neighbor is anyone who needs our help and love (Luke 10:25-37).

c. The earth is the Lord's (Ps. 24:1) and we must be good and just stewards of its fulness.

d. There are large numbers of fellow Christians living in undeveloped countries. We have a special obligation to them (Gal. 6:10).

e. The abundant life (John 10:10) that Jesus came to bring includes, among many other things, sufficient food for daily living.

f. God loved the world (John 3:16). We are to love others as God loved us. g. When we feed the hungry, clothe the naked, etc., we are doing it to Christ (Matt. 25:34ff).

h. The Bible teaches that obligation increases with the increased capacity of the giver (Luke 12:48; Mark 12:42-44; Luke 12:2-4).

i. Kindly words, even articles and statements by study committees, are condemned if there is not concomitant action (James 2:14-16).

j. We may not be respectors of persons (James 2:1-9). This general precept has many applications, including among them that we may not discriminate in our charities and apply them only to certain classes, races, or religions.

- k. Jesus, in ordering the picking up of the twelve baskets (John 6:12, 13), teaches that we should not waste even if we have enough.
- l. God used his prophets to speak against social evils and bad economic structures. The church must speak to and give guidance to its members today also (Amos 2:6, 7; Isaiah 5:8; Amos 5:5-10).
- m. God clearly reveals that corrupt lawmakers and their evil laws are an abomination to him (Ps. 94:20-33; Isaiah 10:1-4).
- n. Although many others may be guilty in one respect or another re world hunger, our task is to take the beam out of our own eye (Matt. 7:5).
- o. Social, institutionalized evil is so subtle that we are often entangled in it without our knowledge. God condemned the rich, upper-class women (Amos 4:1, 2) even though they likely had no direct contact with the poor.
- p. If one is a member of a privileged class that profits from social evil and if one does nothing to try to change things, one stands guilty before God.
3. Confessional
- a. Answer 110 of LD XLII indicates that abuse and waste of God's gifts breaks the eighth commandment.
- b. Answer 111 indicates that God requires of us to further our neighbor's profit.
- c. The form for the ordination of deacons indicates that they should prevent poverty as well as relieve it.
- d. The depravity of mankind infects every area of activity. The actions of nations and the laws that we (and every other person) seek to have passed are also under this blight. The Christian must fight against every unjust tendency and against every unjust law (past, present, or future), every unjust social or economic activity, since these also were made by sinful people.
4. Statements of Christian leaders
- a. "At the heart of the problem of poverty and hunger are human systems which ignore, mistreat and exploit man If the hungry are to be fed some of the systems will require drastic adjustments while others will have to be scrapped altogether" (Stanley Mooneyham, *What Do You Say to a Hungry World?*, Word, pp. 128, 117).
- b. "The second reaction must follow, however, if concern for people's needs is genuine. We must ask: Why are people poor? . . . Finally, the Christian's righteous anger over sin and injustice must find positive avenues of expression . . ." (Dr. Roger S. Greenway, *Missionary Monthly*, Jan. 1976, pp. 15, 16).
- c. "The industrialized nations have carefully manipulated the patterns of international trade for their own economic advantage" (Ronald J. Snider, "Mischief by Statute," *Christianity Today*, July 16, 1976, p. 16; this whole issue is devoted to this topic of world hunger).
- d. "When Christians perceive that certain political and economic and social structures grind multitudes into degrading poverty, that these structures are oblivious to genuine human needs and to real human freedom and development, we must stand up and be counted among those who would be instruments of God's grace, bringing healing to the sick, lifting up the poor and oppressed. When structures of power have moved irredeemably beyond the guiding, informing model of the Kingdom of God, Christians must work to restore that model to reality" (George De Vries, Jr., "Our Latin Neighbors," *The Reformed Journal*, May-June 1976, p. 6).
- e. "If you eat less meat and give the money you save to your denominational relief agency . . . that would help. Above all, deal with the public-policy side of the issue. Help insure that this country and others will attend to the necessary mechanisms, such as the establishment of a world food reserve program. Otherwise changes in eating habits may give us the illusion—and only the illusion—of helping others" (Arthur Simon, "Hunger: Twenty Easy Questions, No Easy Answers," *Christianity Today*, July 16, 1976, p. 21).
- f. "For the next ten years the deepest moral challenge we face is the injustice of a world dramatically split between the wealthy and the impoverished" (Senator Mark Hatfield, *Between a Rock and a Hard Place*, Word, 1976).
- g. Hatfield deplors the "ongoing structural violence" serviceable to the monopolistic wealthy that "causes" death not by bullets and bombs but by famine

and poverty, "To oppose such violence is a moral imperative, this is central to faithful Christian obedience." Huge governmental bureaucracies need to be challenged; tenured bureaucrats in them wield massive power . . ." (Quotes from a review by Carl F. H. Henry of Mark Hatfield's book, *Christianity Today*, June 18, 1976, pp. 24-26).

h. "Political Evangelism, as we shall understand it here, is one aspect of the overall evangelistic task of the people of God . . . Our thesis is that political evangelism must also be concerned with political structures, processes, and policies" (p. 15). "But this must be stressed here: the redemptive work of Christ is, among other things, a political redemption" (p. 24). "Political evangelism, as we are using the term, is a task to which the church is called" (p. 37). "The preacher of the word has been selected by the Christian community to provide guidance from God's Word for the life of God's people . . . The real issue is not one of competence but of authority. Does the preacher of the word have the authority to speak on matters of political policy? . . . This does not relieve him of responsibility for the political growth of his people . . ." (Richard J. Mouw, *Political Evangelism*, Eerdmans, 1973, pp. 80-82).

i. "Many countries are not permitted to sell their products to the highest bidders, which increasingly are the socialist countries. Several defense contracts and trade agreements between the United States and Latin American countries forbid such trade . . . All United States and international lending institutions make their loans contingent on agreement with International Monetary Fund policy. But to receive a loan from this institution the begging country must make certain decisions that will only further its dependence on the industrialized countries . . . (details given) . . . What happens often is that internal growth is suppressed, exports stimulated, and foreign multinational enterprises buy into or absorb completely less powerful national companies . . . (other examples given) . . . Now perhaps these are isolated examples. But to many Latin Americans—and increasingly to Christians, both Catholic and Protestant—they are examples of a deeper reality . . . If that is the case, how does the Christian message speak to Argentina and to Latin America?" (Rev. Harvey Stob, CRC missionary to Argentina, "Latin America's Forced Dependence," *The Banner*, Oct. 8, 1976, p. 5, 6).

Alpine Ave. Christian Reformed Consistory

John H. Bergama, president

John Brondsema, clerk

The proposal to submit this overture to synod was rejected by Classis Grand Rapids North at its meeting on January 18, 1977.

Overture 15 — Dealing with Lodge Members

(Art. 68)

Classis Columbia overtures synod to adopt the following steps as guideline actions to deal with members of the lodge:

1. Candidates for membership in the Christian Reformed Church are required to break with lodge worship, ritual, and any other religious activity that the lodge member can participate in before he/she is accepted as a member.

Ground: Lodges have religious activities which are not in harmony with a person's commitment of faith and his walk with Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.

2. The local consistory is required to counsel and to assist the member toward the formal termination of his/her lodge membership and his/her activity in the non-religious activities of the lodge.

Grounds:

a. The local consistory is the body which must supervise the spiritual life of the new member.

b. It is important not to insist that new members make a choice before he/she is ready to make that choice. To force the issue before he/she has become mature enough to face it could cause him/her to break his/her relationship with the church.

Classis Columbia

Howard B. Spaan, stated clerk

Overture 16 — Committee on Social Justice (Art. 80)

Classis Hackensack proposes that synod establish a standing Committee on Social Justice, which shall be concerned with the application of scriptural principles of social justice to current injustices and abuses of power. This committee shall not be concerned primarily with the self-interest of the Christian Reformed Church and its constituency, but shall attend primarily to the plight of the powerless, both of this country and of the world. Specifically, it shall 1) keep abreast of social justice issues; 2) prepare position papers on issues of present and pressing concern; 3) provide leadership to the members of the Christian Reformed Church, informing them concerning the issues, giving analyses of these issues, and suggesting ways in which the church can take effective political action; 4) supervise the work of a full-time representative of the denomination to the legislative bodies and agencies of the United States government, communicating with them concerning matters of social justice; and 5) seek to establish cooperative efforts toward social justice with the North American Presbyterian and Reformed Council and its member churches, and with the Reformed Church in America.

The members of this committee shall be persons with expertise in political affairs and, in addition, one person representing each of the following: Board of Home Missions, Christian Reformed World Relief Committee, and Synodical Committee on Race Relations.

Supportive arguments:

1. The Scriptures provide numerous examples of and directives regarding God's demand for justice and his sending of prophets with this testimony to those in high places. (Cf. Exodus 6:10-13, Isaiah 3:14, Ezekiel 45:9, Daniel 4:27, Luke 3:18-20, and Acts 24:25.)
2. The Committee for Contact with the Government of the Council of CR Churches in Canada provides us with a working model for the proposed Committee on Social Justice.
3. Little influence is being brought to bear by the people of the CRC in an organized way on the politically powerful forces of the United States.
4. Non-ecclesiastical organizations which may aspire to the task can only represent segments of the denomination with their viewpoints.
5. The voice of the people of our denomination can be spoken with greater unity and effectiveness if that voice is an official one.

Classis Hackensack
Calvin Niewenhuis, stated clerk

Overture 17 — Re Marriage Guidelines Report (Art. 76)

Sincere appreciation is expressed for the insight, the suggestions, and the assistance which synodical Report 35 provides. Understand therefore that the following concerns focus on a few problem areas.

In regard to the Marriage Guidelines Report 35 now before the churches, Classis Hackensack makes the following overture to the Synod of 1977:

- A. Classis requests that synod refrain from adopting Paragraph II B, "The Biblical Teaching Regarding Remarriage," as being in basic accord with biblical teaching, and consequently not adopt recommendations b, 4) b) and c) which are based thereon.

Grounds:

1. Report 35, in B, 2, b, apart from biblical evidence, introduces *reasonableness* as justification for setting time limits on the requirements of scriptural passages which contain no time limit. This is voiding the law of God through application of human standards of reasonableness, as well as denying the unlimited power of God's transforming love and grace.
2. Report 35 evades the sinfulness of remarriage as taught in Matthew 5:32, 19:9, Mark 10:11-12, Luke 16:18, and I Corinthians 7:10-11 when it suggests that the sinfulness of remarriage depends upon getting a divorce with the intention of marrying another. Therefore, to use a possibility to overturn the uniform witness of so many passages against remarriage is not careful exe-

gesis, and appears then to be an attempt to silence the witness of Scripture rather than to heed it.

3. Report 35 evades the severe warning by Jesus to a third party who might want to marry a woman who has been put away by her husband for grounds *not* recognized as legitimate in the Bible (Matthew 5:32 and Luke 16:18b).

4. Report 35 evades the application by Paul of Christ's words for separated believers in I Corinthians 7:11, "but should she depart, let her remain unmarried, or else be reconciled to her husband" (ARV). Report 35 voids this text for the present day by suggesting a *possibility* that Paul counseled her to remain single because of his own preference for the single state. Not only does this use a mere *possibility* to dissolve the force of a very serious command, but the possibility itself is in contradiction with the other half of the text: "or else be reconciled to her husband." If the single state was indeed preferable in Paul's thinking, then he could not have advised her to be reconciled to her husband.

5. Report 35 neglects to apply I Corinthians 7:39 to the remarriage question. A careful study of remarriage must take this verse into account. "A wife is bound for so long a time as her husband lives; but if the husband be dead, she is free to be married to whom she will, only in the Lord."

B. Classis requests that though individuals ought to be encouraged to seek advice and biblical counsel regarding divorce and remarriage and its ramifications from the consistory or body of believers, synod nevertheless should refrain from stipulating, as Report 35 recommends, that consistories are to withhold or grant the church's blessings on contemplated remarriages where divorce was granted on grounds other than adultery.

Grounds:

1. The report's position implies that remarriage will be a censurable sin when it is contracted *without* the approval of the consistory; whereas those who comply with its stipulations will be granted a "dispensation" from the understood requirements of God's revelation. This is an unwarranted and unprecedented use of consistorial authority.

2. This conflicts with the scriptural evidence that every person will be held responsible for his or her conduct according to the light given them (Luke 12:47-48, Romans 2:16, 14:10-12; and II Corinthians 5:10).

Classis Hackensack

Calvin Niewenhuis, stated clerk

Overture 18 — Re Marriage Guidelines Report

(Art. 76)

The Bethel Christian Reformed Church of Paterson makes the following overture to the Synod of 1977:

A. We request that synod refrain from adopting Paragraph I, C (Acts of Synod 1976, p. 465) as expressing adequately the biblical givens on the "Husband as Head" in marriage.

Grounds:

1. Report 35 makes two assumptions which change the thrust of the biblical texts which speak to this relationship:

a. Report 35 makes the statement that "the overarching principle is set forth as a relationship of mutual subjection." This governing statement comes from a unique understanding of the Ephesians 5:21 passage.

Parents are not called upon to be subject to their children, nor the masters to their slaves; rather they are called upon to exercise their authority in a Christ-like way—loving and serving the best interests of those subject to them.

Now the same thing is true of the first case—husband and wife. There is no mutual subjection (or submission) mentioned in Ephesians at all. The command to be in subjection is given *only* to the wife, not to the husband. And the two examples that follow in Ephesians support this concept of one-sided submission. For the head is not subject to the body, such as to the hands or legs or toes, but vice-versa—the body is subject to the head. And Christ is not subject to his church, but the church is subject to him.

Thus, there is no ground for the statement of Report 35 that in marriage "the overarching principle is set forth as a relationship of mutual subjection." Rather, in Ephesians 5 and 6 Paul teaches that there is to be subjection on *only one side* by the wives, children, and slaves—and that is to be *done out of reverence for Christ*.

b. Report 35 also makes the statement that "we are guilty of a serious anachronism if we take "head" as a directing, controlling organ of the body."

Take note, that Paul himself, in this same epistle, uses the word "head" to express *authority*: "and he has put all things under his feet, and has made him *head* over all things for the church" (Ephesians 1:22). This passage clearly expresses that no other interpretation is possible.

2. Report 35 states that a husband should *merit* the respect of his wife (p. 465). No one would disagree that in following after the love and example of Christ, the husband should try to be worthy of her respect. But the last statement of this section suggests that the wife need not respect her husband unless he is worthy of it. "Furthermore, such an attitude exists and may be expected to endure, only if and when the husband manifests Christ-like devotion and love." To make the requirement of respect *depend* upon the worthiness of the husband is contrary to the call for respect as we find it in I Peter 3:1: "Likewise, you wives, be submissive to your husbands, so that some, *though they do not obey the word*, may be won without a word by the behavior of their wives, when they see your reverent and chaste behavior." Note also the parallel situation in I Peter 2:18: "Servants, be submissive to your masters with all respect, not only to the kind and gentle, *but also to the overbearing*." Once again, respect, and subjection are to be given in each case, not because they are merited, but for Christ's sake.

3. Although this section is not directly related to the recommendations at the end of Report 35, be aware that should synod adopt this section as requested by the committee, it may have profound implications for the new marriage form being drawn up by the Liturgical Committee (no more vow to obey?) and also for the study of the hermeneutical principles involved in the Women in Office issue. A decision by synod to approve I, C of this report must necessarily be followed by the other committees as the official exegesis of the church.

B. We request that synod maintain that adultery alone is the biblical and therefore the only permissible ground for divorce.

Grounds:

1. It is clear that in the exceptive clauses of Matthew 5:32 and 19:9, Jesus is dealing with adultery specifically.

*2. Adultery is the *only* ground for divorce. This has been the consistent and constant position of the Christian Reformed Church. Repeatedly synod has asserted that this is the teaching of Scripture.

*3. The Synod of 1906 declared on the basis of I Corinthians 7:15 that even willful desertion does not give a second ground for divorce. This position was further clarified in 1957.

*4. Across the greater part of a century since 1858, synod again and again asserted in specific cases that remarriage after divorce should not be recognized as long as one of the parties lived.

5. A sizeable segment of our denomination already considers "adultery" as covering *all the ways* in which infidelity in marriage can take place, including "breaking the trust." (See Acts of Synod 1973, pp. 598-599.) It appears that by advocating "equivalency" our church, without solid biblical basis, is likely joining secularistic proponents in opening doors in dissolving marriages.

6. Varying interpretations of "equivalency" are likely to undermine the unity of our churches, particularly as members transfer from one congregation to another to find consistories agreeable to their cause.

Bethel, Paterson Consistory
C. Nieuwenhuis, president
H. Schuurman, clerk

*Spaan, Howard, *Christian Reformed Church Government*, "Synodical Decisions," pp. 164-165.

An overture re the Marriage Guidelines Report was submitted to Classis Hackensack in January. Classis adopted the last two sections of the overture of the Bethel consistory as they are found in Overture 17 above. Classis Hackensack rejected the first two sections of Bethel's overture which are submitted here as overture 18.

Overture 19 — Re Admission of Lodge Members (Art. 68)

In the spirit of Overture 32, Acts of Synod 1974 (p. 649) and Overture 5, Acts of Synod 1975 (p. 633) the Consistory of the Avery Street Church in South Windsor, Connecticut overtures synod to allow exceptional cases for lodge members to be accepted into the membership of the church, where there is evidence of a clear commitment to Christ in confession and life and where membership in the lodge carries no confessional, religious commitment for the individual involved.

We are not in favor of an open door policy for all lodge members desiring membership in the church, but we would encourage any action on the part of synod to leave decisions in special cases to local consistories.

Grounds:

1. We have situations in our congregation similar to those reported in other overtures in this regard.
2. We agree with Classis Lake Erie that membership in a lodge for many people is not confessional in nature as is membership in the church.
3. We believe that the requirements for membership in Christ's church should not exceed those which he himself laid down: to confess him as Savior and Lord, and let the Holy Spirit work sanctification in the heart and life of the one confessing him.
4. A blanket policy of "no lodge members can be church members" could prevent exposure to further means of grace and opportunities for growth in an inquirer.

Avery Street, South Windsor, Consistory
Rev. Peter J. Mans, president
Hugo M. Rockx, clerk

Note: This overture was submitted to Classis Atlantic Northeast in January 1977, but was not adopted.

Overture 20 — Authorize Evangelists to Administer Sacraments (Art. 77)

Classis Cadillac overtures the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church to change and reorder Article 55 of the Church Order in the following way:

1. The present Article 55 will become 55a.
2. The addition of the following paragraph as Article 55b: "The sacraments may also be administered by a layworker in evangelism properly examined and approved by classis, in the unorganized congregation which he serves as missionary pastor."

Grounds:

1. 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 (Guideline 8, Acts of Synod 1973, p. 63).
2. This meets the need of the unorganized congregation for a total ministry by her own pastor.

Observation: This overture is a result of the recommendation by synod that the churches "continue to study and evaluate the use of layworkers in evangelism in the light of the 1973 *Guidelines for Understanding the Nature of Ecclesiastical Office and Ordination*" (Acts of Synod 1973, pp. 61-65). (See Acts of Synod 1976, Article 78, B.1, p. 86.)

Classis Cadillac
Fred J. Van Dyk, stated clerk

Overture 21 — Regulations re Lodge Members (Art. 68)

Classis Columbia, at the request of the Tri-Cities church, forwarded an overture to synod asking synod to take a two-point stand on lodge members who become Christians. Though a committee of classis revised the original, there are still some things not clear in the overture.

The Consistory of the Conrad Christian Reformed Church, therefore, overtures synod to add three more points to the proposed stand on lodge members, and not to adopt points 1 and 2 in the overture of Classis Columbia unless the following three points are added:

3. Synod declares that the principle of selective participation in membership, adopted in points 1 and 2 above, be applied in such a way that those who retain selective participation membership in a lodge are required to recognize also selective participation in membership in the church; that is, synod hereby creates a special membership category, called "second degree" members, which will give an applicant church membership status but a status which will not include participation in either the Lord's Supper or baptism for his children, or the holding of office.

Grounds:

- a. This will continue the pattern of degrees of the lodge to which the new member is accustomed.
- b. This new category will lease the transition to full membership for applicants of any kind who need time to mature, and relieve a problem often encountered by home missionaries.
- c. This will give time to determine whether the seed has fallen on good ground and not just on rocky soil or among thorns.
- d. This will hold up more clearly as ideal the complete surgery from worldly institutions and full transplanting of a living organ into the living body—the church.
- e. In this way synod openly admits without cover-up that points 1 and 2 are a change in policy from corporate responsibility to piece-meal individual determination of what membership implies.

4. Synod declares that the principles of selective participation in membership be applied also to congregations in such a way that those congregations, which choose not to participate with the body of the denomination in the matter of lodge membership may still retain other benefits of membership in the denomination.

Ground: If an individual can retain membership in a body without participating in the parts with which he disapproves, then groups of individuals should have the same privilege.

5. Synod declares that the principle of selective participation in membership be further applied to allow members (second degree, regular or member congregations) to be selective regarding any denominational activities in which they wish to participate by means of quotas.

Ground: This is consistent, for if membership in an organization does not render a member responsible for all the actions of the organization, then the member should not be required to participate financially in all of its actions.

Conrad Consistory
John M. Moes, president
Jay Vermulm, clerk

Overture 22 — Increase Ministers' Pension Benefits (Art. 72)

Classis British Columbia overtures the Synod of 1977 to increase the Ministers' Pension benefits in accordance with the increase of the actual cost of living.

Grounds:

1. From 1970 to 1976 the minimum salary of ministers serving in subsidized churches increased from \$6,500 to \$11,000, which is an increase of 69.2% (annual average 11.5%).

2. From 1970 to 1976 the Ministers' Pension benefits increased (only once in 1975) from \$3,620 to \$4,400, which is an increase of 21.5% (annual average 3.5%).
3. According to official statistics the cost of living from 1970 to July 1976 increased 46.6% (annual average 7.7%) in the USA and 52.7% (annual average 8.7%) in Canada.
4. Since the effect of the increased cost of living is felt equally by retired as well as active ministers, there should be more equality in compensation for the increase in cost of living.

Classis British Columbia
John Van Hemert, stated clerk

Overture 23 — Investigate Dr. Allen Verhey's View of Scripture

(Art. 70)

Classis Minnesota South is grieved with the decision made by the Synod of 1976 approving the work of the synodical deputies of Classes Grand Rapids North, Kalamazoo, and Zeeland. These deputies approved the decision of Classis Grand Rapids East to admit Dr. Allen Verhey to the ministry of the Word and sacraments in the Christian Reformed Church. (See Acts of Synod 1976, Art. 84, II-B-2, page 96.)

This decision of synod was made with full knowledge of Dr. Verhey's erroneous views in regard to biblical facts. These views were specifically pointed out in the Dutton appeal (Acts of Synod 1976, p. 685). Classis Minnesota South feels that these unscriptural views cannot be tolerated and that synod failed to demonstrate leadership in maintaining sound doctrine in our church when it approved the work of these deputies.

Further, synod failed to carry out its authority and responsibility when it had sufficient grounds for suspicion, yet did not require a full explanation from Dr. Verhey concerning his views of biblical facts. This authority and responsibility is required of synod in the Form of Subscription, the 4th paragraph, "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."

The above view is supported by Van Dellen and Monsma, who write in their *Church Order Commentary* (p. 40), "As a burdened subscriber can go with his problem to a consistory, classis or synod, so also a consistory, a classis, or a *synod* may decide to require of a brother falling under their authority a further explanation concerning his sentiments regarding any article of our standards. Actions of this kind may be taken by a classis, or a *synod* as well as by a consistory. The major assemblies need not wait for minor assemblies."

Therefore, Classis Minnesota South respectfully appeals to Synod of 1977 to require Dr. Allen Verhey to appear before synod and to give a full explanation of his views on the biblical facts, specifically as they are recorded in Genesis 3 and Matthew 28:2. If synod finds his views are unscriptural and contrary to the teaching of our doctrinal standards, synod then in Christian love should try to persuade him to see the error of his way. If Dr. Verhey, however, continues to hold to his convictions and refuses to change, Classis Minnesota South feels synod must advise the consistory of the Neland Avenue CRC of Grand Rapids to start disciplinary procedure against Dr. Verhey according to Art. 89 and 90 of the Church Order.

Ground: Classis is deeply concerned that when synod approved the work of these synodical deputies, and thus the ordination of a candidate who holds unscriptural views, it tended to shake and destroy the very foundations of our faith and trust in God's Word, and furthermore failed to uphold the confessions of our church.

Classis Minnesota South
Nicholas Roorda, stated clerk

Overture 24 — Re Marriage Guidelines (Art. 76)

The Consistory of the Grande Prairie-LaGlance Christian Reformed Church overtures the Synod of 1977 to make the following declarations regarding marriage, divorce and remarriage:

1. That synod declare the following on divorce and remarriage:
 - a. That *porneia* be understood as being the only permissible ground for divorce that is sanctioned in Scripture (Recommendation 2,b,1, Marriage Guidelines, Acts of Synod 1976, p. 482).
 - b. That *porneia* in Matthew 5:32 and 19:9 refers only to adultery.
 - c. That the right to remarriage with the church's blessing be granted to a divorced person only if the divorced person is the so-called innocent party in a divorce granted on the grounds of adultery.

Grounds:

- 1) Scripture only sanctions one ground for divorce, namely adultery.
 - 2) Report 35, Acts of Synod 1976, does not give conclusive scriptural grounds for changing our position on this rule, which the Synod of 1956 established on sound biblical grounds.
 - 3) To go beyond the confines of Scripture can only lead to confusion and a further breakdown of marriage within our church.
 - 4) Unless conclusive biblical evidence can be given that our previous stand was wrong, we should not change it. We believe that the Rev. Adam Persenaire, in his postscript (Acts of Synod 1976, p. 487ff.) has given sufficient biblical evidence why we should not change our former position.
2. That the Synod of 1977 recommend to the churches the Guidelines for Pastors and Consistories as found on page 484 in the Acts of Synod 1976 with this revision of Guide 10, so that it reads:
 "to extend the blessing of the church to a remarriage involving a divorced person contemplating marriage, if that person is the innocent party in a divorce granted on the grounds of adultery."

Ground: This is what Scripture teaches clearly and we should abide by it.

Grande Prairie-LaGlance Consistory

C. Tuininga, president

F. Zee, clerk

Note: This overture was submitted to Classis Alberta North in its session on April 26, 1977, but classis did not adopt it.

Overture 25 — Re Marriage Guidelines (Art. 76)

The Consistory of the University Christian Reformed Church of Ames, Iowa, overtures the Synod of 1977 to deal with the Marriage Guidelines report as follows:

A. That synod *reject* recommendations 2a, b and c: "that synod accept Parts I, II, and III of the report as being basically in accord with the biblical teaching on marriage."

Grounds:

1. Previous synods have refrained from accepting reports or parts of reports "as being basically in accord with the biblical teaching."
 - a. In 1961, synod did not adopt the report on *Infallibility in the Light of Scripture and the Creeds*, but rather recommended it to the church to remove misunderstanding and for further study. At the same time, synod adopted a short succinct statement about inspiration and infallibility. (See Acts of Synod 1961, Art. 98 III, A & B p. 78.)
 - b. In 1972, synod did not adopt Report 44 on the *Nature and Extent of Biblical Authority*, but rather submitted this report to our churches as providing guidelines for our understanding and further discussion of the nature and extent of biblical authority. Synod did adopt seven specific points on this matter. (See Acts of Synod 1972, Art. 52, C, 2 & 3, pp. 68-69.)
 - c. The same has been true for other major reports, e.g. those on: *The Love*

of God—Dekker Case—1967, *Neo-Pentecostalism*—1973, and *Office and Ordination*—1973.

2. To adopt whole sections of a report "as being basically in accord with the biblical teaching" would be tantamount to the adoption of a new creedal statement.
 3. The recommendations that synod adopt whole sections of the report as "being basically in accord with the biblical teaching" is probably why there have been so many overtures addressed to synod which request specific wording changes or the rejection of specific parts of the report.
- B. That synod *reject* recommendation 2d: "that synod endorse Part IV as a helpful description of the church's responsibility toward promoting the biblical view of marriage."

Grounds:

1. To distinguish between "adopt" and "endorse" would be difficult for the churches and consistories to do. It would raise questions whether this section is of lesser importance than Parts I, II, & III or whether synod is saying that only this section has to be specifically acted upon in the churches.
 2. Previous synods have refrained from endorsing reports or parts of reports. (See Ground 1 above.)
- C. That synod *submit* the report on *Marriage Guidelines* to the church for its use in further study and reflection.
- Ground:* The report contains a great deal of valuable material which can be of use for consistories and churches.
- D. That synod adopt as guidelines for pastors and consistories the ten statements in Part IV with the following changes:

1. That the preface remark read, "Consistories and pastors are urged:"
 2. That the parenthetical ("See III,B,4") in Guideline 9 be dropped.
 3. That Guideline 10 be changed to read:
"to extend the blessing of the church to a remarriage involving a divorced person if that person contemplating remarriage:
a. has sought a divorce to be granted on the grounds of the spouse's unchastity; or
b. has been divorced by the spouse on grounds other than unchastity and has sincerely sought reconciliation in attempting to preserve the marriage or to reconstruct it after divorce; or
c. has been divorced because of one's own unchastity or has sued for divorce on grounds not recognized in Scripture but has since manifested genuine repentance for that sin, has been restored to full fellowship in the church, and demonstrates the biblical attitude toward the permanency of marriage."
- Ground:* The use of the terms "so-called innocent party" and "so-called guilty party" would involve consistories in judgment and condemnation rather than pastoral support as suggested in Guideline 3.
- E. That synod *adopt* as guidelines for the church the eight statements in Part VI without the prefacing sentence.

Grounds:

1. The prefacing sentence is not written as a preface, but rather as a ground.
2. The eight guidelines are written in such a way that they do not follow from the prefacing sentences.
3. The eight guidelines are significant enough to stand alone.

Ames, Iowa Consistory
Fred Walhof, president
John Van Ast, clerk

Overture 26 — Delay Action on Marriage Guidelines

(Art. 76)

Classis Illiana overtures synod to delay for one year final action on the recommendations coming to synod from the Study Committee on Marriage Guidelines:

Grounds:

1. Our churches have had only a short time to study, evaluate, and react to the final report.

2. The proposed recommendations if adopted would considerably change our present position on divorce and remarriage.

Classis Illiana,
I. Couwenhoven, stated clerk

Overture 27 — Transfer of Mayfair CRC to Classis Grand Rapids North
(Art. 19)

Classis Grand Rapids North overtures the Synod of 1977 to approve the request of the Mayfair Christian Reformed Church to be transferred from Classis Grand Rapids East to Classis Grand Rapids North. The effective date of transfer will be the end of the calendar year if synod approves this transfer.

Classis Grand Rapids North,
John C. Scholten, stated clerk

Overture 28 — Re Report on Nature of Biblical Authority
(Art. 65)

Classis Grand Rapids South respectfully overtures Synod 1977 to clarify the position of the church on the matter of biblical interpretation especially in the light of 1972 Report 44 and the "New Hermeneutic."

Grounds:

1. There is extensive unrest and confusion in the churches of our denomination.
2. There is unrest and confusion in the Reformed community at large to whom we have an obligation to present a consistent witness.
3. This issue is clearly a matter which merits synod's involvement since it obviously falls within the purview of Article 28 of the Church Order as that which "concerns the churches in common."

Classis Grand Rapids South,
H. J. Kwantes, stated clerk

PRINTED APPEALS

1. — Classis Hamilton Protests Quota Procedure of Synod (Art. 72)

Classis Hamilton protests the adoption by the Synod of 1976 of a \$1.65 quota per family for "Estate Planning for Deferred Giving."

Ground:

It is contrary to Article 28a of the Church Order since this adopted quota was not listed in the printed Agenda for Synod 1976 and therefore was not dealt with in an ecclesiastical manner.

Classis Hamilton
Alvin H. Venema, stated clerk

2. — Classis Pacific Northwest Appeals Decision of Synod of 1976 re Dutton Appeal and Report of Synodical Deputies (Art. 70)

Classis Pacific Northwest appeals to synod to reconsider the appeal of the consistory of the Dutton CRC (cf. Printed Appeals 2, 1976, Acts of Synod, p. 685) and sustain or not sustain it on the basis of the grounds given by the consistory.

Grounds:

1. The Consistory of the Dutton CRC, in agreement with Article 30 of our Church Order, protested the decision of classis as being in conflict with the Scriptures and the Reformed Confession. Synod, in its decisions, did not answer this, the central issue. The central issue was that, in the judgment of the Dutton Consistory, Classis Grand Rapids East was in error for approving the ordination of a candidate who "plainly stated in his examination that he did not believe that the serpent spoke to Eve as reported in Genesis 3 and that he believed that the earthquake reported in Matthew 28:2 should be understood as an eschatological symbol and not necessarily a fact" (Acts of Synod 1976, p. 685). Synod in essence by-passed this issue and voted not to sustain the Dutton consistory's appeal by reasoning that since the classis followed "proper procedure" in its approval of the candidate's ordination, the decision of the classis should stand. However, the matter of proper procedure was not the issue of Dutton's appeal. The Dutton consistory was simply exercising its legal right under the Church Order to petition synod to make a judgment on whether or not the decision of Classis Grand Rapids East was right or wrong.

2. A clear and unequivocal voice from synod in this concrete matter is needed to dispel the uncertainty surrounding this issue.

This appeal was carried by motion.

Classis Pacific Northwest appeals to synod to reconsider its decision approving the work of the synodical deputies of Classes Grand Rapids North, Kalamazoo, and Zeeland in concurring in the approval of Classis Grand Rapids East in its affirmative decision to admit brother Verhey to the ministry of the Word and sacraments in the CRC (Acts of Synod 1976, Art. 84, II, B, 2, p. 96).

Grounds:

1. Synod had in hand a consistory's report of statements made by Candidate Verhey in his examination in Classis Grand Rapids East as stated in the appeal of the Consistory of the Dutton CRC.

2. Synod has given no grounds for its decision. Synod certainly owes the churches a clear statement of grounds for its decision in the light of the statements attributed to Mr. Verhey. The only information at our disposal strongly indicates that the statements of the Dutton consistory were verified by Mr. Verhey himself in his interview at synod as being a true report. Grounds were necessary also in view of the fact that the synodical deputies "observed that the brother had expressed ambiguous and imprecise views of inspiration"

(Acts of Synod 1976, p. 93). To approve the ordination of a candidate with ambiguous and imprecise views of inspiration to the office of minister requires good reasons both from the synodical deputies and from synod who approved the work of the deputies. The church deserves an explanation.

3. If, indeed, the consistory of the Dutton CRC has accurately presented the statements of Candidate Verhey, then we are forced by God's Word to agree with the grounds of the appeal of the Consistory of the Dutton CRC:

'1. This view plainly contradicts what the Bible states as simple facts.

(See Genesis 3:1-5, 13, 14; II Corinthians 11:3; Matt. 28:2, 'And, behold, there was a great earthquake.')

"2. It is in conflict with Article V of the Confession of Faith in which we confess that we 'receive all these books' (of the Holy Scriptures) believing without any doubt all things contained in them . . ."

4. The many voices heard both within our churches and in other churches concerning interpretation of Scripture demand a clear and unequivocal voice from synod in this matter.

5. If, indeed, synod came to this decision because Mr. Verhey was already ordained, then synod has, in effect, made the matter of approval of the work of its deputies a mere rubber stamp in many cases. Obviously, many decisions on which synodical deputies report for approval have already been executed at the time of their report to synod.

Classis Pacific Northwest
Stuart C. Pastine, stated clerk

3. — Dutton Consistory Appeals Decision of Synod of 1976 Re Dutton Appeal

(Art. 70)

A year ago we brought to the synod our appeal against the decision of Classis Grand Rapids East to ordain Dr. Allen Verhey to the ministry of our churches. Our appeal was not directed against the man but against the decision of the classis to ordain him after he had denied and questioned facts of biblical history. Since we were convinced that the classis' decision "conflicts with the Word of God," following the provisions of Article 28c and 30 of the Church Order for such cases, we brought the matter before the synod. Since it was properly before the synod it was the duty of the synod according to those articles of the Church Order to pass judgment on the appeal. After long discussion, synod refused to pass judgment on the irrelevant ground that the man in question was already ordained. It approved the work of its deputies at the examination and instructed "the appellants that if they remain convinced that the position of Dr. Verhey brings him into conflict with the confessions they must follow the procedure outlined in the Form of Subscription and the Church Order" (Acts of Synod 1976, p. 95).

Although we were convinced that the synod's decision was unjust, we decided to pursue the matter further along the lines that its decision suggested. Our closer study of Dr. Verhey's expressed views and writings, and correspondence and conference with him have confirmed our conviction that these views cannot possibly be harmonized with the Scriptures and church confessions. Therefore we brought our objections to the Neland Avenue Consistory in a letter. That consistory informed us that it has the matter under study and that is where it stands at present. It has become evident that, because of the time required for consistory and classis action, we will be unable to bring the matter before this synod following this route.

Meanwhile we have received numerous communications from other churches informing us that they had decided to bring the matter before this synod by way of overtures, appeals and communications.

Considering all this and especially the seriousness of the matter, we as consistory have decided, in conformity with Article 30 of the Church Order, to appeal to this synod, as "the assembly next in order," because we believe that last year's decision "conflicts with the Word of God" and "the Church Order."

We ask the synod to reconsider our appeal together with its grounds as presented last year (Acts of Synod 1976, pp. 685, 686), to sustain that appeal against the ordination of a minister who interprets the Bible as Dr. Verhey did in the examination, and to advise the classis and the church involved that these views may not be tolerated among our ministers or ministerial candidates.

Grounds:

1. Our appeal was properly before the synod under the provisions of Article 30 of the Church Order and the synod had the duty according to that article to determine whether the classis' decision against which we appealed was right or wrong. To refuse to make that decision because the man was already ordained, as the synod did, was to overlook the fact that the appeal was directed not against the man but against the decision of the classis. The status of the man was irrelevant. It was not a valid reason for the synod's failure to do its duty under the Church Order.
2. Our further study and efforts to carry out the instructions of Synod 1976 have confirmed our conviction that the method of interpreting the Bible employed by Dr. Verhey and already plainly revealed in his examination cannot be harmonized with the Scriptures, our creeds or the decisions of our synods.
3. The synod's decision to approve that ordination despite the appeal and the synod's knowledge of those views is bringing our loyalty as a denomination to the Scriptures and the confessions under suspicion both within and outside of our churches.
4. Further delay in making a decision on this matter threatens to harm the churches and their members as well as Dr. Verhey.

Dutton Consistory
 Peter De Jong, president
 Robert Ellens, clerk

4. — Classis Grandville Appeals Decision of Synod of 1976 re Dutton Appeal and Report of Synodical Deputies (Art. 70)

Classis Grandville respectfully overtures synod to declare that Classis Grand Rapids East and the synodical deputies erred in admitting Dr. Verhey to the ministry of the Word and sacraments in the Christian Reformed Church.

Grounds:

- A. The protest of the Dutton Consistory that was before the 1976 synod was against classis and should have been treated as such. However, Classis Grand Rapids East merely received Dutton's appeal for information on two grounds, (a) and (b). And in the treatment of the appeal synod permitted this action of classis with its grounds to stand. But, as the following will show, these grounds are untenable.
1. *Ground (a)*: "That classis could see no formal basis for either sustaining or rejecting the protest since the decision to admit Candidate Verhey was on the basis of a majority ballot vote and did not involve the approval of specific positions held by him."

Reply:

- a. The very opposite is true. One cannot vote meaningfully on any matter without having clearly in mind the content of the matter voted on. Candidate Verhey was thoroughly examined especially on the matters of doctrinal purity and integrity of scriptural exegesis. And when time for balloting came, each voter was faced with the question: What do you think of the man? And the answer to that question he expressed in his ballot. So instead of the position postulated in ground (a), Classis Grand Rapids East will have to take full responsibility for Candidate Verhey's unscriptural views and for admitting him to the ministry with these views.
- b. To allow ground (a) to stand:
- (1) will ever close the door to contest a decision made by any church assembly. Such a decision is always made "on the basis of a majority ballot vote."

(2) by implication makes the registering of a negative vote meaningless.
 2. *Ground (b)*: "The protest against the action of classis was not accompanied by an appeal or request for action on the part of classis, but was intended as a necessary step in the process of lodging a protest with synod."

Reply:

The truth of the matter is that the first appeal was made to the classis not to the synod. Only after the classis failed to take any corrective action was the consistory constrained to appeal to synod.

B. The grounds upon which synod rejected the Dutton appeal are likewise untenable.

1. *Ground (a)* reads as follows: "Candidate Verhey was approved for ordination by Classis Grand Rapids East according to proper procedure. He was approved by majority ballot vote of the classis with the concurrence of the synodical deputies after a thorough examination. This decision stood unprotested up to and including the time of his ordination."

Reply:

a. The Dutton Consistory has no fault to find with the procedure classis followed in approving Verhey's ordination.

b. What the consistory protested was the fact that in spite of proper procedure classis permitted Verhey to be ordained holding the unscriptural views charged against him in the protest.

2. *Ground (b)* is deserving of some critical attention. It reads: "Beyond the point of ordination the procedures outlined in the Form of Subscription and the Church Order must be followed if a minister's loyalty to the confessions is called into question."

Reply:

a. This has nothing to do with the Dutton protest. The consistory concerned itself only with classical approval of Verhey's ordination. This approval Dutton understands as a grave error.

b. Consequently what the Consistory of Dutton asked in their protest was that Classis Grand Rapids East recognize the error of its decision to approve Verhey's ordination.

Classis Grandville

Peter Vander Weide, stated clerk

LIST OF PERSONAL APPEALS

1. Personal appeal of Five Members of the Clinton, Ontario, Congregation re a Decision of Classis Huron re a Common Law Marriage.
(Art. 57)
2. Mr. R. Timmermans appeals Decisions of First Hamilton Consistory and Classis Hamilton re Coin-operated Sunday business.
(Art. 28)
3. Mr. Bernie Postma appeals Decisions of First Sioux Center Consistory and Classis Sioux Center in a Disciplinary Matter.
(Art. 47)
4. Mr. Thomas Spriensma presents a Personal "Overture" (not adopted by Classis Zeeland) that synod repeal the 1972 Synodical Decisions re The Nature and Extent of Biblical Authority.
(Art. 65)

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**QUOTAS AND RECOMMENDED AGENCIES
FOR 1978**

I. DENOMINATIONAL AGENCIES

A. Quotas

	Per Family for 1978
Back to God Hour	\$ 25.00
CRC-TV	10.00
Board of Publications of the CRC	4.00
Calvin College & Seminary	38.40**
Calvin Seminary Building Addition	1.00
Chaplain Committee	1.95
Chaplains' Deposit Fund .....	.50
Denominational Services	9.75*
Board for CR World Missions	46.00
Fund for Needy Churches	12.50
CR Board of Home Missions	53.00
Ministers' Pension Fund	28.50
SCORR	1.60
Spanish Literature .....	.75
	\$232.95

*Denominational Services includes Synodical Expense and Offices, Denominational Building Debt, and Estate Planning for Deferred Giving.

**Synod approved the following 1978 regional or area quotas for Calvin College & Seminary, in agreement with the decision of the Synod of 1962:

Area 1—comprises Classes Grand Rapids East, Grand Rapids South, Grand Rapids North and Grandville	\$57.25
Area 2—comprises Classes Cadillac, Holland, Kalamazoo, Lake Erie, Muskegon and Zeeland	\$48.00
Area 3—comprises Classes Chicago North, Chicago South, Florida, Illiana and Wisconsin	\$42.00
Area 4—comprises Classes Minnesota North, Minnesota South, North-central Iowa, Orange City, Pella and Sioux Center	\$20.00
Area 5—comprises Classes Atlantic Northeast, Hackensack and Hudson	\$57.25
Area 6—comprises Classes Columbia, Pacific Northwest, California South, Central California and Rocky Mountain	\$37.25
Area 7—comprises Classes Alberta North, Alberta South, British Columbia, Chatham, Eastern Canada, Hamilton, Huron, Quinte and Toronto	\$23.00

Areas which benefit from a quota reduction should employ monies saved to finance their present area colleges (Acts of Synod 1962, pages 54, 104, XXV).

B. One or More Offerings

1. Denominational Agencies

- a. Armed Forces Fund of Home Missions Board (U.S. churches only)
- b. Back to God Hour 1) above-quota needs 2) CRC-TV
- c. Back to God Tract Committee
- d. Committee for Educational Assistance to Churches Abroad
- e. Home Missions for above-quota needs
- f. Minority Student Scholarship Fund
- g. Supplemental Assistance Fund of Ministers' Pension Fund
- h. World Missions for above-quota needs

2. Denominational Benevolent Agency

Christian Reformed World Relief Committee

3. Denominational Youth Agencies

- a. Calvinettes (division of United Calvinist Youth)
- b. Calvinist Cadet Corps (division of United Calvinist Youth)
- c. Young Calvinist Federation (division of United Calvinist Youth)
- d. Young Calvinist Servicemen's Ministry

II. NONDENOMINATIONAL AGENCIES FOR FINANCIAL SUPPORT - recommended for support *but not necessarily for one or more offerings. Any amount (or offering) should be determined by each church.*

A. Benevolent Agencies

1. Bethany Christian Services
2. Bethesda Hospital
3. Calvary Rehabilitation Center
4. Christian Health Care Center (formerly Chr. Sanatorium)
5. Christian School Employees Relief Fund (only when requested)
6. Elim Christian School
7. Luke Society
8. Pine Rest Christian Hospital Association (includes Children's Retreat)

B. Educational Agencies

1. Association for Advancement of Christian Scholarship
2. Canadian Christian Educational Foundation (NUCS)
3. Christian Schools Educational Foundation (NUCS)
4. Dordt College
5. National Union of Christian Schools
6. Reformed Bible College
7. Roseland Christian School
8. Trinity Christian College
9. Westminster Theological Seminary

C. Miscellaneous Agencies

1. American Bible Society (U.S. churches only)
2. American Calvinist Fellowship
3. Canadian Bible Society (Canadian churches only)
4. Canadian Home Bible League (Canadian churches only)
5. Christian Labour Association of Canada (Canadian churches only)
6. Christian Laymen's League
7. Faith, Prayer and Tract League
8. Gideons, International (for Bible distribution only)
9. Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship
10. Lord's Day Alliance of Canada (Canadian churches only)
11. Lord's Day Alliance of U.S. (U.S. churches only)
12. New York Bible Society (NIV Translation only)
13. TELL (The Evangelical Literature League)
14. World Home Bible League (U.S. churches only)